

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Pilton, The Bluecoat Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior School

Abbey Road
Pilton
Barnstaple
EX31 1JU

Diocese: Exeter

Local authority: Devon

Dates of inspection: 23rd January 2007

Date of last inspection: 18-20 February 2003

School's unique reference number: 113447

Headteacher: Mr Paul Mulligan

Inspector's name and number: Mr Roger Guest No 206

School context

Pilton, the Bluecoat, Church of England School is a junior school with 257 pupils on roll. The vast majority of pupils are of white British origin and are arranged in two parallel year group classes. The school has an increasing number of pupils with special educational needs. The present headteacher, appointed in September 2004 is providing the school with stability; resulting in improving standards.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Pilton the Bluecoat as a Church of England school are outstanding

The clear vision of the headteacher and the governing body of the school as a functioning, active Christian community is realised by a supportive staff and responsive pupils. This is proving extremely effective in enhancing the spiritual development of learners.

Established strengths

- The school's evaluation of itself is accurate, ongoing and developmental. This effectively ensures pupils are fully included and are offered the best possible provision.
- An outstanding Christian ethos develops a positive response to a Christian way of life in virtually all pupils.
- Well-planned and stimulating Acts of Worship are recorded and evaluated. They have meaning and relevance in pupils' day to day living.

Focus for development

- Use monitoring of teaching in religious education and assessment of pupils' understanding to ensure good practice is consistently applied to raise standards in religious education.
- To ensure the learning environment consistently reflects the outstanding nature of the school's Christian tradition and work.
- To place more emphasis on the pupils' understanding of the Anglican tradition within the Christian community.

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

Pupils are secure, happy and confident in the Christian atmosphere, which pervades the school. They are valued, enjoy their work and are expected to fulfil their potential. Pupils talk of "always trying to do their best". Peer mediation is used effectively to support others and to ensure high self esteem. Close links with the neighbouring infant school and with the nearby Special school have a very positive effect on pupils' attitudes to life and learning. Their need

for social, personal, moral and spiritual development is being fully met. All staff are involved in the development of the work of the school including the school's Christian values. Christian symbols around the school reinforce the ethos of the school. There is a noticeable lack of wall displays of pupils' work in Religious Education. Therefore pupils get few opportunities to evaluate each others work. This lessens the effect of the environment on supporting their spiritual development and their Religious Education.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Imaginative and exciting Acts of Worship foster the pupils' spiritual development and give them a real understanding of the joy of Worship, which they articulate in conversation. Worship is well planned, evaluated and recorded by many different leaders. The values, which are given to pupils in worship, they take with them in their day-to-day life in school. Pupils speak positively of their enthusiasm for worship, singing and prayer. Governors have an open invitation to attend worship. All staff participate fully in worship. Affirmation of the effect of this is evident in the whole school community. Pupils' personal and social development is strong as a result of their positive response to worship. Whilst worship is always distinctively Christian and offered on a daily basis, emphasis on a distinctively Anglican tradition is less evident. Pupils do not have the opportunity to witness a Eucharist.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

The school is providing good religious education, to which pupils respond well. The chosen syllabus for religious education is closely followed and adapted in a manner, which accounts for pupils' needs. Pupils reach expected standards, with good standards achieved in oral work. Standards of written work and art work in pupils' folders are good but lacking in quantity. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding in Religious Education. This is because the subject is well embedded in the school curriculum and the co-ordinator leads in a most effective manner. Pupils demonstrate knowledge of other faiths. However, whilst most aspects of Christianity are taught well, Anglican traditions within Christianity are insufficiently emphasised. Class teachers' good subject knowledge supports the pupils' learning in many cases. Monitoring of teaching and assessment in Religious Education are in their infancy.

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

All people with an interest in the school speak confidently about its Christian nature. This is because the headteacher and governing body clearly articulate their vision to promote Christian living. Effective links with the local Church community enhance this. The very good support of the religious education co-ordinator and the co-ordinator for the social and emotional aspects of learning contribute effectively to the distinctive leadership and management of this church school. In common with all staff, they have a commitment to further raise standards and share good practice to improve pupils' learning. Effective monitoring procedures of the school's work inform the school improvement plan. All staff speak positively about how well they are valued. As a team, they are fully involved in the development of the school. This results in good school self evaluation to which everyone is committed. Recruitment procedures, emphasising the school's Christian tradition are effective in ensuring the ethos of the school is consistently promoted. The school, which is already functioning as a Church school most effectively; is committed to further improvement. The exciting, recent, introduction of a Church/School liaison worker provides an example of this.