

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### **Norton Juxta Kempsey Voluntary Controlled Church of England First School**

Wadborough Road  
Littleworth  
Worcester  
WR5 2QJ

#### **Diocese: Worcester**

Local authority: Worcestershire

Dates of inspection: 8<sup>th</sup> March, 2007

Date of last inspection: 29<sup>th</sup> Jan 2003 – 3<sup>rd</sup> February, 2003

School's unique reference number: 116834

Acting Head Teacher: Mrs J Dean

Inspector's name and number: Mrs Ann Capell 197

#### **School context**

Norton is a rural first school for 172 pupils aged 4-9 close to the City of Worcester serving, in the main, the villages of Norton and Littleworth. It has a small number of pupils with special needs. The number of minority ethnic pupils is very low. The school has recently experienced staffing difficulties including the long term absence of the Head Teacher. The school has been led by the Deputy Head Teacher since September.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Norton Juxta Kempsey First School as a Church of England school are satisfactory.**

Norton is a happy school where learners feel safe and valued and where their concerns are being acted upon. There is an emerging awareness of the school's foundation as a Church School and Governors and Staff are keen to promote the Christian status. Prayer has begun to form an important facet of the school and provides an excellent way of confirming the Christian basis of school life. However there is not yet a clear, shared understanding of the significance of the church school status or how this might enhance the spiritual development of the learners. The school's self-evaluation is not yet totally secure.

#### **Established strengths**

- Positive, articulate, well behaved learners who enjoy school and feel safe and happy.
- The good relationships between learners and with their teachers.
- The care which all members of the community show towards each other.
- The commitment of the Acting Head Teacher, Governors and Staff to take the school forward.

#### **Focus for development**

- Place greater emphasis on the Christian character of the school with regard to the school environment and the encouragement of learners' spiritual development.
- Involve the learners in the planning and leading of some worship making use of a greater range of active styles and resources.
- Provide opportunities for learners to give their views about worship.

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

Many aspects of this area are in place or emerging: learners enjoy school and can articulate their views enthusiastically. The school provides a wide range of extra curricular activities and external visits which are carefully co-ordinated. Relationships are good, one boy stating

categorically: "There isn't any bullying, we just apologise." Although there is no formal school council learners feel their concerns are met and their views taken account of. They are able to illustrate changes in the school as a result of their requests. Communication with parents/carers has recently improved and most find the school a welcoming place where their concerns are sympathetically and promptly dealt with. Less clear is the link between these positive aspects of the school and its Christian foundation. Learners are beginning to talk confidently about prayer and worship. The introduction of a prayer tree is being enthusiastically supported by learners. There is not yet a clear sense of the learners' spiritual development. R.E. has a low profile within the school and plans for the revision of the scheme of work have not yet been implemented. The school environment limits support for learners' spiritual development. While the hall has some evidence of Christian worship, little evidence exists in the classrooms or other areas of the school or in displays, of the school's Christian foundation. The school has a link with a Ugandan school but there is yet little visual evidence to support this or other aspects of the worldwide church.

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

There is a daily act of whole school collective worship. Learners respond well speaking particularly of enjoying the praise worship when they can practise their enthusiastic singing. A recent revision of worship themes, linked to those of the parish church is working well. New resources have been purchased which will enhance the worship experience when put into full use. Some prayers and responses from the Anglican tradition are now also included. Local clergy take services on a regular basis adding to the richness and variety of the learners' experience. A governor has recently evaluated worship but this evaluation is at too early a stage to analyse fully the impact of worship on the learners. Learners enjoy times when they can take an active part in worship but use is not always made of opportunities for learners to participate fully through drama, prayer and music or to contribute to the planning of worship. There is no formal system for evaluating learners' views about worship. The environment for worship does not make sufficient use of symbols and music to enhance times of reflection and the spiritual development of the learners. Documentation does not indicate the centrality of worship to the school. Some services take place to which parents/carers are invited in the village hall.

### **The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school is satisfactory**

The school is emerging from a difficult period with the long-term absence of the Head Teacher. However the Acting Head is beginning to have an impact on the direction of the school, positively supported by Governors. There is a genuine desire to enhance the Church School status. Prayer is included at the start of each governors meeting but there is no regular review of the Church School Status. Documentation is at present undergoing review in the light of the school's church foundation. Closer links with the parish church are hampered by the size of the active congregation and the state of the church building. However extensive building work and the enhancement of church facilities will enable more practical links to be forged in the future giving opportunities for parents/carers to participate in church services. The school has supported the church in its fund raising efforts. Learners have been involved with some Diocesan events in the cathedral. Help and advice has now been sought and provided from the Diocese.