

**Langwathby Church of England Primary School**

Salkeld Road  
Langwathby  
Penrith  
CA10 1ND

**Diocese: Carlisle**

Local authority: Cumbria  
Dates of inspection: 24<sup>th</sup> January 2007  
Date of last inspection: 8<sup>th</sup> November 2001  
School's unique reference number: 112255  
Headteacher: Mrs Lesley Birtwell  
Inspector's name and number: Mrs CM Bartlett 444



**Diocese of  
Carlisle**

**Board of Education**

*"Every Child Matters To God."*

**School context**

Langwathby is a village school near Penrith, which serves several small villages and scattered farms. The school community reflects the very diverse nature of the area with a predominance of farming or tourism related occupations. Most pupils come from the Nursery, which also feeds two other schools, but there is also a transfer into Y4 from a nearby 'First School'. There have been very few staff changes in recent years.

**The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Langwathby as a Church of England school are good**

Langwathby is a good Church school, which produces independent and confident pupils who have a breadth of experience, especially in the creative arts, developed by an outstanding curriculum. The emphasis on individual caring and mutual support encompasses families as well as the whole school community and is strengthened by the close relations with the Church in the person of the vicar.

**Established strengths**

- Good management led by the strong head and ably supported by the whole staff team and efficient, proactive governing body.
- The passionate commitment to the creative arts
- The mutual support and respect reflected in the relationships within school and between the school and the church
- The commitment of the 'Friends of Langwathby School'

**Focus for development**

- The involvement of pupils in all aspects of Collective Worship
- The inclusion of staff and pupils in the evaluation of collective worship to inform future planning

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

The Christian ethos is evident in the mutual respect and support of the individual and belief in the importance of raising self-esteem and nurturing children's creativity. A child responded to the pupil survey saying 'Langwathby is special because everyone in it is special'. Parents say that the learning culture supports and values creativity through 'all the extra things they do with the children' and 'the generosity of the staff in giving their time outside school hours for events like Artmark and the Summer Barbecue'. Children progress well because they 'like the way the teachers make lessons fun, for example we don't just *plan* things, we actually *make* them in DT.' Parents' needs are supported, especially of children with specific difficulties, as one parent reported: 'We would work out a plan to improve his skills, which helped me to help him.' The good contact between staff and parents also has a beneficial effect on behaviour. Examples of very imaginative writing retelling the Christmas story, reflect the good quality of creative writing in KS1 which parents noted with appreciation. Spiritual, social and cultural development is particularly strengthened by the emphasis on creative arts. The whole school community is involved in the development of a 'learning culture' seen in the encouragement of staff, governors and parents to extend their knowledge and skills. The support of the Friends of Langwathby School ( FOLS) enables the school to participate in the many out of school activities, which contribute to social and cultural development. 'FOLS do a lot for us, they helped us get to see 'The Tempest' yesterday because we're going to act it.' Parents speak warmly of the involvement of the vicar who leads worship once a week and teaches RE throughout KS2. Children talk enthusiastically of the different activities he introduces in RE. A recent visit of KS1 to explore the church involved parishioners who have specific responsibilities as well as the vicar. The record of this visit, displayed in the school and including children's thoughts about the church, illustrates the quality of display in the school. There is also a strong tradition of effective links with the Methodist Church.

The pastoral role of the vicar and the mutual support shown by the staff was very evident recently at a time of loss and this strengthened the sense of community in the school.

### **The impact of collective worship on the school community is satisfactory**

Children enjoy assemblies 'we like the stories', and they listen and respond well. More active involvement, such as role-play, is infrequent because of the perceived limitations caused by the size of the hall. The weekly celebration assemblies when 'we can show off about our work' encourage self-esteem, but it is only on special occasions that they play a more active role in Collective Worship. The vicar's very good relationship with the children leads to their eager response to his stories. They look forward to his assemblies, which follow the Church's Year and are based on Bible themes. The Methodist minister, whose weekly involvement in collective worship extended the children's experience of the wider church, has recently moved away and his successor is establishing a similar role. The school has invested in a comprehensive collection of music for worship and considerable care is taken in linking music to the theme. However, the children only spoke with enthusiasm about their participation in the regular 'music assembly' when they play instruments. Staff attend and lead worship regularly and develop worship themes through the broader curriculum. The evaluation of worship, which was an issue in the last inspection, is partially in place. It records the perceived response of the children, 'they enjoyed the story', but should now be extended to enable them to express this themselves and evaluations should be used to inform future planning.

'The vicar talks to us in Assembly, he tells us a story and really interacts with us and tries to make it fun.' Y6 Pupil

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

The whole school community effectively promotes the shared vision of the school in developing children as 'autonomous independent learners'. The strong partnership between head and governors is reflected in good practice and procedures, such as the effective system of recording and reporting in the management of governor monitoring. The encouragement of staff development leads to good subject management, including monitoring of teaching and learning, within the context of the school development plan. The RE co-ordinator has started to build up a portfolio of examples of work which will aid the assessment process. Parents are encouraged to share and develop their skills, especially in crafts. 'I was roped in to do war time cookery, the children loved it and I learned a lot. They extend our skills'. Parents also speak positively about the open door policy and how their ideas are considered. 'I took the idea of the fruit scheme to the parent governor, it was considered and is now here'. The pastoral role of the vicar is strengthened by his very active role in the school. He also provides an effective link with the Y4 feeder school. Children are very proud of the role of the school council and are clear about the democratic process. 'You discuss things in class, then you vote on it and take it to the school council where they do the same.' They initiate support for charities and look at ways of improving school life. The School Council recently raised an issue of a very messy cloakroom. 'It was just pegs and squash. Now we have boxes, it looks much more lively and we keep our things tidy in the boxes. It was our idea, we looked in Argos catalogues and chose them, it's much better now.'

A written record is maintained of governor visits to the school specifying their area of focus. For example, when a concern over school meals was raised, a team of governors joined the children for meals over a period. Discussions followed and suggestions were made with follow up visits to monitor the result.