

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

St Andrew's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Ecton Brook Road
Ecton Brook
Northampton
NN3 5EN

Diocese: Peterborough

Local authority: Northamptonshire
Dates of inspection: 01.12.06
Date of last inspection: 5th – 9th June 2001
School's unique reference number: 122017
Headteacher: Miss Deborah Cushing
Inspector's name and number: Anne Spence 315

School context

St Andrew's CEVA Primary School was established following the Northampton Borough reorganisation. The school moved into newly refurbished buildings in September 2005, the head was appointed from this date. It is the only church school in the Eastern District. The school has 201 pupils on roll, 74% are white British and 26% from ethnic minority groups of which the majority are Black African. 40% of the children are regular church attendees. The school has had a considerable number of break - ins resulting in the loss of ICT equipment.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Andrew's CEVA Primary School as a Church of England school are satisfactory.

The school prospectus and mission statement state that Christian Worship and teaching are central to the life of the school and are in accordance with Anglican practice; the caring ethos and sense of being valued that underpins school life confirms this. The head teacher has a clear vision for the future of the school, central to this is giving children a faith they can connect to and take into future life.

Established strengths

- A caring Christian ethos and supportive environment.
- Prayer has a strong focus in the life of the school.
- The school has established good links with the local parish church and other denominations.

Focus for development

- Establish a rigorous assessment and monitoring policy to raise standards in Religious Education.
- Establish a more systematic evaluation of the effectiveness of Collective Worship.
- Involve the governing body in the monitoring of Religious Education and Collective Worship and develop the role of the governor responsible for Christian Ethos.
- Provide an environment throughout the school that celebrates its Christian foundation.

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

The School Prospectus clearly states that the school's work is rooted in Christian values and that it aims to promote the teachings of the Anglican faith. The parents commented and the children confirmed that they feel safe, secure and valued. The school has a strong Christian vision which parents feel is improving; parents commented on the new building, which they consider has improved the provision. The School Council plays an active part in school life; they have introduced a Prayer Wall, Prayer Room and Playground Friends and they have plans for future developments. Prayer is an important part of school life; prayers are said in the classrooms and at staff and governors' meetings. The parents value the focus on prayer and say that it has a visible effect on their children's lives. The school has strong links with the local Anglican church and other denominations in the area. The Rector runs an after school worship club

which attracts approximately 30 children from the younger age range. The governors feel the school promotes a positive image, where Christian principles are promoted effectively and that they are becoming increasingly more active and well informed. Improvement in the school environment through more effective displays both inside and outside will strengthen the Christian and Anglican foundation of the school.

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

The act of worship observed was a class Assembly which was led by Year 3. The children entered the hall in an orderly, quiet, attentive manner and this was maintained throughout the Assembly. All children focused on the presentation and their interest was held throughout. The assembly heightened their awareness of life in past times. The children responded to questions, sang enthusiastically and year 6 ensured that everything ran smoothly by being responsible for lights, overhead projector, music and seating, the head teacher confirmed that this behaviour is evident at all acts of Collective Worship. A candle and cross provided a focus and the children were able to explain why the candle was lit. The assembly concluded with an act of worship that focused on the Advent candles. The children were able to recall the significance of each candle and reflect on the meaning of Advent responding to questions relating to previous acts of worship. All teaching staff attend and take part in Collective Worship and support staff are invited to attend on special occasions. The Collective Worship plan is extensive and themes, music and leaders are planned for the term. The content of worship has a positive impact on the children's understanding of Christian beliefs; the parents value this element of Christian teaching. The head teacher confirmed that The Lord's Prayer is included on a regular basis and time for reflection always precedes prayer time. The OfSTED report states that 'Assemblies and church celebrations contribute well to pupil's spiritual development'. The children confirmed that they enjoy Collective Worship and their appreciation of prayer time is evidenced by the use of the Prayer Wall, they were able to recall worship that focused on the lives of David and Moses and Jesus' birth. The local Rector leads worship once a fortnight and representatives of other denominations lead on a regular basis. All visitors enjoy leading worship and comment that the children are both 'attentive and inquisitive'. Collective Worship is held at the local church at the end of each term and on special occasions, e.g. Harvest Festival, Ascension Day and any other Christian festivals; parents are invited to join the school at St Andrew's Church, Great Billing, they also attend worship in school, particularly class assemblies, the assembly observed was well attended by parents. The children are given opportunities to appreciate the world wide church by the links established with Christians in Kenya and Nepal; this heightens their awareness of the traditions and beliefs of different communities. Celebration of festivals related to other faiths enables the children to appreciate differences. The implementation of a more rigorous monitoring policy of the effectiveness of worship will maintain the good provision.

The effectiveness of the religious education is satisfactory.

The teaching styles used challenge the children and in the lessons observed there was a clear learning objective and a variety of activities which maintained the children's interest; paired and group discussion is used effectively and follow up work is differentiated by task and outcome. The standards in RE are in line with those in the core subjects; the issue of standards in core subjects was an area identified for improvement in the recent OfSTED inspection. The local Rector provides support in the teaching of RE by his input to the teaching of Anglican practices, particularly to Year 6. The RE policy is based on the Northamptonshire Agreed Syllabus and medium term plans detail work to be covered. The teaching of other faiths is based on the non Christian faith communities living in Northamptonshire. The children explore issues within and between faiths to help them respect and understand different religions; evidence of this was seen when scrutinising pupil's work. Resources have been purchased to support the teaching of other faiths and the head teacher confirmed that these have had a positive impact on the children's learning. More vibrant displays throughout the school will attract the children's interest and further develop their understanding of the Anglican traditions and beliefs and practices of other faiths. The RE policy identifies procedures for Assessment, Record Keeping and Monitoring; implementation of these will ensure that targets for improvement are set and standards are raised. Provision of training for the RE coordinator will enable her to fully implement her role.

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

The head teacher has a vision for the school as a church school she enthusiastically represents Christ both within school and the world. The governors are keen to encourage the Christian status, providing critical and constructive challenge; they have a sense of commitment and are becoming increasingly more involved and able to contribute to school development. All staff are aware of the Christian aims and ethos of the school and prospective parents are made fully aware of the differences between a church and community school. In an annual questionnaire to parents many responded that the reason for choosing the school was its Christian ethos and this was confirmed at the meeting with parents. The appointment of a Family Support Worker and Learning Mentor is having a positive impact on the opportunities for sharing concerns and resolving difficulties. The school is developing strong links with the community. The Parish is well aware of the school's aims and is kept up to date by regular reports from the Foundation Governors. A more systematic approach to monitoring and evaluation by the governors will ensure that the vision of the school as a church school is enhanced.

SIAS report December 2006 St Andrew's CEVA Primary School Ecton Brook Northampton NN3 5EN