

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### **Shoscombe Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School**

St Julian's Road,  
Shoscombe,  
Bath  
BA2 8NB

#### **Diocese: Bath and Wells**

Local authority: Bath & North East Somerset

Dates of inspection: 16 October 2006

Date of last inspection: 26 - 27 June 2001

School's unique reference number: 109236

Headteacher: Mrs Sylvia Such

Inspector's name and number: Mrs Rosemary Bartlett – NS 120

#### **School context**

Shoscombe School is a small school serving the village community, with over half its pupils coming from nearby Peasedown St John and the wider area. The characterful Victorian school building is listed, and has a chancel attached. The chancel is used by the parish for weekly worship over the winter months. This helps strengthen the school's good links with the church.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Shoscombe as a Church of England school are satisfactory, with many good features.**

Within the school's good Christian ethos, the headteacher and staff team, with the support of the governors, work effectively for pupils' welfare. There is a good, broad curriculum with many extra-curricular activities. Parents contribute generously in a variety of ways to school life and resources.

#### **Established strengths**

- There is a good Christian ethos
- There are good links with the local church
- Pupils' global awareness is very well developed
- Opportunities in sports are outstanding

#### **Focus for development**

- Increase opportunities for stillness and reflection within collective worship
- Establish a framework for monitoring and evaluating worship
- Continue to implement assessment in religious education
- Raise awareness of the spiritual dimension

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

The school's Christian values have a positive impact on pupils' perception of themselves. They say: "School is very fair". They describe how the staff help them to learn. "Teachers tell you if you've done well. It helps you persevere". They value the weekly celebration of good work and behaviour with the Golden and Kaleidoscope Books. The buddy system works well. The school has a broad curriculum with a good variety of extra curricular activities. The headteacher leads a variety of inter-school projects with a number of different countries. The school hosts a number of visitors from abroad. Spanish and French are taught to senior pupils. Drama is well taught and there are regular school productions involving all pupils. Pupils' physical well being is actively promoted. The school's advocacy of healthy eating clearly benefits the pupils. It is well supported by the great majority of parents. Senior pupils

run the mid morning healthy snack time. Pupils enjoy and benefit from a good variety of PE and sporting activities. These are enthusiastically and effectively coordinated. The staff, headteacher and sometimes ex-pupils all lead sports, which include cross-country running. The school grounds contribute well to pupils' spiritual and physical well being. The quiet garden provides a space for reflection. The pond and planted area enable pupils to appreciate the wonder and beauty of the natural world. Pupils benefit from the all- weather surface and outdoor play equipment. Curricular studies include the local countryside. Pupils' awareness of living history is enriched by visits to the ancient Long Barrow close by.

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

School worship takes place generally in the school hall and occasionally in the chancel. Pupils respond overall positively to collective worship. They see it as a time "For everyone to get together and have a time of peace". They particularly appreciate the effective use of candles: "You can look at the candle and it makes you relax". There is a clear framework for worship, based on the church calendar. The Rector, working with the headteacher, contributes fully to the termly planning for worship. Worship is regularly introduced with the traditional Christian greeting and response. Themes for worship include gratitude for the world we enjoy and prayers for all the world. For the Harvest festival, pupils are actively involved in supporting the charity Feed the Minds. Foundation governors attend school worship regularly. Guest leaders of worship such as a Gospel group from Ghana make a strong impression on pupils. In order to obtain a more detailed understanding of the impact of worship on the school community, the school plans to establish a system of monitoring and evaluation. The school also judges rightly that increased opportunities for stillness and reflection will deepen opportunities for spiritual growth.

**The effectiveness of religious education is satisfactory, with good features.**

The syllabus for religious education is based on the revised Somerset Agreed Syllabus, Awareness, Mystery and Value. In addition, the school makes good use of Diocesan materials for teaching about Christian festivals. Pupils benefit from the school's cross-curricular approach to RE. Hinduism is studied in RE alongside India, in geography. The Rector regularly supports RE. Pupils show especial interest when they see the vestments worn by clergy. When learning about the Eucharist, they respond particularly to the preparation beforehand. They are interested in the chalice and paten. The chancel is well used for RE. Teaching about Christianity in this setting clearly enhances pupils' experience of the Anglican tradition. The coordinator regularly attends diocesan training and the school makes good use of the diocesan resource centre. Visits and visitors enrich pupils' understanding of RE. In this way pupils gain first hand experience of Christianity and other world faiths including Islam and Hinduism. Teaching and learning is overall satisfactory with examples of good practice. Good use of open questioning enables pupils to consider some of the deeper questions of life. Senior pupils were recently invited to express what they might like to ask God. Their thoughtful responses included "What's the meaning of life?" Learning is further extended when pupils are invited to ask similar questions of their friends and families. Until recently the headteacher, who is the subject co-ordinator, was teaching all the RE and the IT. More recently, however, it has been taught by class teachers. The school is now in a good position to track pupils' progress in RE more clearly through developing further assessment in the subject..

**The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school are satisfactory, with good features.**

The headteacher and staff are fully committed to the school's caring Christian vision for its pupils. The governors are actively involved in school life and the parents are very supportive. At the school's last inspection, key issues were identified for action. These included raising standards in RE through implementing the new syllabus and scheme of work as well as developing assessment and monitoring. The school implemented the syllabus and scheme of work but assessment and monitoring have yet to be developed. Monitoring and evaluating collective worship were also identified and have not yet been implemented. The third key

issue was to raise awareness of the spiritual dimension. This has not yet been addressed. The school's status as a church school is clearly communicated in its documentation, notably in the Mission and Ethos statements. Christian symbols are well displayed around the building and in the school badge. The school's motto is : "Inspire to believe and achieve". The strengths of the staff are well used, to the benefit of the pupils. Pupils feel valued and secure. There are good links with the local community. The Cathedral Leavers' Days are attended and enjoyed by the school.

SIAS report October 2006 Shoscombe Church of England Primary St Julian's Road,  
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