

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Seer Green Combined Church of England Voluntary Aided School

School Lane,
Seer Green,
Beaconsfield,
HP9 2QJ

Diocese of Oxford

Local Authority: Buckinghamshire

Date of inspection: 14 November 2007

Date of last inspection: July 2003

School's Unique reference number: 110458

Name of Headteacher: Mrs Olwyn Davison-Oakley

Inspector's name and NS inspector's number: The Rev'd Richard Peers (NS 125)

Context

This school serves the village and area of Seer Green in Buckinghamshire. The area is very affluent and many parents commute to London. Almost all children attend nursery schools before joining the school. There is a higher proportion of children in the school with special educational needs than the national average. There are 212 children on roll.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Seer Green as a Church of England school are outstanding

This is an extremely happy, caring school in which children feel safe, valued and loved. Christian values inform the decision making process and give children a rich experience of community. The school is at the heart of its village community and links with the Parish Church are good. It also has close links with other Christian denominations in the Parish.

Established strengths

- The Christian leadership of the Head teacher who inspires her team to care.
- The love which characterises all relationships in the school.
- The exceptional quality of the music which enhances worship and helps children to develop spiritually.
- The school environment including outstanding displays.

Focus for development

- To develop specifically Anglican elements in the Religious Education (RE) curriculum.
- To review assessment criteria and their use to ensure all pupils make appropriate progress in RE.

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

This is a truly inclusive community in which everyone feels valued and cared for. Pupils said that "everyone in the school is your friend".

The school has a higher than average number of students with Special Educational Needs and this is because of the school's commitment to the individual. All pupils are extremely well integrated into the life of the school. Special and appropriate provision is made in Collective worship to enable the whole school to participate and pupils know and understand this. They recognise the value of doing something extra to make it right for everyone.

The school is embedded right at the heart of its community and acts as a real family that supports families in the village. Parents speak extremely highly of the school and feel privileged that their

children attend it. They miss the school when children move on to secondary school. Pupils are happy at school and grateful to teachers who they describe as “joining fun and learning together”. The school has made exceptional efforts to reflect a diverse and multicultural world which has enabled pupils to recognise the value of difference and variety. The school has outstanding links with a school in Africa and pupils recognise that this and all the other charity work that is done is a Christian response to the suffering of the world and a way of making the world “more like God wants it”.

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

An outstanding act of worship seen used drama to present a Biblical figure as well as allowing children time to reflect on and to apply the story to their own lives. Every child was captivated by the story and participated with enthusiasm. The school’s music is outstanding. Children sang in harmony and with huge energy and excitement. A beautiful setting of the Lord’s Prayer was used which the children knew by heart – every child sang. Another song was sung in its original African language as well as English.

Pupils understand the importance of prayer in life and the need to be able to take important things to God in prayer. Parents and pupils describe how pupils use prayer in times of real need. A prayer station is well used as a place to indicate the need for prayer. Pupils spoke of the Quiet Garden as a place where they can go “to be with God”.

Prayer is used at many times in the school’s life and pupils know that praying is a way of celebrating and saying thank you. They think that Collective Worship is important and that it helps them to feel part of the community.

Annual questionnaires are used to gather the pupils’ view of worship and pupils know that what they say is listened to. The frequency of singing in worship has increased because pupils have asked for this.

The effectiveness of the religious education Religious Education is good.

Pupils work well in RE and respond positively to tasks set. The standard of work in books is good. Lessons are well prepared and resourced and use high level questioning. In one outstanding lesson a pupil pointed out that the candle in assembly ‘reminds us of God’. Following Diocesan guidance, the governors have approved the adoption of the Buckinghamshire RE syllabus as the basis for RE throughout the school and planning is now in place to deliver the curriculum. The new RE plans on teaching about Christianity do not yet include anything specific on the Anglican tradition and as a result pupils found it difficult to talk about this.

Level descriptors are used to inform RE planning but there is insufficient clarity of understanding about how these can most effectively be used to track pupils’ progress.

Very good use is made of ICT in RE and in one lesson seen images were used exceptionally well to enhance learning. Pupils enjoy RE and said it was one of the places they “meet God” in school. They describe the RE Co-ordinator as a holy person and someone who “shows” them what God is like.

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

The head teacher, has a clear vision of the school as a church school and has built an effective team. Pupils describe the head as being “always there for you”.

The relationship between church and school is outstanding. The school uses the parish church for worship once a month. The vicar celebrates the Eucharist for staff and is a good support to them. Pupils know who their vicar is and recognise that she is a person who cares for them. They enjoy going to church and know that their Chair of Governors is a part of their church community. They know that belonging to the church is about having a “special way of knowing God”. Pupils also know that Christians belong to different churches and they recognise and enjoy the school’s links with the Baptist church in the village. Pupil voice is well listened to and there are annual surveys of pupil opinion including one on collective worship. This information is used to inform planning.

Governors give generously of their time and are committed to the school. They take part in the life of the school community at social and fund raising events as well as their own meetings. Governors meetings begin and end with prayer which is carefully prepared. Governors know their school well and attend worship very regularly indeed. Pupils know who they are and enjoy their

visits.

Although Governors have not recently discussed the school's Christian distinctiveness they are very open to investigating further what this means and rightly believe that it is the foundation of everything that the school does.

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