

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Skellingthorpe St Lawrence Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Lower Church Road
Skellingthorpe
Lincoln
LN6 5UZ

Diocese: Lincoln

Local authority: Lincolnshire
Dates of inspection: 11 & 12 July 2007
Date of last inspection: September 2002
School's unique reference number: 120537
Headteacher: Mrs Marion Watson
Inspector's name and number: Mrs Meg Hackney NS198

School context

Skellingthorpe St Lawrence Church of England Primary School is of medium-size and serves the village of Skellingthorpe and the surrounding area. Almost all pupils are of white British heritage. The school has good links with the adjacent church and the local community.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Skellingthorpe St Lawrence Primary School as a Church of England school is good.

Christian values and beliefs underpin the entire life and work of the school. This supports the strong sense of community and genuine care for everyone. All groups of pupils feel valued and special because of the positive recognition of effort and celebration of success.

Established strengths

- The leadership of the headteacher and the commitment and support of governors in promoting the school's distinctive Christian vision.
- Pupils' excellent behaviour and attitude and their obvious pride in the school.
- The outstanding quality of collective worship in school and the strong contribution this makes to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The care and nurture provided for all groups of pupils within an environment which positively encourages and celebrates academic and personal achievement and effort.

Focus for development

- Strengthen the links with the worshipping community to enrich the partnership between the church and the school.
- Continue to build on working relationships to create a strong team focussed on common goals through consistent practices and procedures.
- Extend opportunities through the School Council for pupils to take more independent responsibility for the life of the school.
- Develop ways to make more use of the outdoor environment for learning activities, spiritual development and collective worship.

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

Christian principles and values are clearly visible and well embedded. Pupils learn in a caring and happy environment where they feel valued and special. Many of them speak proudly about their school. The well established reward system which recognises and celebrates achievement is highly valued and enjoyed by pupils of all abilities. All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, are well supported so that they make as much progress as they can in their academic and personal development. Pupils' behaviour and attitude are excellent and they develop a clear understanding of the difference between right and wrong. This is reflected in the emphasis placed on worship, religious education and personal, social and health education throughout the school. The Christian ethos underpins all aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. During many lessons and collective worship pupils confidently share their feelings with their teachers and each other about a wide range of issues. For example, Year 5 pupils expressed a deep concern about homelessness when talking about their book of poems written to support the Lincoln Nomad Trust. Although pupils already play an active role on the School Council they continue to seek more independence for its organisation and an assurance that their suggestions and ideas can make a difference. The school uses the environment well to encourage spiritual development through a good range of stimulating displays of pictures, religious symbols and artefacts. The Pilgrimage Garden provides pupils with an excellent area for quiet reflection. However, at present the outdoor environment is not used to its full potential to enrich the curriculum and develop pupils' spiritual experience and appreciation of the world around them.

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

Collective worship is an integral and very important part of the school day. A well established sense of community is created during worship both in school and in church. Pupils show a high level of respect for worship and their behaviour is excellent. They show great enjoyment in singing songs and saying prayers together and all ages listen attentively and are keen to contribute. Pupils respond well when given time for reflection on a range of issues and thoughts to carry with them through the day. Themes for worship are well planned with a direct link made to the work in classrooms. For example, pupils considered the importance of making the right choices and demonstrated a good sense of fairness and care for others. Through collective worship and religious education pupils gain a good understanding of the major Christian festivals and a respect for the beliefs and values of other world faiths. Pupils' knowledge of Anglican traditions is developed well and the school has recently introduced the Church's seasonal colours as a focal point for worship. Pupils enjoy attending the church for collective worship each week. This is led by the Rector whose ecumenical approach provides a good opportunity for pupils to understand and appreciate different styles of worship.

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

The headteacher's total commitment and the strong and proactive support of governors have ensured that Christian values and beliefs firmly underpin the daily life of the school. They are united in their Christian vision for the school and are working hard to develop a strong team with a common purpose. This clear Christian vision impacts on the leadership and management of the school's development including the new team arrangements designed to build on teachers' individual strengths and interests. The school brochure, development plan and policies are well focussed to promote the school's Christian aims and values. The school has good links with the local community but has identified the desire to strengthen links with the worshipping community in its mission to enrich the partnership with the church. Parents support the school well and many chose the school for its Christian ethos. The recent improvements in communication are developing well with the formation of the Parents Partnership Group and the launch of a new website. The excellent links with the Diocese are well maintained.

