

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Langar Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Church Lane,
Langar,
Nottinghamshire.

Diocese: Southwell and Nottingham

LA: Nottinghamshire

Date of Inspection: 17th and 19th October 2006

Date of last inspection: June 2001

School's Unique reference no: 122763

Headteacher: Mr. B. Hillary

SIAS Inspector and no. Miss Margaret Matthews No.95

Context

Langar is a small school with 67 pupils, situated in the rural countryside of southeast Nottinghamshire. It also serves neighbouring villages. Pupils live mainly in private housing and are of white British heritage. The school occupies two sites at present – the original building opposite Saint Andrew's Church and a small group of 1970's classrooms on an attractive green site, a short distance along the road. The school is extremely short of space and is to be developed in the near future to provide facilities for school and village use. The relationship between the parish church, the school and the local community is exceptionally close.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of the school, as a church school, are outstanding.

The school's distinctively Christian character can be seen, clearly, in all aspects of its ethos and practice. Its effectiveness is apparent in the warm relationships and excellent teamwork, which exist throughout the school community, resulting in high levels of achievement and high standards of personal development amongst pupils.

Established strengths

- Leadership of the Head Teacher.
- Commitment of the staff.
- Strong support of parents and the community.
- Very close links with the church.

Focus for development

- Enable all staff to attend collective worship every day, when the buildings allow it.
- Ensure that the emphasis of each act of worship is Christian rather than just pastoral.

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

A strong culture of care and guidance, within a Christian context, operates throughout Langar Primary School. It ensures that each individual is welcomed, respected and valued and is able to make the best possible progress. Pupils enjoy their learning because they are secure and happy and feel that adults listen to their views. New pupils and those with special needs are exceptionally well looked after. Parents speak warmly of the school's Christian code of conduct, for example, the positive approach to behaviour management, and see it as an extension of their family values at home. Pupils like their teachers very much because they feel able to improve with the help and encouragement they are given and because lessons are fun. They respond to generous levels of praise and reward and appreciate the recognition and celebration of their achievements. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural education of learners is important to the school and is based on sound Christian principles. Pupils are well aware of the needs of others and involve themselves in charitable events both locally and for worldwide projects. Healthy lifestyle and the school council are well-developed features of the school, enabling learners to make moral decisions and to take responsibility for themselves and others. Their social interests are met through a range of after school clubs and residential visits. Cultural development is improving: the school is aware that multi-cultural enrichment of the curriculum is a necessary step forward. Relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff are very close. Pupils acquire the confidence to reflect on important issues in their lives; and as a consequence, spiritual awareness becomes an effective part of their personal development. K/S2 pupils, for example, showed thoughtful concern over how they welcome newcomers to a group or to the school. Although space is at a premium the distinctiveness of the school is highlighted with Christian symbols and related displays of children's work in each classroom. Strong links with the parish church and the local community; and the valued contribution of the parish priest all help to meet the needs of each member of the school, young or old. Pupils, staff and parents value the school and what it stands for and believe it is a good school to attend.

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

Collective worship is central to the Christian witness of the school and is an important focus in each school day. Pupils' attitudes are good. Most children engage fully with the worship and enter into singing and prayer willingly. They help in practical ways and express very positive views about the value of worship, for example, one pupil explained that, 'prayer is a chance to talk to God, because he is always there to comfort us.' Others particularly like the hand crosses they are given to hold during the worship. Honour assemblies are very popular and pupils firmly believe that they encourage everyone to work harder and behave better. The school's S.E.A.L. programme is woven into the worship and is a strong support to learners' moral and social development. Occasionally, in individual class assemblies, the link between the theme and the Christian element of worship is tenuous because discussion does not connect the two sufficiently. Despite this, the atmosphere created with lighted candles and the use of Anglican sentences and responsorial prayer is aptly conducive to worship. This was demonstrated by an excellent act of class worship in K/S2 based on the theme of communication. Prayer, in its many forms, including spontaneous prayer and silent reflection, plays a significant part in the spiritual life of the school. Policy, planning and evaluation are carried out through informal procedures, but they are effective because of the small size of the school and the efficiency of the worship co-ordinator. The school is able to make free use of the church building owing to the close bond between the two. Special services, which are held there at major Christian festivals, are welcomed by church members and valued by parents. The school also receives very good support from the rector and the foundation governor both of whom lead worship in the school, regularly, covering the Anglican church year and stories from the Bible. The constraints of the school building impose considerable restrictions on what can be offered and achieved in collective worship. Some of its impact is lost because of the cramped conditions when fitting the whole school into one classroom; and full staff attendance becomes almost impossible. Nevertheless, the school does well in making the best of the current situation and has plans to carry out a major review of collective worship when the new building becomes available.

The leadership and management of the school as a church school are outstanding.

The school has enjoyed a long period of success, during which time it has gone from strength to strength under the exceptional leadership of the Headteacher. The high standards and wide educational experience offered to learners is due, in large measure, to his unwavering commitment to the whole school community. The Headteacher's vision and drive are totally in line with the school's Christian values and, with the full support of the governing body, he promotes the traditions and status of the school's religious foundation. The school's philosophy, as stated in the School Improvement Plan, is underpinned by Christian principles and practice, which are put into effect throughout the school. Governors take their responsibilities seriously: they are proactive in their role as 'critical friend' and prayer is used at governor meetings. Their talents are well used for the benefit of the school, as exemplified by the IT expertise of the chairman in developing an email and texting system for parents, to aid communication. Staff are well motivated and often 'give extra' because they feel valued and supported by the leadership. They speak highly of the sense of unity and common purpose within the school. Parents appreciate the contact they are encouraged to have; their views are sought and taken into account and they feel well informed. The strength and reliability of the Parent Teacher Association has made it an indispensable part of the school's record of success. The special relationship between the school, church and community is very effective with many social events taking place that are of mutual benefit. Links with the Diocese are also good: pupils visit the Minster for the Time Travelling event and the Headteacher and Chair of Governors attend the annual Diocesan Conference. Staff have also gained from in-service training provided by the Diocese. It is important to note that the work and success of Langar School is carried out in a quiet, modest and gentle manner by all concerned, truly reflecting its Christian ethos. The school has recently embarked upon the process of self-evaluation as a church school and has been realistic in its findings. The objectivity of the leadership and constant desire to improve, places the school in a very good position to meet new and even greater challenges.

October 2006 SIAS report Langar CE Primary School, Langar, Notts. NG13 9HG

