

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Oldswinford Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School,

Field Lane,
Stourbridge,
West Midlands
DY8 2JQ

Diocese: Worcester

LA: Dudley

Date of inspection: 18th December 2006

Date of last inspection: June 2002

School's Unique reference number: 103839

Name of Headteacher: Mr S Pepper

Inspector's name & National Society number: Alan Brown No. 256

Context of the school

Oldswinford is a Voluntary Controlled Primary School with 385 pupils on roll. The School has a supportive PTA; the Incumbent is a regular visitor to the School; and the pupils visit the local church on various occasions during the year. There is an outstanding, tactile mural of Noah's Ark along one of the corridors. It is a symbol of the energy and vision within the School. The School has an outstanding website.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Oldswinford as a Church of England school are outstanding

The Christian character of the School is apparent with Christian signs, symbols and prayers in classrooms and on walls. The School is committed to promoting Christian values and the importance of collective worship and to the spiritual development of the pupils. There are strong links with the local Church and the leadership is visionary and enthusiastic.

Established strengths

- The School is committed to collective worship and to the personal development of the pupils;
- The strong and enthusiastic leadership of the Head Teacher;
- The excellent links between Church and School;
- The broad Christian values that underpin the School.

Focus for development

- To create a symbol recognising the Christian character of the School that is visible on entry.

The impact of the distinctive Christian character of the school in meeting the needs of learners is outstanding

The School's character is openly and distinctively Christian ensuring provision is made to meet the spiritual, personal and emotional needs of all its pupils. One outstanding feature is the relationship between staff and between staff and pupils. The Incumbent and the Head Teacher share a view of the School that it should be place where to have a faith is a 'normal' activity and has a seminal part to play in the education of pupils. They are particularly thoughtful, encouraging and articulate about the Christian character of the School and the importance of it in the lives of their pupils. The pupils themselves are enthusiastic about the School; they like the friendly atmosphere and the way in which it is easy to make and retain friendships. They like and appreciate their teachers and the way in which they are taught. They recognise how hard teachers work in order to make learning a positive experience which,

'makes learning enjoyable'. One pupil felt the School had prepared her and her friends for the next stage of their educational journey through encouraging and developing an independence of thought and maturity when she said that the School 'helps you get ready for leaving'. Pupils are aware that Oldswinford is a Church school and enjoy those aspects of a church school that play a part in their school and spiritual experience with several, at both Key Stages, commenting on how much they enjoyed collective worship and how they liked visiting the Church. Pupils are well behaved, thoughtful and speak with enthusiasm about Oldswinford. The School provides pupils with a solid foundation for understanding the Christian life and the importance of belief, values and worship. The excellent links with the Parish Church through the Foundation Governors and the Incumbent are a strength of the School

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Worship in Oldswinford School is very good indeed as exemplified by record keeping; the quality of planning; the various opportunities for worship; and thoughtful, carefully prepared acts of daily collective worship. The important contribution of the clergy to the School and the pupils' experience of worship are difficult to overstate. It is not simply the content of what they offer but their presence and approachability. The pupils commented on how much they enjoyed their input. Pupils say and learn prayers and there is a School prayer which is found in most classrooms. Those organising and leading worship are sensitive to the reality that as most of the pupils do not attend Church, nor will do so after they have left, they need to be made aware of the spiritual opportunities that worship, in every sense, can offer. The major festivals of the Christian year are celebrated in a lively manner and are appropriate for the age range of the pupils; they enjoy worship and sing well. Collective worship is based on broad Christian beliefs and values while remaining inclusive, open-minded and appropriate for all: for such is the open and inclusive nature of the School. There are excellent links with the Parish Church with worship taking place there on a regular basis. Worship in Oldswinford School is a focal point for the pupils' spiritual and moral experiences which find further expression in their concern for others, their behaviour and the excellent displays on the walls in common areas and classrooms. No pupils are withdrawn from collective worship.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school is outstanding

The Governing Body, the Head Teacher and the senior leadership team work in close partnership. The School has a continuously developing vision of what it means to be a church school in their particular community, serving the spiritual, moral, social and other personal needs of the pupils. The leadership of Oldswinford has energy, enthusiasm, and an educational vision of what a Church school should offer its pupils and staff. This, with the full support of the Governing Body and the Incumbent, has created a purposeful and caring environment which is reflected in the welcoming nature of the School. Pupils can grow knowing their concerns will be listened to with professional and personal sympathy. 'There is always someone who has time to listen to you', said one pupil. The management of the School is sensitive to the situation from which pupils come and does outstandingly well to create a school community based on the Christian values of loving God, one's neighbour and oneself in a caring, sharing environment. Pupils speak warmly of these values, though perhaps not in these words, for these values are outstanding features of this School.