

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### **Ludlow Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School**

Bromfield Road

Ludlow

SY8 1GJ

#### **Diocese of Hereford**

Shropshire LA

SIAS inspection: 18<sup>th</sup> September & 21<sup>st</sup> September 2006

Previous S23 inspection: December 2000

URN: 116991

Headteacher: Mr. Philip Poulton

SIAS Inspector: NS 398 Mr Robin Sharples. NS Revd Peter Massey

#### **Context**

Ludlow Church of England School is a medium sized 11-16 mixed comprehensive school serving the market town of Ludlow and surrounding rural areas. The catchment combines characteristics of rural disadvantage with relative affluence. Almost all students are from white British backgrounds. There are 798 pupils on roll with approximately 20% with special educational needs. The school is a specialist technology college.

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

Ludlow Church of England School is good school which has improved significantly in recent years. The school is well led and its leaders are well aware of where further improvements are necessary and how these can be achieved. The school's developing self evaluation is enhancing this process. The recommendations of the previous Section 23 inspection are now being fulfilled.

#### **Established strengths**

- The vision, enthusiasm and energy of the Head Teacher;
- Sensitive management strategies promoting improved morale amongst staff and students;
- The pastoral and support systems within the school.

#### **Focus for development**

- Continue to develop the collective worship programme and encourage greater student involvement and development of links with local Christian churches and agencies;
- Enhance the use of the whole school environment to be more reflective of the Christian Foundation of the School.

#### **Ludlow C.E. School, through its distinctive Christian character, is good at meeting the needs of all learners.**

There is tangible concern for the whole child which stems from an understood Christian context. This is seen in the attitude of the staff and Governors and results, for example, in a very effective intervention programme and the process of policy formation. However, the Christian ethos is implicit and not explicitly visible to the majority of the school's stakeholders. This is the case both in school procedures and in the displays around the building. While the Christian ethos is not obvious the charity work of the school is very strong and to be commended.

Across the school there is clear evidence of collaborative working, as in vertical tutor group sessions, and in the steadily developing school council. While this inclusive approach is well led and carefully structured it is not yet fully embedded in the students who, for example, are not always clear about the role of the School Council or their opportunities to contribute to decision making within the school.

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

The school has, since the arrival of the current Headteacher, been establishing a positive and workable pattern of opportunities for worship and spiritual reflection. The half school assemblies form a focus which is memorable for students and this is co-ordinated to reflect the Tutor group 'Thought For the Day' during the rest of the week. These allow individual students a voice in the expression of spiritual ideas and is well responded to by the students. The assemblies further link the worship life of the school into the achievements and rewards system. The school acknowledges that this programme is in the very early stages of development. Students and staff spoke of their growing appreciation of spiritual experiences through greater use of silence, visual and auditory stimuli. It is of great credit to **all** the staff that in such a short time the programme has become so successful.

The students are aware that they are at a Church of England school and they are able to positively discuss the impact of (especially) the Tutor Group times. However they were not clear about what being in a Church of England School might mean in specific terms beyond the simple observation of well known festivals. The school's chapel is a potentially significant element in school worship but at present has a very limited impact on the students and staff as a Christian resource.

**The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school is very good.**

Since the arrival of the current Head Teacher the many developments have led to steady improvements across the whole school. The Head Teacher's personal contribution through example is outstanding. Other members of staff welcome this leadership and are thus themselves making very significant contributions to the life of the school which has resulted in improved relationships among all stakeholders.

The Governors provide a solid base for the improvements seen in the school, and are aware of the need to place their work in an appropriate Christian context. The new school prospectus is a good example of how they are beginning to do this. However, this declaration of Christian underpinning is still not completely clear across the school. The management team and Governors are aware of this and are carefully working to demonstrate the Christian context more clearly.