

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Lacock Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

High Street
Lacock
Chippenham
Wiltshire
SN15 2LQ

Diocese: Bristol

Local authority: Wiltshire

Dates of inspection: 17th December, 2007

Date of last inspection: 10th and 11th November, 2003

School's unique reference number: 126333

Headteacher: Miss Jessica Caunter

Inspector's name and number: Mr David Shears (Inspector No. 423)

School context

Lacock is a smaller than average rural school that increasingly caters for pupils from outside their catchment area. Currently there are 70 pupils on roll. There are no pupils from ethnic minorities. All the teaching staff, including the headteacher, have been appointed in the last three years. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is smaller than the national average. The school is working towards its international award.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Lacock Primary as a Church of England school are good

Lacock Primary is a good and improving school that has the determination and drive to give its best to the pupils in its care. There is strong leadership and management who work well together with all the staff, continually improving the quality of provision for pupils. There is a delightful family atmosphere that permeates the whole school. Relationships between staff and pupils are very positive, as are those with parents. There are excellent links with the local church community that support the foundation of the school.

Established strengths

- A forward thinking leadership team who are committed to the ideals of a Christian based education for their pupils.
- Excellent relationships between the school and pupils, parents and the community.
- A strong sense of support and care for all.
- Very good progress in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Focus for development

- Plan in more detail for Collective Worship, including suggestions for personal reflection.
- Make displays and the reflection corner more interactive to encourage pupils to use them.
- Ensure that all stakeholders are aware of the Christian foundation through documentation and are consulted about the Christian aspects of school life.

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

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They feel safe and secure in the knowledge that their teachers care for them and support them well. Relationships in the school are outstanding, creating a distinctive Christian ethos in which all are valued and nourished. These values have a profound impact on the personal development of the pupils. Pupils have noticed this, saying that they are 'kind to each other and share nicely.' The school has made much progress in developing their spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills. In particular, emphasis has been placed on their cultural awareness including links with schools in France and Uganda. Another link with a school in London is also planned. Pupils have had enjoyable experiences such as African drumming and Indian dance. Other topics such as one based on the Caribbean are planned. There are also opportunities for spiritual development such as writing prayers and

the creation of a reflection corner. However, both the reflection corner and other displays need to become more interactive so that pupils are encouraged to make good use of them. The older pupils have produced a book of lunchtime prayers to use before eating meals. There are plans for this to be developed with the younger pupils. The curriculum is being adapted so that subjects are planned around a topic giving rise to links with RE and spiritual development. A new scheme supports reflective thinking and is being used throughout the school. Pupils visit the local church to support their learning in RE. Although pupil's attainment on entry is lower than the expected levels, their academic progress is good, resulting in satisfactory standards overall. They want to work hard for their teachers and enjoy being given a challenge. Pupils in year 6 are becoming mature and independent and this supports them in their preparation for their next phase of education. There are good links with the local secondary schools.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Pupils enjoy Collective Worship. Although it is held in a classroom, staff ensure that this is a special part of the day by having appropriate music playing whilst pupils come in. Pupils are encouraged to be quiet and respectful, preparing themselves well for the act of worship to follow. A cross and a candle provide a visual focus. Pupils have good opportunities to praise, pray and reflect as well as learn from the interesting topics that are planned for them. The planning needs to provide more detail about what is being taught each day and more suggestions about what might aid pupil's personal reflection. There are a good range of resources and music is planned well. Both the foundation governors and the co-ordinator monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of Collective Worship and make alterations where necessary. However, this could be extended to ascertain what pupils and parents feel about Collective Worship. Parents have opportunities to join with pupils both at celebration assemblies and services held in the local church. There is an effective Collective Worship policy in place. Pupils have an excellent knowledge of Christian festivals and all acts of worship are consistently and distinctively Christian. There are outstanding links with the local vicar and other people from the Christian community who lead worship regularly. Pupils particularly look forward to these occasions and benefit a great deal from them. They feel that Collective Worship is important so that 'you can get to know God more' and 'you can pray to Him'.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school is good

Both the headteacher and the foundation governors have an outstanding Christian vision for the school. They have clear aims and the drive and determination to continually improve the provision in the school to support the development of all pupils. When appointing staff they ensure that candidates are able to support the Christian ethos of the school. Their self-evaluation is excellent. They have a good knowledge of their strengths and have good ideas about how to make improvements in areas where they need to develop. This is reflected in the school development plan. The staff feel very much a part of this effective team and there have been some opportunities for their development. However, this vision is not always made clear enough in all documentation both to parents and the community. The ethos statement, although useful, is not underpinned by the Christian foundation that they regard so highly. Parents and pupils are not given enough opportunity to give their views about the Christian aspects of school life although they are consulted well in all other areas. They feel that they are informed well through regular newsletters and they are able to discuss any worries or problems with staff, knowing that they will be listened to and supported. There are excellent links with the local church and community. These links begin through 'scuffs', a pre-school group that is run by the church, which is attended by many of the children. When they begin school they already know the vicar well and can sing some of the songs that the school uses, helping them to settle in quickly. There is a wonderful feeling of inclusivity where the church, school and community all work together for the good of the pupils. One parent said that 'the school is good at knitting education with Christian values to develop children who are well-rounded individuals'. Overall, this is a good school with some outstanding features.