

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

North Nibley Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

The Street,
North Nibley,
Dursley
GL11 8DL

Diocese of Gloucester

Gloucestershire LA

Date of inspection: 7 May 2009

Date of last inspection: 4 November 2005

School's URN: 115695

Name of Headteacher: Barbara Freeman

Inspector: Amanda Swift, NS 354

Context

North Nibley is a smaller than average primary school, drawing most of its pupils from a rural community. Pupils start school with broadly average attainment and skills. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is below the national average and almost all are of White British heritage.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of North Nibley Primary as a Church of England school are good.

North Nibley School has established effective links with the local church and extends this practice to another church group in the community. There is an agreed Christian vision which is evident in all aspects of school life. The Anglican vision provided through strategic leadership is well thought through and underpins decision making at North Nibley. Although the school has begun a journey of self-evaluation, the impact of this is inconsistent and leaders are not yet fully aware of the school's strengths and areas for development. The governors challenge is to develop the distinctiveness of the school in the future and improve provision with support and guidance from the Diocese.

Established strengths

- Because children are nurtured with care and support from all staff, their personal development is excellent. The majority of pupils display maturity, independence and feel valued and special.
- The Christian ethos is solidly grounded in core values, such as Respect. These shared values help everyone to feel a sense of belonging in the school family.
- Because the school strives to work in partnership with parents; listening to their views and valuing their contribution, the pupils flourish.
- There are strong and effective links with the church and community.

Focus for development

- Prioritise the development of RE:
 - Develop a teacher assessment system beyond pupil's RE knowledge extending to assessment of skills and understanding in RE.
 - Analyse pupil outcomes in RE identifying strengths and weaknesses in both attainment and achievement.
 - Develop assessment for learning in RE to ensure that feedback to children is focussed upon the RE learning intention and that children are helped to understand the next step in their learning.
- Leaders and managers to evaluate effectively identifying key areas for development. For example, the toolkit needs to be a document of strengths and weaknesses rather than descriptive evidence, the SDP a concise working document of key priorities.

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

Children, parents, staff and governors share the school's Christian vision and speak highly of the advantages provided by school's Christian character. For example, parents talk of the strong church links, the positive atmosphere in school, the high expectations and the care for the whole family. Spiritual development is distinctive and the school successfully identifies opportunities for promoting this across the curriculum. The school council is outstanding and provides a voice for the pupils in addition to creating opportunities for them to demonstrate independence and instigate change. The school environment is distinctive providing areas of reflection for pupils, these were observed to be used to good effect by pupils. The strategic leaders have conducted some evaluation processes but these are yet to show significant positive impact. Governors will need to consider their impact upon the school and how they can drive Church School improvement forward.

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

Worship at North Nibley is a reverent and important time. The pupils benefit from a range of worship leaders during the course of a week and most enjoy this special time of day. One pupil reports, 'I look forward to it, it is a nice time, a special time with everyone together'. The impact of worship is less successful where pupils are not involved and the school could develop the way worship is planned to include the pupils at the planning stage. Open The Book has a particularly positive impact upon pupils' attitudes to worship because the children enjoy the active participation. The older pupils demonstrate a strong ability to reflect and explore spirituality in addition to their learning about the Anglican faith. Parents enjoy the family services and enjoy attending Friday worship at school. In order to improve further the strategic leaders may reflect on differentiation during worship and how the needs of all the pupils are met during whole school worship.

Religious education is satisfactory at North Nibley School.

Standards in RE are satisfactory. Most pupils make expected progress by the end of the key stage. The curriculum model is one of coverage at present and the school recognises that standards could be higher if greater continuity and focus upon skill and understanding was provided. The more able pupils could make better progress if challenged. Planning and assessment do not always provide sufficient differentiation to meet the needs of all the learners. For example, whilst some of the teaching observed was good, there was limited evidence of teachers extending pupils' thinking in some lessons. This suggests that teachers would benefit from further professional development and peer coaching to enhance their skill and confidence. Pupils would benefit from target setting and related feedback to help them make better progress. Pupil's work is generally of good quality and RE is regarded as important to the school and governors. Pupil's views on RE are inconsistent and whilst some enjoy RE lessons, others feel the curriculum is too repetitive and involves too much passive listening.

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

The school has developed some effective evaluation processes. Whilst these systems are evolving, they are not yet demonstrating a positive significant impact or integration with school development planning. For example, observations do not necessarily lead to improvements and tend to describe what has been observed rather than evaluate its impact. The toolkit has been rigorously completed and the key areas for development will now need to be extracted very clearly and actions planned. The foundation governors play a pivotal role in encouraging and affirming the Anglican faith in the school. The leadership of RE and collective worship as key areas in a Church school, are unevenly distributed and this has led to a degree of overburdening for the Headteacher. In order to improve the governors could consider the allocation of roles and responsibilities. The strong church links, community ethos, parental support and pupil motivation form a powerful foundation for the school to build on and with diocesan help it is well placed to make further excellent progress.