

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Pocklington Church of England Voluntary Controlled Infant School

Maxwell Road,
Pocklington,
East Riding of Yorkshire,
YO42 2HE

Diocese : York

Local Authority: East Riding of Yorkshire

Date of Inspection: 10th January 2007

Date of last inspection: May 2002

School's unique reference number: 117987

Headteacher: Mrs J. Sewell

S.I.A.S. Inspector: NS129 Mr. J.W. Bradley

School Context

Pocklington Infant School has 200 pupils on roll and is situated in an area of mostly private housing serving the whole of this East Yorkshire market town. All except one of the pupils is white British and this pupil speaks English as an additional language. The headteacher has been in post for fifteen years.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Pocklington Infant School as a Church of England School are outstanding.

It is immediately obvious from displays, welcoming signs, crosses and prayers that this is a school where Church School status is very important. This impression is confirmed by the outstanding relationships evident in the school and by the very close and meaningful links with its church. The style of leadership and management by Head and Governors is highly pro-active regarding an ethos based upon sound Christian principles.

Established strengths

- The caring relationships within the school.
- The commitment to its Christian ethos from Head, Chair and Clergy, supported by parents.
- The links with its church and the relationship with clergy and congregation.

Focus for development

- To fully develop the system of regular class worship in church.
- The proposed clergy consultation with staff regarding the significance of belonging to a Christian foundation to be extended to include Governors.

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

A stated aim of this school is to 'maintain a Christian ethos as part of everyday life'. It is clear that the co-operative working relationship between head and staff, assisted by a well run governing body plus a supportive church, are all working consistently to achieve this aim. Relationships throughout are outstanding and children say 'we like to help one another'. The school is attractive with Christian signs, symbols and prayers being very much part of the displays. Children are polite, behave very well and are welcoming to visitors. Particularly for an Infant School, they are well served by an enthusiastic School Council who say they want to make 'our school even better'. The teaching of Religious Education is important and is perceived as having an important effect upon whole school ethos. 'R.E. goes beyond the classroom' is the stated view of its effect upon relationships and working together. The subject is well used, through its subject matter, to re-inforce good behaviour and caring relationships. Parents, whose views are regularly sought, are very complimentary and supportive of the school, including its clear Christian ethos. More than one

parent stated that they thought it was good for the town that the children recognise the vicar and are happy to speak to him. Pupils in this school feel special and valued and it is the all-pervading Christian, caring atmosphere that is so beneficial to all pupils as part of their Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural education.

The impact of Collective Worship on the school community is outstanding.

Well planned and recorded worship is a very important daily event in the life of Pocklington Infants School. Worship is clearly Christian and this is achieved through a skilful combination of appropriate focal points, suitable music, good singing and prayer, plus a calm, reverential atmosphere. The children are very attentive, clearly enjoy the experience and are very willing to say so. The worship is led by a number of different individuals and groups from the church, thus enabling the children to experience a variety of approaches. Anglican aspects are well covered by following the church's year, by input from the clergy and the use of Church of England prayers. Regular services held in the nearby church are very well attended by parents and there are good plans in place to increase the number of visits, particularly for class worship. The well written worship policy makes appropriate reference to spiritual development, personal reflection and the fact that worship is vital in teaching children about their 'place' in God's world and universe. Regular evaluation of the impact of worship is undertaken by children, staff, clergy and governors. The impact of worship on the daily life at this school can clearly be observed in the caring family atmosphere created.

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

This is a school which clearly states its Christian commitment from the outset. It is made very clear in the brochure and other documentation and parents willingly state their support for this approach. There is a real sense of partnership between head, staff and governors at this school. They are all fully aware that they are responsible for a Church School and work hard towards realising their vision. The Foundation Governors, of which the Chair is one, are aware of their role and good ideas to increase this influence are becoming clearer. This applies particularly to proposed governor attendance at the meetings planned for staff to examine in detail the importance of a Church School. The headteacher is highly respected by governors and parents and this regard certainly includes her effect upon the clear Christian ethos evident in the school. Charitable giving and the needs of others are afforded a high profile, thus linking the care children are encouraged to give each other with the needs of the wider world. Parents are regularly asked for their views and are highly supportive of the school. The wider parish is very much aware of its school and is extremely supportive. The result of this outstanding collaborative work is that Pocklington Infants is a happy, caring, thriving and successful school where children really matter and Christianity is at its centre.