

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### **Norland Church of England Voluntary Controlled Junior & Infant School**

Berry Moor Road

Norland

Sowerby Bridge

HX6 3RN

**Diocese: Wakefield**

LA: Calderdale

Dates of inspection: 9<sup>th</sup> March 2007

Date of last inspection: April 10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> 1997.

School's Unique reference number: 107537

Headteacher: Miss S. Dawson

SIAS Inspector: Mrs. L. Alvy NS 170

#### **School context**

Norland is much smaller than most primary schools and serves the local rural area with most pupils coming from the local village. No pupils are from minority ethnic groups and there are no pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school has Investors In People status, Healthy Schools Award and Basic Skills Quality Mark.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Norland as a Church of England school is good.**

It has significant strengths in the children's high standards of care for each other and its strong partnership with the church and the community.

#### **Established strengths**

- Relationships between staff and children that result in children's high levels of personal fulfilment.
- A caring, supportive and inclusive environment that encourages Christian values and principles very effectively.
- A vibrant church school at the heart of its community.

#### **Focus for development**

- In partnership with governors develop self evaluation strategies to ensure the continued success and growth of the Christian foundation of the school.
- Seek ways to increase the outward display and celebration of the good partnership between school, church and community.
- Involve children, parents and governors in the evaluation of acts of worship in order to increase understanding of its impact on the learners.

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

Norland is a popular church school and its children are very good ambassadors at articulating why this is so. Because it is a small school children feel they get to know each other better. They enjoy the many sporting activities provided; fund raising events and the close association with the local church for instance. Older children care for younger children spontaneously. They talk with maturity and insight about 'helping new children to settle in' and how they resolve any differences with the guidance of caring adults. Children trust the adults implicitly and relationships and

behaviour are very good as a result. A caring Christian ethos and values rooted strongly in Christian principles support the school's robust commitment to developing every child. Children achieve high standards both academic and personal as a result. As one child so succinctly put it 'we practise hard, we want to do good things for the school but also for ourselves'. Plentiful opportunities in Collective Worship, Religious Education and Personal, Health, Social and Citizenship Education are used to help children reflect on the important questions of life so nurturing their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively. Recent initiatives have broadened and deepened children's tolerance and understanding of other faith communities. A culture of fund raising and participation in church and community functions links well with planned themes and events in school. Children working and playing together respectfully is a reflection of this partnership. There is a real sense therefore that the school and the church are at the heart of the community. Praise and celebration of children's many talents are embraced joyfully during Achievement Assembly. Acceptability of individual worth both academic and personal is seen in their spontaneous applause as children receive their awards. Membership of the School Council is providing a useful vehicle for children's voices to be heard. In the same way parents and carers through recent questionnaires show high levels of satisfaction and confidence in the school. The school has a good reputation in the community for meeting children's needs well as a result.

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

A daily act of worship is rigorously planned and children's attitudes to worship are very positive. Carefully crafted worship means children have opportunities to be involved, to reflect quietly in prayer and also to ask questions about the Christian faith and the faith of others. There is also a strong fellowship between church and school fostered effectively through the partnership with the vicar who is a regular and much valued visitor to the school. This provides additional effective opportunities for children to explore the Christian faith. 'Bringing acts of worship into real life so that they are practical and make sense to the children' was one way that a parent so aptly described it. Discussions with older children demonstrated a mature understanding of being part of a church school, their enjoyment and attendance at church worship and their celebration of major Christian festivals. Children respond with due reverence and sensitivity on these occasions. There are no formal mechanisms by which to explore their personal response to worship or to monitor its quality or impact more fully.

### **The leadership and management of the school as a church school are good.**

Staff and governors are proud of the school's church status and the pivotal role it plays within the community. This has been guarded carefully through a period of change. The advent of a new Headteacher has brought a fresh impetus and new energy into the school. Strengths such as care for children, high standards of work and behaviour, effective relationships and the promotion of inclusion continue to be at the heart of the schools' Anglican tradition. Children and parents are given 'a voice' through regular consultation. The creation of a new school hall has had a major impact on school life as well as providing a dedicated space to worship. It provides a shared facility for other organisations and joint church, community and school activities. Children and parents embrace these events wholeheartedly because the school alongside the church has a strong sense of its service to the whole community. Foundation governors take a strong lead in this. The Headteacher through accurate school self-evaluation recognises and celebrates the strength of the partnership between school, church and community. Governors are now poised to extend their monitoring role to sustain these many strengths whilst ensuring further growth as an effective and distinctive church school.