

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Newton Ferrers Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Dillons
The Green
Newton Ferrers
Plymouth
PL8 1AS

Diocese: Exeter

Local authority: Devon
Dates of inspection: 19 March 2007
Date of last inspection: 6 and 7 July 2005
School's unique reference number: 113413
Headteacher: Mrs Claire Sealey
Inspector's name and number: Mrs Jenny Thomas, National Society No. 218

School context

Newton Ferrers school is a small village school (78) occupying new buildings and set in a rural and coastal location. The majority of pupils come from a high socio-economic background. The head teacher has been in post since 2004. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is low, as is the number identified with special educational needs.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Newton Ferrers School as a Church of England school are good.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Newton Ferrers School are good with some outstanding features. There is a strong supportive relationship between the school, parish and village community. This results in a very happy school. The school is established on Christian principles of love, care and respect. There is a strong commitment to pastoral care which is outstanding. The school has high expectations of all its staff and pupils, and these are promoted throughout the school.

Established strengths

- Clear vision and high expectations of the head teacher and governors.
- Effective emphasis on addressing the needs, gifts and talents of each individual child.
- Strong links between the community, church and school.
- An up to date and exciting environment in which pupils can flourish.

Focus for development

- Develop the awareness of the place and the traditions of the Anglican Church in the world.
- Display more Christian symbols, introducing those exhibiting cultural difference.
- Instigate opportunities for the head teacher to continue professional development on the distinctiveness of being a church school.
- Further the work with Governors on 'What it is to be a church school in 2007'.

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

The strong established links between church and school effectively support the Christian ethos of the school. Over sixty church and community volunteers help in school to deliver a wide and exciting curriculum and extra curricular opportunities. Christian values of trust and care for others are lived out in the school community. This can be seen in a number of ways.

For example the way in which the older children take care of the younger ones and the responsibility taken by family groups in school decision making. Each child is valued as an individual made in the image of God. Their individual needs are addressed and their talents valued and encouraged. Consequently, children speak of school as a place where they feel safe and happy. Parents speak of confidence in effective school procedures which develop and support their children. Parents are able to raise concerns knowing that they will be dealt with appropriately. Staff are excellent role models and pupils respond with exemplary behaviour in and around the school. The spiritual needs of learners are addressed effectively through the curriculum, extra curricular activities and a stimulating environment. Fund raising activities illustrate the children's developing concern for others, as in auctioning their art in aid of their linked school in Africa.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Care is taken to ensure that acts of worship take place in a well organized and peaceful environment. Children enjoy the daily acts of worship, their attitudes are positive and they respond well. In a distinctly Christian act of worship, the children joined in the story of the lost sheep entering into playing the parts with gusto, singing a lively Christian hymn and using a candle as a focus for reflection during a time of prayer. Acts of worship follow a planned theme but the overall programme does not reflect the breadth and opportunities in the Church of England's year. The children's understanding of the Anglican tradition is still to be developed. Major Christian festivals and first Friday worship take place in church and are led by the incumbent who is also the Chair of Governors. Parents who are invited to attend comment on the positive impact this has for the children and parents providing opportunities for spiritual growth and a special time in which to worship God. Acts of worship follow a planned theme. The 'God Squad', run by the parish reader, provides religious education in an after-school club.

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

The head teacher has brought about fundamental changes through her decisive and strong, yet compassionate, leadership. She has a clear vision and her expectations are high. She is ably supported by a committed and well informed governing body and dedicated professional staff. The quality of this leadership contributes significantly to the success of the school as a church school. The school's foundation governors provide good support to the school and report regularly on the progress of the school at the Parochial Church Council meetings. The aims and policies of the school reflect its Church of England foundation. Religious education is under-developed. This is an area identified in the school development plan. A new co-ordinator will be in place in September. The provision of Christian symbols around the school is under-developed. Parents are very supportive of the school and feel that the Christian ethos is implicit in all that the school achieves and offers, and in how it cares for their children. There is regular and effective communication between the school and parents. Parents appreciate the open door policy to the head teacher, staff and governors. Teamwork is the basis of the success of the school. Parents, governors and staff feel that the school has a special quality that enables all pupils to fulfil their potential and flourish as individuals.

SIAS report March 2007 Newton Ferrers Church of England VC Primary School, Newton Ferrers, PL8 1AS