

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### Seely Church Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School,

Burntstump Hill,

Arnold,

Nottingham

NG5 8PQ

**Diocese: Southwell and Nottingham**

LA: Nottinghamshire

Dates of inspection: 28<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup> November 2006

Date of last inspection: 30<sup>th</sup> March, 3&4<sup>th</sup> April 2001

School's Unique reference number: 122786

Name of Headteacher: Mrs Sue Read

Inspector's name with National Society inspector's number: Jane Lewis - No: 27

### School context

This is a small rural school close to the outskirts of Nottingham. Almost all the pupils are transported to the school by buses from Nottingham suburbs. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is broadly average. Pupils come from a wide range of minority ethnic and different cultures, although most are of White British background.

### Summary Judgement

**Seely Church school is a good church school with some elements of outstanding practice.**

### Established strengths

- Quality acts of worship that impact positively on pupils
- Outstanding RE lessons that contribute significantly to pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development.
- A school environment that promotes the Christian character of the school.

### Focus for development

- Foundation governors and senior staff should establish a process of self-revue of the school as a church school to ensure the development of the church school ethos.
- In consultation with the Diocese provide Inset for staff to develop their understanding of the church school ethos.
- Provide time for the RE coordinator to evaluate and monitor RE to enable the subject to be moved forward appropriately
- Make use of assessment in RE to accelerate children's learning.

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

The Christian ethos in the school is strong. Christian values are evident in the quality of care. Pupils of all ages and abilities feel happy and secure and know that their feelings and beliefs will be respected and valued. The school says that it aims to be a place where pupils can develop a positive self-image and learn how they can make a positive contribution to the school. All children are supported in their learning and made to feel special by the adults who work with them. Through an awards system the school recognises pupils who do act positively and those who give of their best to their work. The atmosphere around the school is orderly and relaxed. Pupils show

courtesy and care to each other and to adults. Staff who have a Christian faith share it with pupils in an open and non-threatening way and they are encouraged to take faith seriously. Areas around the school encourage spiritual development. The entrance hall has a display that helps pupils to focus on particular festivals or events in the life of the school. When a young member of the school community died the display became an interactive one, which helped children, staff and parents in their mourning process as letters, prayers and toys were left there. Classrooms have areas to display pupils work in RE which are interesting and informative and in some cases interactive.

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

Acts of worship take place in a bright, airy, comfortable hall, which is conducive to worship. Worship has a good impact on the school community, with a significant commitment to developing pupils' spirituality. Worship has a strong Christian focus and major festivals are celebrated both in school and church. Acts of worship are well planned by the Deputy Head Teacher and pupils are encouraged to participate. In Collective Worship pupils are often challenged as to how what they have heard and shared in could make a difference to their life. In one act of worship the pupils were encouraged to think of bringing gifts to a baby and then the challenge was given to them as to the gift they can bring to baby Jesus now as they prepare for Advent. Pupils say they find collective worship helpful, in particular the 'prayer book' worship when prayer requests that have been written in the book are brought and situations prayed for. Pupils say this shows them how much the teachers care about them but more importantly how much God cares about them.

**The effectiveness of Religious Education is good.**

A committed and enthusiastic member of staff, who is also the Deputy Head teacher, leads RE. Her good subject knowledge and vision have led to the subject being well planned and resourced. Some staff appear to lack confidence when it comes to teaching RE. However the lessons observed during the inspection showed examples of outstanding practice. Excellence and Enjoyment initiatives in the school have allowed staff to be more creative with their delivery of RE and this has had a positive impact on the pupils in terms of the teaching and learning. RE makes a distinctive contribution to pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. Pupils say that RE will help them in the future to understand more about people who might have a different faith or religion to their own or who might make different decisions to the ones they would make. Opportunities for reflection occur in RE lessons and the pupils benefit from these times to help them think about 'important things'. The scheme of work shows that Christianity is predominately taught but there is a good balance of teaching about other faiths and pupils are encouraged to learn from all faiths, Pupils moral development through RE is significant. Children look for immediate opportunities to engage with the teaching they have received. After exploring the concept of being 'lights in their world' a year 2 child swept up the sand on the floor and said she was being a 'light' in her teacher's world! RE links well with other curriculum areas giving a holistic feel to the subject. The RE coordinator has attended some training sessions in the past but not since 2004. Over the past few years she has not been given any coordinator time to monitor the teaching and learning in the subject. At present assessment in RE is inadequate.

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

The current Head Teacher is due to retire at the end of the term and she has done a great deal to move the school forward after a period of difficulty. The Governors are aware that the time is right for a new Head teacher to move the school forward more significantly as a church school. At present there is little monitoring and evaluation of the school as a church school. The Deputy Head teacher has begun the process but

it is now important that the new Head teacher and Foundation Governors engage with this to check and evaluate the schools progress as a church school. Members of staff do have a sense of the vision for the school as a church school but they have been given little training in understanding it and exploring how they can share in fulfilling that vision. Parents speak positively about the school and they value its Christian ethos but as yet they are not involved in evaluating its development as a church school. Parents show their support by attending school services in church when they occur. The school has productive links with the parish church of St Paul's-Daybrook but the fact this is a bus journey away from the school does not make it easy to visit more than for the celebration of major festivals each year. There is currently an interregnum, but previously to this time the incumbent and curate were regular visitors to the school. They were involved in leading worship and, in the case of the incumbent fulfilling the role of Foundation governor. The school has a Governor from another parish who is active in the school and currently helps to lead services in the church.

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