

**Yattendon Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School**

Yattendon  
Thatcham  
Berkshire  
RG18 0UR

**Diocese of Oxford**

West Berkshire LEA

SIAS inspection: 23 November 2005

Previous S23 inspection: W/c 12 October 1999

URN: 110026

Headteacher: Mr Mark Turnham

SIAS Inspector NS 104: Jo Fageant

**Summary Judgement**

Yattendon is a satisfactory Church school with good features. The Christian values on which it is built, along with its size, mean it provides a family ethos with which pupils, parents and staff are very happy.

**Established strengths**

- ☛ The school's care for all individuals driven by its underpinning Christian values
- ☛ The encouraging atmosphere created by the school in which pupils are enthusiastic about their learning
- ☛ The positive and supportive links the school has with the church
- ☛ The very positive impact collective worship has on learners within the school

**Focus for development**

- ☛ Planning in religious education needs to be more fully and consistently informed by statements found in the locally agreed syllabus about expectations of attainment to ensure pupils make appropriate progress
- ☛ Governors should be more involved in defining, monitoring and evaluating the Christian character of the school

**How well does the school, through its distinctive Christian character, meet all learners' needs?**

Through its distinctive Christian character the school makes satisfactory provision for the needs of all learners. The school's judgement that it makes satisfactory provision for the needs of all learners is largely accurate. Through the systems in place, pupils make at least satisfactory progress in those areas of the curriculum that are rigorously monitored but such a system has yet to be established within the new arrangements for religious education. As a result of its size as well as its Christian character, however, the school makes good provision for the well being and personal development of pupils. The school's mission statement expresses the intention that all pupils should thrive and enjoy their learning. It is evident that pupils enjoy attending Yattendon school and they speak with enthusiasm about their lessons. They appreciate opportunities for reflection provided in lessons and collective worship. They value the school council and what they have achieved through its processes. Good relationships are modelled by adults and exist between adults and children. Achievements are celebrated through assemblies and a 'golden book'. Pupils clearly appreciate the opportunities for recognition these afford. They enjoy the range of extra-curricular activities available to them and understand the benefits of the school trips they have been on. Parents are very appreciative of the attention given to their concerns and the speed and effectiveness with which teachers respond to them.

### **What is the impact of Collective Worship on the school community?**

Collective worship has a good impact on the school community. Acts of worship are well planned and leaders make good use of resources including those available on the internet. Collective worship is very well supported by the local vicar who is known to all members of the school community. He regularly leads worship in school and once a month, for the whole school community, in the church. Teachers and support staff attend and all teachers are involved in leading worship. As a consequence of this commitment and effort, pupils speak very positively about the experience and value of collective worship. They enjoy the variety offered by those who lead it and appreciate the opportunities it affords them for active participation as well as reflection and prayer. They are particularly enthusiastic about singing in worship.

There is a consistent focus on Christianity which pupils understand. However, they also speak, unprompted, about the value of those occasions when they encounter key features and celebrations of other faiths. Parents with varying standpoints of faith speak of feeling genuinely welcome and comfortable in the church services.

Although governors visit collective worship, there is room for a more organised approach to the evaluation of worship so the school can ensure the positive impact is sustained.

### **How effective is the Religious Education in the school?**

Religious Education is satisfactory. The present strategy for ensuring the continuing development of religious education is very new. Its great strength is that the co-ordinator is well placed within this system to ensure that all learners make appropriate progress and attain the standards of which they are capable. Plans are being reviewed to take account of developments in the local syllabus and the co-ordinator is aware of local resources and sources of support.

Pupils speak with enthusiasm about their learning in religious education and at the time of the inspection were particularly excited by their exploration of the Hindu festival of Divali. The one lesson observed was good and the teacher helped pupils extend their understanding by the very good use of questions. Learners understand the value of exploring a variety of religions and talk with interest about what they have learned. Pupils' written work does not reveal the same levels of understanding as their conversations. Work is insufficiently differentiated and not consistently informed by the descriptions of expected attainment found in the local religious education syllabus. There is little monitoring of pupils' progress. The Headteacher and governors have yet to review the new arrangements for religious education.

### **How effective are the leadership and management of the school as a church school?**

The leadership and management of the school as a church school is satisfactory with many good features. Staff and governors have worked very positively with the Diocesan adviser to revise the school's mission statement and develop visual images of the school's Church of England foundation. This has resulted in two beautiful stained glass windows depicting St Peter and St Paul about which the pupils speak knowledgeably together with other symbols found in the entrance. The prospectus, currently being rewritten, makes the Anglican foundation clear. It is drawn to the attention of parents and to new teachers during the recruitment process. The close working relationship between the Vicar and Headteacher has resulted in positive links with the local church, particularly through the Vicar's involvement in collective worship. There is a strong commitment on the part of the Headteacher and governors to ensure that all members of the school community are well cared for as evidenced by regular meetings of the Welfare Committee and attention given to the needs of pupils. Parents appreciate the inclusive ethos of the school and the care provided for their children.

Although the mission statement and school aims refer to a 'Christian context' and 'Christian values' these are not made explicit in policies and plans in a way that would enable the Headteacher and governors to monitor and evaluate their impact.

As yet there is no strategy in place to monitor the new arrangements for religious education to support the new co-ordinator or to ensure the progress of all pupils in this area of the curriculum.