

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Leeds & Broomfield Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Lower Street,
Leeds,
Maidstone,
Kent
ME17 1RL

Diocese: Canterbury

Local authority: Kent

Dates of inspection: 16th November 2006

School's unique reference number: 118264

Headteacher: Mr Steve McGill

Inspector's name and number: Noreen Vinall 467

School context

Leeds and Broomfield Church of England Primary School is a small, rural primary school with three mixed-age classes. The proportion of children with learning difficulties is higher than average. A small proportion of children are from minority ethnic groups including one child with English as an additional language. In recent years, standards in the national tests in English, mathematics and science have been satisfactory and pupils' attain broadly average standards. A fall in levels of achievement in years 5 and 6 in 2005 led to effective changes in assessment procedures and attainment is again close to the average. There has been a high turnover of staff in the last two years. The Headteacher has been in post since January 2005.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Leeds and Broomfield as a Church of England school are satisfactory

Leeds and Broomfield Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School fosters a curriculum where every child matters and its effectiveness as a church school is satisfactory.

Established strengths

- Clear leadership that places every child at the heart of the curriculum
- Inclusive practice that supports families in times of need
- Religious Education and Worship which have a positive impact on pupils' spiritual and moral development

Focus for development

- Revisit the Vision Statement with all stakeholders to ensure the language used reinforces the school's commitment to its Christian status
- Explore ways in which key areas in and around the school could celebrate the school's Christian character

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

'...as many hands build a house, so many hearts make a school' from the school prayer headlines the Vision Statement and permeates the child centred curriculum fostered by the Headteacher. A calm and friendly atmosphere cultivates good relationships between adults and pupils. 'Adults talk with rather than to children' one teacher told me. Good teaching in RE effectively supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, in the two lessons observed pupils were encouraged to reflect on messages received from angels in the Christmas Story and explore this theme through drama. Older pupils were enabled to develop their understanding of differences and similarities in Gospel accounts of the feeding of the 5000. Pupils are given positions of responsibility and trust. Celebrations of major Christian festivals and support for charities are part of school life. The support from the pupils and staff for a child with a serious illness characterises the way every child and their family matter. When speaking to the Parent Governor about the care shown to families she

told me, 'It's as much about the parents as the children'. The visiting priest supports all members of the school community as well as taking a weekly assembly. Links with the local church are part of the life of the school. The school's own self-evaluation accurately highlights Christian values such as loving God, loving one's neighbour, care of the needy and forgiveness which underpin the life of the school community. These now need to be included in the Vision Statement so that the school's Christian status is made clear to all stakeholders. Christian symbols, prayers and displays at key points in the physical environment, would promote spiritual development and proclaim the school's distinctively Christian ethos.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is satisfactory

A system of timetabled Worship based on the Diocesan plans ensures that Worship occupies a secure place in the life of the school. The Headteacher promotes its distinctiveness from assembly, ensuring the content is based on Christian ideals and teaching. In the whole school Worship seen, music, a lectern displaying Christian symbols in the Anglican tradition and a religious display created a worshipful atmosphere that fosters pupil's spiritual development. The Tidy Team prepared the hall for whole school Worship in a quiet, reverent manner.

All pupils were fully involved in responding to questions and singing the entrance and final hymns, heartily joined by the staff. The School Council spoke positively about their experience of Collective Worship, recalling prayers for Remembrance and Harvest. One pupil told me that they wrote prayers to make them feel grateful. The oldest Council member told me he liked his school because pupils are told why they are learning something and it is the same in Worship. That is why it is important. During the Act of Worship seen, the Headteacher read a poem he had written to help pupils relate school experiences to the parable of The Lost Sheep. This enabled even the youngest pupils to reflect meaningfully on the day's theme before being led in prayer by the Headteacher.

A member of the local ministry team leads Worship once a week which supports the Headteacher. Plans are in place to increase the range of visitors to lead Worship. Worship is not monitored or evaluated but, the visiting priest spoke positively about how he could support the school in developing this.

When Worship takes place in the local church, parents are supportive and services well attended.

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

The Headteacher has managed significant change whilst establishing himself as a leader and creating his vision for a Church school. The training that the Headteacher as RE co-ordinator has undertaken has led to Religious Education becoming more firmly established as part of a whole school curriculum. The school's Vision Statement aims to foster pupils' spiritual development. Worship is now more clearly linked to the curriculum. The school's self evaluation, whilst judging itself to be satisfactory, did not reflect the areas of good practice that are part of the Christian life of the school. Monitoring and evaluation of existing practice would give a clear picture of strengths and areas for development to be shared with all stakeholders.

The School Improvement Plan 2006 aims to promote a shared understanding of what it is to be distinctively Christian and develop this ethos within the school. There are key people who can support the Headteacher and could allow for distributive leadership of the school's Christian aims. The efforts of the Headteacher in developing the Church school ethos are bearing fruit. He should take time to reflect on what has been achieved so far, let others draw the threads together and celebrate successes. The Parent Governor, the visiting priest and the staff I spoke to are ideally placed to support development.