

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Norton Fitzwarren Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Blackdown View,
Norton Fitzwarren,
Taunton
TA2 6TB

Diocese: Bath and Wells

Local authority: Somerset

Dates of inspection: 20th April 2007

Date of last inspection: June 2005

School's unique reference number: 123789

Headteacher: Richard Llewelyn

Inspector's name and number: Jacqueline Waters-Dewhurst 80

School context

The school serves a mixed community including families from the local military base, therefore many pupils join and leave the school at various times during their primary years. The vast majority of children are from white British backgrounds and very few have English as an additional language. Only a few pupils are eligible for free school meals. The school has recently been removed from an Ofsted category.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of the school as a Church of England school are satisfactory.

There is an obvious warmth throughout the school which comes from the love and respect shown to and by all the school community. There are close ties between the church and school. Following a period working to come out of special measures and with the appointment of a new head the school is now in a position rapidly to develop its Christian ethos and make more explicit its Christian values and attitudes.

Established strengths

- All of the school community, pupils and staff, are caring and supportive of each other.
- The partnership and shared vision of the head and vicar are strong and dynamic
- The head models the values and practice of the Christian faith that underpin the church school ethos
- The toolkit has been used to write an action plan to develop the school's church school distinctiveness which will, next year, feed in to the school's SDP

Focus for development

- Embed the school's church status in all policies, especially the behaviour policy and in the prospectus
- Share, display and use the school's Christian vision and values with all members of the school community
- Explain to children the role and significance of Collective Worship and enable them to reflect on and articulate this
- Share with the school community the vision that the head and vicar are forming of the school as a church school and allow others to participate in this process and understanding

The school through its distinctive character is satisfactory at meeting the needs of all its learners.

Whilst satisfactory at present, the school has the capacity to rapidly improve its Christian distinctiveness. Children understand their spiritual needs and are given opportunity to be calm. Initiatives such as forest school, nurture groups, reflection areas in each classroom

and a trained programme of peer massage within classes have raised self esteem. Children are supportive and considerate towards those who have difficulties or differences and look after and support both staff and pupils, e.g. Year 3 are especially thoughtful towards the individual needs of both staff and peers. All pupils are excellent at including and accepting those children joining the school from the local military base. Pupils are trusted around the school grounds and the observed RE lesson demonstrated the atmosphere of mutual trust between staff and pupils. Lessons are well differentiated and the academic needs of all pupils are met both within the curriculum and in all other areas of the school. The school now needs to ensure that the Christian values that are implicit throughout the school are made more explicit in a variety of ways.

Collective Worship makes a satisfactory impact on the life of the school.

The Collective Worship observed showed pupils to be attentive and enthusiastic. They were willing to answer questions, sit quietly and reverently and use responses appropriately. Year 6 pupils were able to lead the singing and actions for the whole school. The vicar has built up an excellent relationship with the pupils which was evident in their responses to him when he leads worship and at other times. Monitoring of acts of worship has started and this now needs to become regular practice. Pupils end the morning session with grace said in their classrooms prior to lunch. Year 4 has a 'Thought for the Day'. The church is used for some services and again there are plans to increase this. In order for the impact of the collective worship to be judged as good, work needs doing with pupils to ensure that they understand the importance and reasons for it within the school.

The leadership and management of the school as a church school are satisfactory with some aspects being good.

The newly appointed head has a strong vision for the school which is shared by the vicar. He is well respected and staff have found him to be approachable and encouraging. There is a good knowledge of key issues facing the school and the schools self evaluation is sound. The head has ensured that every member of the school community feels valued. Religious Education benefits from having an RE specialist as coordinator. Governors are keen to support the school and are supportive of its church foundation, but as yet have minimal understanding of the difference this makes to the running of the school. The head is keen for the school to develop a more overt attitude to its Christian foundation and this would be aided by sharing this vision with the school community. Inset for staff looking at church school distinctiveness and collective worship, newsletters to parents containing information on church school status and training for governors in church school distinctiveness are necessary to ensure that all stakeholders understand and work to enhance further Norton Fitzwarren's distinctiveness as a church school.