

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Narborough Church of England School Voluntary Controlled Primary School,

Denny's Walk,
Narborough,
PE32 1TA

Diocese: Norwich

LA: Norfolk

Dates of inspection: 25th January 2007

Date of last inspection: September 1999

School's Unique reference number: 121104

Name of Headteacher: Mrs. Linda Buckley

Inspector's name with National Society inspector's number: Michael Kee 316

School context

This is a small village primary school with 86 pupils on roll. The school has recently been designated Primary, having been a First School for many years and new additional buildings have accompanied this change. Most children enter the school from local playgroups. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and / or disabilities is higher than the national average. The number of pupils from minority ethnic groups is low. There is a strong relationship with the church, both within Narborough and neighbouring villages. The school is committed to serving these communities by providing education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice.

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

The school is a good Church school where Christian values underpin all its work and relationships. Pupils are very enthusiastic about their school and display very caring attitudes towards each other. They are keen to talk about how they are able to contribute to making sure that the school is safe for everyone, and consider it a very happy place to be. All staff feel valued and enjoy working at the school. They provide good role models for pupils and with the head teacher ensure that pupils can develop both academically and spiritually.

Established strengths

- Good leadership creates an ethos which is clearly valued by pupils and staff and is welcoming for parents
- Strong sense of family in the school pervades all activities and relationships
- Strong links with the church through the parish priest, foundation governors and other governors and parents who attend church
- Supportive parents and active 'Friends of Narborough School'
- RE and collective worship make a significant contribution to the moral and spiritual development of pupils

Focus for development

- More distinctive declaration of the school's Church status at the points of entry to the school building
- Regular attendance and involvement of all staff in the daily act of collective worship would ensure immediate and meaningful follow up with pupils
- Consider ways of presenting suitably challenging material in collective worship for the growing number of older pupils as the school expands
- Invite the Friends association to research parent opinion on how the school's distinctive Christian character supports learning and development
- Involve governors more regularly in monitoring everyday practice

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

The Christian ethos of the school is strong and Christian values underpin policies and practice. Relationships throughout the school, between pupils and staff and between pupils both in the classroom and in the playground, affirm these values. Pupils are very enthusiastic about their school and they display caring attitudes towards the school and each other. Members of the school council were able to articulate very clearly their feeling that the school is a safe place to be and that they are listened to when they put forward ideas to further improve the school. They are confident that there is no bullying at their school. There is a calm and purposeful atmosphere in the school and pupils are polite, helpful and keen to participate in the learning process. The distinctive Christian character of the school is strongly promoted by the Head teacher and the staff and the good working relationship between the Head teacher and the parish priest. The governing body is also clearly underpinning this in its supportive attitude and involvement. The aims of the school, documentation generally, and policies for RE and spiritual and moral development in particular, promote the school's distinctive Christian character with RE and Collective Worship both making a central contribution to that spiritual and moral development for pupils. Pupils' responses in RE lessons were articulate and showed understanding of Christian concepts and of practice and belief from other faiths. There was a clear link to the theme from Collective Worship on Jesus as the light of the world and pupils were well able to discuss how they, in a variety of ways, could be a light by helping others.

The school environment supports pupils' understanding of the Christian ethos of the school and its Church of England affiliation. A cross, bible and candle are displayed in the hall and the candle is lit during collective worship. There is a positive emphasis on Jesus in story, prayer and song in collective worship with very enthusiastic singing and the Lord's prayer spoken clearly and with meaning. Prayers written by pupils are displayed in the hall and in classrooms and these are used to start the day, at lunch time and at the end of the day. Good classroom displays of children's work reflect biblical themes and stories.

The school's distinctive Christian character and its Church of England affiliation are further affirmed by the weekly leading of collective worship by the parish priest and regular visits to the church to celebrate major festivals and to learn about the building, its contents and Christian practice and belief.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship plays an important part in starting every school day in a very positive and inclusive way. All pupils participate including those of other faiths and persuasions and it is clearly an experience which is valued by pupils. This is demonstrated by the respectful way they enter the hall in silence and join in singing and prayers willingly and enthusiastically. Pupils also take part in the presentation of the theme for the day and they respond well. They are able to discuss the way that collective worship involves them all and how younger children are helped to learn. Members of the school council saw it as a 'family' experience which they said was due to it being a Christian school. Pupils also helped in practical ways by arranging and clearing the hall. All members of staff take a lead in presenting collective worship and its impact is strengthened by the regular weekly visit of the parish priest. This is further supported by the school's attendance at the parish church for festival services when parents also join in and by the use of the church as an important learning resource for RE, history and community knowledge. This positive relationship with the church and its priest, which is supported by staff and governors, proclaims the school's Christian character and demonstrates Anglican faith and practice for the benefit of pupils.

The school ensures that pupils are aware of other faiths and cultures, both within the context of collective worship and RE and by providing opportunities for pupils to visit places of worship of other faiths including the local synagogue. A parent of two

Muslim pupils has agreed to come into school and talk about their faith. Collective worship impacts on classroom discussion and activities and is reflected in displays around the school. The use of prayer in assembly is also part of classroom practice at lunch time and the end of the day. Collective worship makes a positive contribution to both the moral and spiritual development of pupils and is clearly seen as an important focal point of every day practice.

The leadership and management of the school, as a church school, are good

The Head teacher, staff and governing body provide positive, creative leadership which clearly promotes the distinctive Christian vision for the school. The aims of the school place the education offered within the context of Christian belief and practice and recognise the religious foundation of the school to promote the spiritual and moral development of pupils. The parish priest is one of the foundation governors and many of the governing body attend church. The incumbent is currently chair of the governing body and is involved in all staff appointments, ensuring candidates are fully aware of the school's church status.

Great emphasis is placed by the head teacher on recognising the needs and individuality of all pupils and this contributes significantly to a culture of calm discipline, and respect for everyone's right to learn. Everyone is promoted as special. Monitoring by the Head, governors and staff of the impact and practice of the school's distinctive Christian vision currently takes place within the informal context of staff discussions and feedback by the parish priest from parents. To make this important process more effective it needs to be formalised and focused on the primary issue of the school's distinctive Christian ethos. Involving all stakeholders in the process of monitoring and evaluation is important as the commitment of staff, governors and parents to the school, its aims and vision is very evident.

Teachers, teaching assistants, mid-day supervisors and parent helpers all considered themselves valued by leadership and governors for their contribution and this culture within the school has helped to develop and nurture a welcoming atmosphere where children and parents feel at home.

Encouraged by the governing body, the Headteacher and staff seek to provide a rich experience of learning and discovery for all pupils and the regular residential experience and other out of school activities all help to do this.

SIAS report January 2007 Narborough Church of England School Voluntary Controlled Primary School, Denny's Walk, Narborough, PE32 1TA