

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### Overbury Voluntary Controlled Church of England First School

Overbury  
Tewkesbury  
Gloucestershire  
GL20 7NT

**Diocese: Worcester**

LA: Worcestershire

Dates of Inspection: 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2007

Date of Last Inspection: 21.2.02

Schools Unique reference number: 116837

Head teacher: Ms Pernilla Pascolutti

Inspector's name and number: Mrs Susan Helps 300

#### School context

Overbury Church of England First School is a very popular Voluntary Controlled village school situated on the Overbury estate. The newly appointed head teacher leads an enthusiastic team. Fifty four pupils are organised into three mixed age classes, one of the classrooms has to double up as the 'gathering place' for collective worship. The building has been sensitively modernised and extended but retains the intimacy of a 'Victorian' small school with an outdoor environment that is used extensively. Overbury is an intimate school, that is 'bursting' with displays that illustrate the whole school community's commitment to its Christian character and its place at the centre of village life.

#### Summary Judgement

##### Overbury is an outstanding school.

The school has a caring ethos where 'Every Child Matters' and where the values of respect, compassion and forgiveness are developed in a well-disciplined environment. The curriculum capitalises on cross curricula links that ensure learning is 'fun' and that the school's distinctive Christian character pervades all lessons. The whole staff manage behaviour in a very positive way with the emphasis on boosting self esteem, affirming all achievements and ensuring everyone feels 'special'. Relationships are outstanding both among the children, between the children and staff, the staff and governors and the parish priest, who is herself one of the two foundation governors. All stakeholders are actively encouraged to become involved in the life and development of the school community. Throughout the school a variety symbols and artefacts proclaim the school's Anglican tradition. There is an excellent relationship between the head teacher and the parish priest, where their shared vision for the enrichment of the school's Christian character is imaginative and enthusiastic. The school supports many charities, embraces cultures beyond the school and celebrates the diversity of other faiths. The school's self evaluation is very secure and proactive.

#### Established strengths

- The outstanding quality of relationships between all those connected with the school, the exemplary behaviour of the children and the care and support shown across the school community;
- The curriculum where ICT and the arts are used creatively to link Religious Education, Personal, Social, Health Education, and Spiritual, Moral and Cultural Education;
- The leadership of the head teacher and the support she receives from the staff, parish priest, governors and parents in developing her vision of a 'Christian' school that celebrates its place at the 'heart' of the village.
- Collective worship where a spiritual depth is achieved by children across all ages.

#### Focus for development

- Build on and consolidate the support being given to the school by the Diocese for R.E;
- Draw in more of the local church community to support the parish priest and the staff team in balancing the challenges of nurturing the children's spiritual development and educating them for the 21<sup>st</sup> century with a limited budget and minimal facilities.

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

Youngsters feel safe, secure and affirmed in an environment where their 'God given' gifts are celebrated. Learners 'love' their school and talk positively about their teachers. They are enthusiastic in talking about the many and varied experiences they have at school both in lessons and after school i.e. trips out of school to Gloucester mosque. Parents spoke of the support given to their children in achieving their full potential and in being started on a journey to develop a moral code based on Christian values. Many of the children had identified responsibilities i.e. volunteering to be playground mediators, monitoring 'healthy choices' in lunch boxes etc. The school environment both inside and out, is outstanding and reflects a love of 'Gods' world i.e. children proudly showing me around their wildlife area. All classrooms, corridors and shared areas have displays reflecting work on a variety of world faiths and R.E topics. Christian symbols such as a praying angel, crosses and photographs of the local church are located in different areas of the school and as the focus for worship. Children understood the purpose of prayer i.e. a year 5 child said she liked to pray as it helped her to feel peaceful. Parents trust the staff and they value the support given to them with personal issues. The school supports charities such as the Red Nose appeal. The school has attended Diocesan events such as 'J.C. Today', links to Family Services at the local church and the parish priest is building an understanding among the children of the Eucharist, which will lead to this service becoming a regular feature of school worship. Close links with the parish Church ensures all the children attend services there with some children being confirmed in church.

**The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding.**

Worship is regarded positively by all learners despite limited space. Worship is planned around themes that are broadly Christian, but also include other world faiths. The structure of worship is understood and this generates an atmosphere of peace and tranquillity. The influence of the parish priest on the content and quality of Collective Worship is outstanding. Children clearly enjoy coming together i.e. enthusiastically answering questions. Music is used effectively to create an atmosphere of calm with the children singing beautifully hymns that they obviously enjoy. The area of the classroom used for worship was attractively arranged with a cross; candle and themed display and children of all ages led into the 'tiny' space effortlessly, silently and ready to listen. This was impressive! The children were very keen to contribute to the worship i.e. reading the Lords Prayer from a specially laminated bookmark. A very 'powerful' silence was sustained considering the age of the children, with reception children and children with significant special educational needs showing an understanding of the importance of this quiet reflection. When asked why the school had assemblies members of the School Council were clear in their responses i.e. 'We listen to stories about Jesus, 'We sing and pray'. The school regularly uses the local church, i.e. Harvest Festival linked to the schools drive to become a Healthy School, celebrating the main Christian Festivals and parents were very enthusiastic in their praise for these occasions.

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

The head teacher, parish priest and governors strongly support the Christian ethos of the school. The views of all stakeholders are sought regularly i.e. questionnaires to parents and School Council meetings with direct action resulting from this consultation. All school documentation, the school website and policies promote the school Christian status and the head teacher pulls together many facets of school life together as both R.E. and Collective Worship subject leader and PSHE subject leader. Her rigorous self evaluation supported by the staff and parish priest has led to exciting new initiatives being very quickly developed and implemented. The quality of the Self Evaluation Toolkit is both detailed and very reflective. All staff lead worship and school based INSET has included inset on worship, a review of the R.E. Curriculum Godly play INSET is planned for September 2007. The staff team work very closely together to steer the school on a 'Christian path'. The leadership of the head teacher is central to the collaborative approach that achieves such high standards in this small but highly effective team. All the staff provide excellent Christian role models for learners and the close relationships they have enrich the school and the village community.