

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Orsett Church Of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

School Lane,
Orsett,
Grays
Essex,
RM16 3JR

Diocese: Chelmsford

Local authority: Thurrock
Date of inspection: 5th June 2007
Date of last inspection: 28th / 29th January 2003
School's unique reference number: 115171
Headteacher: Miss Frances Cooper
Inspector's name and number: Andrew Binnell .

School context

Orsett is a village primary school with 208 pupils on roll. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is low. The present Headteacher began at the school in September 2005. She has created an effective leadership team with a clear vision for both Religious Education and Collective Worship which is encompassed in an effective School Development Plan.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Orsett as a Church of England school is satisfactory

The school has a clear capacity to develop as a school with a distinctive Christian character. This journey will be aided by the effective school evaluation of its current position which is highly accurate and in line with the findings of this inspection.

Established Strengths

- The clear vision of the Headteacher, the Senior Leadership Team, and Governors, for the future development of the school as a Christian school
- The good, and in some cases outstanding teaching of Religious Education (RE)
- The effective use of the parish church of St Giles and All Saints
- The care and concern for pupils provided by the staff team
- Pupils' behaviour, care and concern for others.

Focus for development

- To continue to develop the Christian ethos of the school so that it is at the centre of all that it does.
- Pupil perceptions of collective worship are currently not sought and so do not inform future planning.
- Fully implement the scheme of work for RE and produce clear planning and assessment approaches to meet the needs of all learners.
- Support spiritual development through the provision of a focal point away from the demands of everyday school life.

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

The school makes satisfactory provision to meet the needs of all its learners. The school is strengthening its sense of Christian identity and this is clearly having an impact on the pupils. The staff team consistently promote pupils' self esteem and the whole school recognises the importance of this. Adults act as positive role models for expected behaviours. The school council meet regularly and have an important voice in the school. The group's views could be sought more effectively on the provision of collective worship across the school.

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

School worship is satisfactory. It has a secure place in the life of the school. It is well planned and reflects Christian celebrations across the school year. Pupils experience a variety of worship over the course of the school week. They understand these arrangements and generally enjoy all that is provided.

One act of worship was observed. This was led by the Headteacher and took the theme of 'looking after our environment'. The pupils responded well to the open questions asked. ICT was utilised to good effect with a range of images projected which contributed greatly to the pupils' understanding. Singing was outstanding. Pupils were given the opportunity to come up with ideas with the person next to them which led to positive engagement and again added to their feeling of involvement in their assembly. Prayers were led by a pupil, and everyone was given the opportunity to reflect. As they left the hall, pupils again enjoyed the opportunity to sing and most had a smile on their face !

Pupils particularly enjoy it when drama is used to support the assembly; and generally when they are encouraged to actively participate.

The parish church is used in a highly effective way to support school worship and as a resource to support learning.

The school's own self evaluation has highlighted the need to support further the spiritual development of staff and pupils. They have identified the need for the provision of a focal point away from the demands of everyday school life. This would be encouraged.

The effectiveness of the religious education (RE) is satisfactory .

Religious Education (RE) is now being given higher priority in the school. A recent innovation, reflecting this greater profile has been the creation of RE themed Weeks. One took place in March 2007. During this week pupils explored the festival of Easter from Lent through to Holy Week. Special assemblies took place, liturgical colours explored and a range of craft activities were enjoyed. This followed a successful theme week to celebrate Christmas.

Pupils spoke of their great enjoyment for these themed weeks.

The teaching of RE is good and in some cases outstanding. Children achieve well, and have generally positive attitudes. The subject knowledge of pupils in Year two was particularly good

There is a clear policy and a scheme of work being implemented

There is an RE subject leader and clear plans for the future are outlined in the School Development Plan. These plans include the development of assessment approaches, including next step marking and the tracking of pupil progress. Also identified is the need for clear planning procedures to be implemented.

The school is well placed to achieve these aspirations.

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

The Headteacher provides effective leadership. She is well supported by the Senior Leadership Team. Good links have been developed with the other two schools in the Benefice with, for example, a common RE scheme of work being used in all three schools. Though rigorous school self evaluation is currently in its early stages, the Headteacher has a clear picture about the school's current position. School improvement planning is now beginning to reflect the school's Christian status

The Headteacher works closely with the vicar in planning worship both in school and in the parish church. This enhances the Christian dimension of the school.

The Governors are very supportive of their church school. The school is now well placed to move forward at a pace.