

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Lady Elizabeth Hastings Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Dowkell Lane

Thorp Arch

Wetherby

LS23 7AQ

Diocese: York

LA: Leeds

Dates of inspection: 2nd November 2006

Date of last inspection: 2001

School's Unique reference number: 108010

Name of Headteacher: Mrs Pam Edwards

Inspector's name with National Society inspector's number: Roger Highton 336

Context of the school

Lady Elizabeth Hastings VA Primary School is situated in Thorp Arch, a rural village SE of Wetherby. 130 pupils attend the school with many pupils coming from outside the catchment area. There is little racial or cultural diversity and a low proportion of pupils with learning difficulties.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Lady Elizabeth Hastings School as a Church of England school are outstanding.

The school is outstanding in the way it encourages spiritual development and positive attitudes to Collective Worship. This is rooted in high quality relationships that are underpinned by Christian values. The Governing Body, Staff and Church support the Head Teacher in leading and managing the school very effectively.

Established strengths

- The pupils are happy and very well supported by the school. They are open and welcoming and have a very positive outlook on their school's Christian ethos.
- The school has nurtured very effective links with the community and local churches, which benefits everyone.
- Good leadership in religious education is leading to rapid improvement in assessment, monitoring and levels of attainment.

Focus for development

- Homework should be used more effectively to raise attainment and achievement in religious education
- Governors should monitor and evaluate the impact of collective worship on the school community to ensure high standards continue to improve

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

The Christian ethos in the school is very strong and permeates every aspect of the school's life, from documentation and displays through to classroom practice. This is most evident through the behaviours and Christian beliefs expressed by the pupils. Pupils feel that they are fairly treated and well cared for. For example, one pupil stated, "...although two pupils may not like each other, they would still help each other". There is clear evidence that the school has worked hard to develop a

real Christian environment. One outstanding feature is the large paintings, created by the pupils, which depict religious events and encourage contemplative thought. The School Prospectus states that the school “supports pupils through the beginnings of their own spiritual journey.” This is true. One parent commented, “I wish I had had the benefit of such spiritual support at school”. The relationship with the community is excellent. The Church/School Lynx Group makes a great contribution. An example of the group’s impact is the fact that parents have returned to be active members of the local church through first attending school worship. The Lynx group provide an open path between school and Church.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding.

Worship is integral to the life of the school. This is evident through the involvement of a wide range of clergy who regularly lead worship and the support of members of the community. The collective worship co-ordinator plans worship and liaises well with visiting clergy. Children also plan and deliver their own class worship once a fortnight. The quality of prayer is a strength and was summed up by the Vicar who said, “This, more than anything else, is what makes the school distinctive – the children pray from the heart!” During an inspiring act of worship, eight children volunteered to say their own prayers in front of the whole school. Prayer is a natural part of the children’s development in this school. When asked to define an act of worship, one pupil said, “It’s when you’re not talking to friends, but talking to God.”

The effectiveness of the religious education is good.

Attainment in this subject is broadly in line with standards achieved in other core subjects. There is good monitoring and assessment of the subject by the co-ordinator and the staff. This is leading to increased confidence and effectiveness in their teaching. Lessons are well prepared and resourced and teachers engage pupils through skilful questioning. In discussion with pupils, many said that they found RE interesting. They were able to talk openly about what they had learnt in lessons. Homework is currently not used effectively to develop understanding in RE. The school has worked very creatively to enhance RE through the use of computers. For example, a teacher made an interactive CD for younger children to explore their local church after a class visit. This enhanced the learning experience. The effective use of ICT in RE also supports independent learning.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school is good with some outstanding elements.

The leadership of the head teacher is outstanding in the way that she has shared and developed her distinctive Christian vision for the school. This is demonstrated through her inspired decision to appoint a full time learning mentor who is also the co-ordinator for Collective Worship and key member of the Church/School Lynx group. There are strong and fruitful links with the local Church community and regular meetings with the neighbouring Church of St Mary’s, Boston. Pupils have good relationships with staff, which has developed their confidence and empathy. This is a credit to the leadership of the school. One parent commented that one of the Year 6 mentors, having left school, has kept in touch with his younger children. Governors have also displayed good leadership and are involved in some monitoring of the school’s Christian dimension, mostly through attending acts of worship and talking to staff. Overall, the success of this school is attributable to the quality of relationships clearly based on Christian principles. There are mutually supportive relationships between the school, parents and the village community, where all are proud to be associated with Lady Elizabeth Hastings school.

SIAS NOV 2006 Lady Elizabeth Hastings VA Primary, Thorp Arch, Wetherby, LS23 7AQ