

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

St. Andrew's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Church Road
Wormingford
Colchester
CO6 3AZ

Diocese: Chelmsford

Local authority: Essex

Dates of inspection: 26th September 2007

Date of last inspection: 1st July 2002

School's unique reference number: 115140

Headteacher: Mrs. Margaret Branfield

Inspector's name and number: Mrs. Dianne Jackson

School Context

Wormingford Church of England Aided Primary School is a much smaller than average school, serving a rural community on the Essex / Suffolk border. As a result of a 44% reduction in pupil numbers, since the end of the summer term, the school has with one class of 18 children. Much of the teaching takes place in Key and Foundation Stage groups. The school lacks a hall, but otherwise is well resourced and staffed. The number of free school meals is below average and almost all of the children are from white British families.

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

Established strengths

- A very positive Christian ethos and high level of pastoral care, with a strong belief in the development of the whole child.
- The extensive range of curriculum enrichment and extra-curricular activities.
- Very good relationships between the staff and children, which are based upon mutual respect.
- Use of the school grounds and locality to promote the children's understanding of stewardship and provide opportunities for personal reflection.

Focus for development

The governors to work with the staff and all stakeholders to:

- Carry out a rigorous self-evaluation of the school's effectiveness as a church school and use the findings to produce a realistic action-plan, which will impact upon the school's development.
- Adopt a RE scheme of work, relevant to the needs of the school.
- Ensure that assessment, monitoring and evaluation procedures are in place for RE.
- Ensure that sufficient time is being given to the teaching of RE.
- Devise a more focused approach to the planning, monitoring and evaluation of collective worship, which will progressively develop the children's worship and spiritual experience.

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

The school has a distinctive Christian character, which is acknowledged in some of the documentation, e.g. Mission Statement and School Aims, The importance of a child's uniqueness is recognised. Christian values are manifested through the school ethos, the role models provided by staff and the relationships within the school. The school is successful at meeting needs of the younger pupils and those with learning difficulties and disabilities. The more able and older children are not sufficiently challenged. The children appreciate the wide range of extra-curricular activities. The majority of children enjoy coming to school and appreciate that their achievements are acknowledged in the Friday celebratory assemblies, in the positive feed-back given orally and noted in the younger children's work. The pupils feel valued and their opinions respected e.g. when they raised matters through the school council (The Scream Team). The children's social, moral and cultural development is good and the

school regularly participates in local music and sports festivals and projects such as Healthy Schools' Initiative, welcomes a range of visitors from other cultures and charity organisations and has a well established link with a Ugandan school. Spiritual awareness is not developed in such a systematic way. There is no whole school perception of the concept and opportunities for its development have not been explored. However, occasions for reflection and prayer are created outside of collective worship e.g. lunchtimes and end of school prayers and in the excellent use of the school's grounds.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is satisfactory, with some good aspects

Worship is perceived as an important aspect of school life and its significance is stated in the school prospectus, as well as in the comprehensive collective worship policy. It underpins the school's Christian character. The observed act of worship was clearly distinct from an assembly, and was appropriate for the age and abilities of the children. It captured their imaginations by using conkers and acorns to reflect upon God's creation. The children responded appropriately and appreciated opportunities to actively participate; something they would like to do more of. Some could see the value of collective worship, e.g. 'a time to think about each other and ourselves.' Most children found it difficult to remember previous worship themes. Planning consists of titles that are open to the worship leader's individual interpretation. The themes include school events, such as the patronal feast, leavers' service and major Christian festivals. As there is no guidance regarding the underpinning Christian beliefs or spiritual dimensions the children's worship experience is not being progressively developed. Monitoring and evaluating worship is in its initial stages and has yet to impact upon the participants' experience. All teachers and the priest-in-charge lead acts of worship, although they do not participate in the worship led by others.

The effectiveness of the religious education is inadequate

The prospectus states that RE is a special feature of the school, but in practice the subject is not accorded the same status as other core subjects and would not currently seem to be a priority of the school. Children in KS2 appear to receive less than the 5% curriculum time. Much of the RE is delivered through the content of collective worship and cross-curricular topics. However, there is no planning evidence or recorded work to show that RE is being effectively delivered through these methods. At KS1 a work scrutiny shows that the children are achieving a satisfactory attainment level. In the observed KS2 lesson on creation, the children demonstrated a positive attitude to RE, an eagerness to engage in discussion and gave thoughtful answers. Orally the children demonstrate an accurate usage of vocabulary and grasp of lesson content. Most listen attentively and demonstrate empathy and some had the ability to translate ideas into new situations. The children's progress and achievement in RE is being impeded by an inadequate scheme of work and the lack of effective assessment, monitoring and evaluation procedures.

The leadership and management of the school as a church school are overall satisfactory, but has some inadequate aspects

The school's Christian vision is evident in some of the public documentation and displayed in the reception area. The school's Christian nature was explored during the 2006 governor and staff INSET day. However, the foundation governors are not actively promoting the school's Christian vision nor do they sufficiently encourage, monitor or challenge the headteacher to promote the quality of RE in this Christian school. The monitoring and evaluation strategies that are in place have yet to impact upon the school's development. With the exception of the children and their 'Scream Team', stakeholder involvement operates informally, but the lack of focus and rigor reduces the usefulness of the process. There are no induction procedures for staff, which explain the school's Christian character. The governors support the school through visits and attendance at church services and the school is actively trying to establish improved links with the PCC. The school enjoys some valuable links with the local community and is well supported by most of the parent body. There is an interchange of information with the parish church and the school and community work together on local events e.g. the Remembrance Day service and fund-raising activities.