

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Nailsworth Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Nympsfield Road,
Nailsworth,
Gloucestershire
GL6 0ET

Diocese of Gloucester

Gloucestershire LA

Date of inspection: 7th February 2008

Date of last inspection: 18th June 2003

School's URN: 115637

Name of Headteacher: Mr C. Raymond

Inspector: Chris Hammant NS009

Context

Nailsworth Primary School is situated in the Cotswold town of Nailsworth and serves the whole community. It is a smaller than average sized primary school, with six classes, and a lower than average number of pupils are entitled to free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is below average and no pupils have disabilities. Almost all pupils are of White British origin and none are at an early stage of learning English. The head teacher was appointed just over two years ago.

Summary Judgement

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Nailsworth Primary School as a Church of England School are outstanding.

Parents who send their children to the school are immediately made aware of its strong Christian ethos, which permeates every aspect of school life and learning.

Established strengths

- A strong and distinctive Christian ethos is the foundation upon which secure relationships are built resulting in a vibrant school of happy, caring children and teachers who enjoy learning together.
- Acts of worship, which focus on Christian values, actively involve learners and provide time for prayer and reflection.
- Opportunities for children to quietly and individually reflect on how their learning and their relationships affect their actions.
- Very strong leadership based on Christian principles and a deep understanding of how children learn and grow.

Focus for development

- To involve the governing body in the school's self-evaluation of its distinctiveness as a Church of England School.
- To record governors' comments when they visit Acts of Worship as a support to the school's evaluation of worship.
- To introduce Christian greetings and responses into Collective Worship.

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

Learners in this school feel valued, special and proud to be part of the school community. They are able to articulate clearly the Christian values which are the focus of worship and are elaborated upon in lessons. Children enjoy their work and understand its importance in their lives. Planned and targeted differentiation in lessons ensures all learners are challenged and enabled to fulfil their potential. Learners are confident in speaking about the Christian values of the school and conduct themselves as independent, compassionate and responsible people. An interactive display on friendship is the focus of a small space in which children can pause to be quiet, reflect and pray if they choose. There was evidence that this facility has had a major influence on relationships in the school. In a similar way, worry and prayer boxes provide opportunities for children to ask for support and prayer at special or difficult times in their lives. Senior staff members ensure responses to these needs are appropriate and timely. Learners make excellent progress in their spiritual awareness and are supportive of each other's needs.

Learners have considerable respect for the beliefs of other religions. They truly appreciate the beauty of God's world in the school nature garden where there is time to think and be still. Very effective behaviour and work reward systems enable children to develop their social and moral awareness.

Staff express with great confidence the assurance they feel working as valued members of the team at this school. Their work is appreciated and their views are taken into account. They work collaboratively as part of an effective team. Teaching in Religious Education provides very clear opportunities for spiritual development. When asked to reflect on baptism during a lesson one child wrote, 'I do feel that I want to be baptised and I'm glad that my mum and dad left it to my decision to be baptised because they care about me, and it would be good to have a ceremony with my cousin and I can follow Jesus and be in God's family'.

The accommodation in the school provides an abundance of space for each class to create colourful and interesting displays of their work in a range of subjects including RE. There is a worship focus in each classroom and children are invited to respond to key questions about the Christian value for the term on a "Voice Board".

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Worship is central to the life of the school and is the key factor in the expression of its Christian character. Acts of worship are well planned and delivered, providing excellent opportunities for learners' spiritual development. In worship children learn the importance of Christian values in their lives through imaginative and inspiring experiences of story, drama, music and prayer, in which they play an active part. They express their enthusiasm for worship and realise its significance as a time when they can reflect and think quietly. There is an atmosphere of reverence and expectation and the presence of God is acknowledged and celebrated. Children, staff and governors evaluate worship and staff monitor this evaluation regularly to inform planning. The choir and the recorder group provide music and recorded music is also used. Children sing very well and enjoy reading prayers, some of which they write themselves. All staff regularly attend worship and take their turn to lead periodically. For them it is also a time to pause and reflect. Parents are invited to attend worship when their child's class is taking part. Visitors to collective worship from other faiths share their beliefs with the children who show great respect, sensitivity and interest. A worship focus (of a candle, cross and the Christian value with appropriate artefacts) enhances the worship atmosphere and supports the strong spiritual dimension. The content of the worship is skilfully matched to the age and ability of the children whether it be for the whole school, a key stage or for one class only.

The parish priest is a welcome visitor to the school, leading worship regularly and contributing to the spiritual life of the school. Worship encompasses learners' moral, social and cultural development as well as the spiritual and this is acknowledged by all

stakeholders. Learners are fully aware of the Christian year and celebrate key festivals in the church as well as learning about the church in RE. They use Christian hymns and prayers in worship although use is not currently made of greetings from the Anglican liturgy. Links with the local church are very strong through contact with the parish priest, the Open the Book team and the head teacher's contribution to the Parish magazine. The Christian character of the school is actively affirmed and celebrated in its worship.

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

The Christian vision of the school is evident in all public documentation and communication. The head teacher communicates very effectively with parents and children through their own respective newsletters, and with the local parish community. Governors have received training in the distinctive Christian character of the school and their responsibilities in supporting this. As this training was fairly recent, governors have not yet been involved in the self-evaluation of the school as a church school. The head teacher and staff carried this out very thoroughly themselves, identifying areas where they feel improvement is needed. As the school is constantly striving to improve, the role of the governing body in the aspects related to the school's role as a church school is crucial. Governors contributions to the prospectus support whole-heartedly the Christian foundation of the school.

The parish priest, who is a foundation governor, supports the head teacher in his leadership role. The School Development Plan has a clear focus on the Christian ethos of the school and the head teacher, staff and governors have worked together to create a plan which will raise standards in worship and RE as well as across the full primary curriculum. A senior member of staff has a responsibility post which focuses entirely on the Christian ethos of the school. Staff have received regular training in the teaching of Christian values from Diocesan officers. Staff members confirm that at their appointment and induction the Christian character of the school was fully explained to them. It is very evident that all staff contribute willingly to promoting the Christian ethos of the school, while parents speak with great confidence of the warmth and friendliness of all staff. They confirm that their views on various school matters are sought and their responses taken into account. Parents feel valued and confident with the education and care their children receive at the school. For many it is particularly important that the school is a church school. The school is led by a dynamic and committed head teacher whose whole aim is to see happy, independent children enjoying learning and at peace with themselves and their peers.