

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Knowle Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Kixley Lane

Knowle

Solihull

B93 0JE

Diocese: Birmingham

LA: Solihull

SIAS Inspection: 15th November 2006

Previous Section 23 inspection: February 2004

URN: 131292

Head teacher: Miss J. Godsall

SIAS inspector: NS 135 Robert A. Cooke

Context

This popular 2-form entry school is in a residential area within the Borough of Solihull, in a community which retains its former village ethos. There is a small but growing number of pupils from ethnic minorities and a widening catchment area. Present buildings date from the 60's and 70's. Infant and junior schools were united in 1997. Recent building work has involved extending small classrooms and creating more storage space.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Knowle CE School as a church school are good.

The relationships that exist between the school, the church and the local community are exceptional. The support of the church team and support by parents are outstanding. A strong Christian ethos permeates all aspects of the children's education and the school is considering ways of broadening the pupils' experience of the multi-cultural society to which they belong.

Established strengths

- There are excellent links between the school, the church and the local community
- There is dynamic involvement of a very strong church team in a range of school and community activities involving pupils of all ages
- There are very good opportunities for pupils to reflect, to formulate their own views, to express themselves and to listen to each other
- There are very good relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff

Focus for development

- Consider formulating a concise statement that encapsulates the school's Christian character so that what the school stands for can be simply proclaimed and widely expressed in the school's documentation and correspondence
- Use a published scheme for self evaluation as a church school to check and review what the school is doing on a regular basis
- Explore the possibility of an exchange with a school in a multi-faith environment so that pupils broaden their experience of the multicultural society in which they live
- Seek ways by which the classroom environment throughout the school can give further support to pupils' spiritual development

The school through its distinctive Christian character is good at meeting the needs of all learners.

The aims of the school which underpin all teaching and learning and which impact on all its pupils are strongly related to Christian values. Pupils are very well cared for in a safe and secure environment. There are plenty of opportunities for quiet reflection, for pupils to express their thoughts and feelings and to listen to the views of others. Parents are very supportive of the school and its policies. There are very strong links with the local church. A large church team including clergy, children's ministers, youth workers and volunteers is actively involved in supporting the children both in school and in out of school and lunchtime activities. There is a strong emphasis on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development within a clearly defined Christian framework. An appropriate amount of time is given to the study of other faiths and there are growing opportunities to visit various places of worship including the local church. There are very good relationships between pupils and staff and among the pupils themselves. Staff provide good role models in their relationships and in their care and concern for others. There are good opportunities for pupils to work in large and small groups as well as individually. Faith-related displays and religious symbols in the school halls and corridors support pupils' spiritual development well, but are less evident in most classrooms. The school libraries contain plenty of Christian material, but there are few books about other faiths and few opportunities for pupils to interact with children and adults of other faiths. A "Shakespeare Garden" provides a good environment for pupils who wish for a quiet time of peace and reflection during school breaks.

The impact of Collective Worship on the school community is good.

The importance attached to worship is clearly demonstrated by the active involvement of clergy and other members of the church in Acts of Collective Worship for all pupils on a weekly basis. A thriving Sunday School takes place within the school on Sundays. It is attended by a large number of pupils following their participation in the first part of Sunday Services. Many pupils also participate in community organisations such as rainbows, cubs, brownies and guides and in lunchtime and after school activities run by the church team. A good example is the "Jaffa Club" for infants during the lunch hour. Meetings of these groups all include Acts of Worship. Pupils listen and respond very well during collective worship. Older pupils participate in the selection of music for assemblies and in handling audio-visual equipment. Pupils of all ages play an important part in Christian festival events. In these and at other times pupils prepare and read their own prayers. Singing is tuneful and robust, especially when led by an instrumentalist or pianist. Staff are expected to lead some Acts of Worship and participate fully with the children. Older pupils speak positively about their involvement with the church and its representatives. Sufficient attention is given to the beliefs and worship of other faiths for all pupils to feel that their different backgrounds are recognised and appreciated. Older pupils show a good understanding of Anglican faith and practice and the significance of Christian festivals. There are good opportunities for reflection during Acts of Worship and pupils are selected to record their thoughts in books kept in the school halls. Younger pupils can recite a school prayer. Older pupils know the Lord's Prayer.

The effectiveness Leadership and Management of the School as a Church School is outstanding.

There is a very clear view that Christian faith and prayer play an essential part in pupils' daily lives and that their very good relationships are underpinned by strong Christian principles. Relationships between the school, the church and the local community are excellent and include a network of links between school and church activities in which large numbers of pupils are involved. An after school hobbies club run by church members involves pupils and older members of the community working together. The headteacher is very well supported in her role as spiritual leader by the church team. Major Christian festivals are celebrated in the church and the school during the school week and are extremely well supported by parents and other members of the community. There is a very strong focus on pupils' personal development in the School Improvement Plan. This is strongly linked to the school's Christian ethos. A team of staff has joint responsibilities for planning Acts of Worship, pupils' personal and social education, citizenship and religious education. Members of the church team are also involved in Acts of Worship planning. The links thus formed help ensure that the Christian character of the school is identifiable in a range of policies and other documents. The Christian aims of the school are very clear as is a motto above the main entrance. A concise statement to encapsulate the school's Christian purpose could further identify and proclaim what the school is

about. Links with other schools, including other church schools are very good.

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