

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Norton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Old Tewksbury Road,
Norton,
Gloucester,
GL2 9LJ.

Diocese of Gloucester

Gloucestershire LA

Date of inspection Monday 18th December, 2006

Date of last inspection: 19th April 2002

School's URN: 115642

Name of Headteacher: Mrs Tonwen Empson

Inspector: Dr Alison Primrose, NS225

Context

This small, rural primary school of 105 pupils is on the outskirts of Gloucester. It serves the surrounding area of Norton, which is mainly private housing. The school provides for children from a nearby Travellers' site and an RAF station, so pupil mobility is high. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is low. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is average.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Norton as a Church of England school are good

This good Church of England school has strong links with the local church and community, with pupils benefiting from, contributing to and receiving from, the local community. Through its caring, Christian ethos the school makes outstanding provision for all its learners, with systems and practices in place that promote inclusion and high standards for all. It has strong and effective leadership and management. Relationships throughout the school are very good and the pupils feel special and valued. Their behaviour around the school is very good, with older pupils taking on positions of responsibility. The school environment is well managed and planned, providing well for different age groups and the diverse needs of the pupils.

Established strengths

- The school has very effective procedures in place to ensure that all learners, from whatever background, or whatever their need, are included and well provided for.
- The pupils make very good progress in their personal, social and moral development as a result of the school's proactive and positive approach to PSHE and the education of the whole child.
- There are strong links with the local community. A range of different people visit and support the school on a regular basis and community resources are shared effectively, to the benefit of all.

Focus for development

- Aspects of collective worship to reflect the school's Anglican foundation and enrich pupil' spiritual development.
- The development of a more critical evaluation of the school's distinctive Christian contribution and character, and its effectiveness as a church school.

The school, through its distinctive Christian character, makes outstanding provision for the needs of all learners

The school, through its distinctive Christian character makes excellent provision for the needs of all learners. Learners from all groups are valued and their needs are met very well. The cultural traditions of minority groups are shared, and all pupils feel that they have a special place within the school community, demonstrated visually by the jar of pebbles, which the children were proud to explain. The needs of pupils with specific learning difficulties are considered carefully and appropriate support is put in place to meet them. The pupils' behaviour around the school is very good, with older pupils taking on various responsibilities such as the organising and running of lunchtime clubs for other children. Children from both key stages are elected as representatives for the School Council, which actively addresses whole school issues such as various healthy school initiatives. Pupils are expected to be polite and considerate, and there is a range of strategies in place to promote and reward consideration, kindness and courtesy, such as house points, merit certificates and praise notes home. Individual academic attainment is carefully monitored and work is planned to ensure that all can succeed and achieve success. Achievements are celebrated in weekly merit assemblies, to which parents are invited, a few of whom are able to attend regularly.

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

Collective Worship in the school has a good impact on the pupils and they value various opportunities to participate. The weekly contribution made by the 'Open the Book' team from the church is particularly enjoyed by the children and makes a positive contribution to their knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith. Times of collective worship are also used to promote whole school values and address social matters and behaviour, which has a very positive impact on the pupils' behaviour and general school ethos. The weekly pattern provides some variety in style and leadership through the week, with occasional opportunities for class led worship. The pupils are proud of the recognition given to their achievements in assemblies and see collective worship as an important time to discuss and reinforce the school's commitment to the Golden Rules. Times of collective worship include singing and quiet reflection or prayer, though the value of this aspect is less recognised by the pupils. Christian festivals are celebrated in the church and these times are valued. They make a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual development. Collective worship has a positive impact on the school community and contributes to its coherence and Christian ethos.

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

The school leadership team works hard to develop and maintain close links with the parish church, and school news is shared in the Parish magazine. One Foundation Governor makes a valuable contribution regularly playing the piano for collective worship in school. This contribution, along with the 'Open the Book' initiative and church visits, contributes to the school church link and the pupils' appreciation of it. The leadership team feel well supported and challenged by the governors. Teaching and non-teaching staff work effectively together to create a strong team, with shared values and expectations. This consistency makes an important contribution to the school's effective behaviour policy. There are good systems in place for monitoring academic work and pupil progress. The systems for evaluating the effectiveness of the school as a church school, with its associated distinctive characteristics, are less well developed. The opinions of parents and pupils are sought through questionnaires, and a weekly newsletter to all parents contributes to effective communication between home and school. Parents are appreciative of the school's efforts to meet the needs of their children and value its positive atmosphere and approachable, caring staff.