

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Shustoke Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Forge Road

Shustoke

Birmingham

B46 2AU

Diocese: Birmingham

LA: Warwickshire

SIAS Inspection: 1st November 2006

Previous Section 23 inspection: April 2002

URN: 125684

Head teacher: Michelle Wall

SIAS inspector: NS 135 Robert A. Cooke

Context

Shustoke CE School is a one-form entry school in a rural area near Birmingham. The wide catchment area encompasses Shustoke and neighbouring villages. The school has existed for over 100 years, the original building being nearer the church. Families include commuters to nearby towns and cities and members of the farming community. Most are owner-occupiers. There are very few children from ethnic minorities. The headteacher was appointed recently.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Shustoke as a Church of England school are good with many strengths.

There is a strong Christian ethos. The school is well managed. The headteacher and governors are committed to taking the school forward as a church school and to overcoming such obstacles as the distance from the nearest church and other places of worship.

Established strengths

- There is a very strong focus on the personal and social development of all children
- Pupils show a strong awareness of the needs of others less fortunate than themselves and a concern for their environment
- There are very strong links with local clergy and with the local community
- Relationships between the pupils and between pupils and adults are excellent

Focus for development

- Arrange an annual study visit to the local church
- Review and update the Collective Worship Policy
- Provide more opportunities to develop worship through the writing and display of children's prayers and reflections and through regular communal singing
- Examine how the school proclaims its church school status and consider and implement means by which this could be improved

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

There is a very strong focus on pupils' spiritual and moral development. All pupils are very well cared for and encouraged to succeed. Pupils are given good opportunities to express their thoughts and feelings. Pupils with disabilities and learning difficulties are very well supported. Weekly achievement assemblies give focus to the school's recognition and celebration of the achievements of every pupil. There is a strong emphasis on pupils' health and well-being. The pupils are happy to come to school and the school is very well supported by parents, some of whom have elected to travel a considerable

distance to their chosen school. There are good opportunities for children to consider such issues as belonging, tolerance and caring for others. There is a strong emphasis on caring for the environment. Knowledge and understanding of other faiths is an integral part of the school's work. The school's strong links with the local community are seen in the support given to events such as Harvest and Christmas celebrations. There is a commitment to fund raising for local and world causes. Staff provide very good opportunities for pupils to work individually, in pairs and in groups. Pupils listen well to adults and to each other. There are some very good examples of the use of the school environment to encourage pupils' spiritual development such as displays in the entrance area and school hall. However, the display of work related to religious education in classrooms is patchy and could be improved.

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

The school follows statutory requirements and is well supported by the local vicar who takes assemblies on a regular basis and lends support to teachers in responding to pupils' questions in visits to classes. A Christmas carol concert by older pupils in the local church and a nativity by the younger pupils in the school hall are significant events in the school calendar. Pupils listen and respond well during collective worship. However, opportunities for communal singing are limited at present following the promotion of the former music coordinator to another school. The school is aware of this and is planning appropriate action. A few pupils, who are regular church goers, show very good understanding of prayer and worship and can give examples of how prayer has helped them at difficult times. For the majority of pupils prayer is restricted to times of collective worship and the opportunity to study or write prayers is limited. Some older pupils show a very good understanding of what it means to be a Christian. Older pupils know the Lord's Prayer and a musical version has been sung in assemblies. Visits to the local church have been restricted by the distance from the school and its location along a busy road. The school is taking steps to arrange transport for study visits in the future. Visits to other places of worship are difficult because of transport costs. The school's Acts of Worship Policy needs to be reviewed and updated.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school are good

Foundation governors are clear in their view that being a church school provides pupils with a good grounding in the Christian faith. Candidates for appointments to the school are given a clear understanding of the school's expectations as a church school. The Christian ethos of the school is explained in its mission statement. However, more could be done to proclaim the school's Christian foundation in its documentation such as the school prospectus and in some policy statements including the Acts of Worship policy. There is a strong commitment by the staff to developing Christian attitudes among the pupils, particularly a concern for others and the world in which they live. Teachers plan effectively for the needs of all their pupils and give them good opportunities to reflect on and discuss moral issues. The school is making good use of its links with the local diocese to seek support and advice for staff in promoting the Christian character of the school. There is a very good relationship with the local vicar and strong links with the local community. These are reflected in the excellent support given to school events including Summer and Christmas Fayres as well as the annual carol concert, nativity and harvest celebrations. The school gives strong support to local events and is seen as a focal point in the community.