

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

St Barnabas Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

West Hill,
Portishead,
Bristol,
BS20 6LN

Diocese: Bath and Wells

Local authority: North Somerset

Dates of inspection: 23 April 2008

Date of last inspection: 23 and 26 January 2004

School's unique reference number: 109203

Headteacher: Lynne Yelland

Inspector's name and number: Jane Tibbs 226

School context

St Barnabas Church of England Primary School is housed in Victorian and new buildings. The remodelled school re-opened in November 2001. The new purpose built hall is used extensively by the community, and the local playgroup is accommodated within the school. Plans are in hand to incorporate the proposed Portishead Children's Centre within the existing building which will entail some reorganisation of accommodation. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs, including statements, is about 70%. Attendance fluctuates and in the last academic year the movement of school pupils was over and above the normal Reception and Year 6 movement.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St. Barnabas School as a church school is outstanding

At St Barnabas Church of England Primary there is an overwhelming sense of friendliness and welcome from staff and pupils alike who display a sense of enthusiasm, accomplishment, constructive curiosity and genuine care and concern for each other. Relationships within the school and between the school, parish and community are firmly rooted in Christian values that are evident to anyone who visits.

Established strengths

- The confident vision for the development of the school as a church school
- The enthusiasm and leadership of the Headteacher
- The value placed on every individual member of the school community
- The overall quality of relationships in the school based on implicit Christian values

Focus for development

- Maintain the ethos with the impending redundancy of a member of staff and the Headteacher becoming a half-time teaching Head in September 2008
- Continue to develop the times of quiet and reflection
- Build on the recently embedded curriculum policies

The school through its distinctive Christian character, meets the needs of all its learners in an outstanding way.

St Barnabas School is a welcoming and caring place where pupils are valued and are given outstanding pastoral support. Parents and pupils acknowledge the love given to them in what they experience as a safe, friendly, happy and secure environment. It is evident that a Christian ethos and Christian values underpin all of school life. Attractive displays, including many that are specifically related to Christian beliefs and values, contribute to the spiritual development of the pupils. The entrance hall contains a beautiful water feature incorporating words from Psalm 23 and a presentation of activities within the school is projected onto a wall for all visitors to view. Parents stressed that school staff always had time for them as well as their children. One mother commented that, "We've just moved here from London and the school has been so welcoming; my daughter has settled in very well". Another praised the progress of her son in the Foundation Year and a father stressed how caring the staff are. A pupil in Year 6 said that he had "felt alone and ignored in my last, larger school but since moving to St Barnabas it has been great and given me more confidence".

The example of all school staff has a positive influence on the pupils, enabling them to engage in meaningful discussions and valuing their contributions to school life. Achievement is acknowledged and celebrated and pupils feel affirmed. They are encouraged to share their thoughts and ideas in a caring and supportive environment. As a result of this high level of care and the development of a comprehensive, positive and multi-faceted behaviour strategy, the behaviour of pupils is outstanding. The school council is very effective and taken seriously, having a genuine influence on the management of the school. Parents expressed considerable satisfaction about how the school involves them in many aspects of its life and one parent commented, "The children get love and care here." Extra curricular activities cater for a wide variety of interests. Religious education is recognised as being of particular importance in this church school. The quality of teaching and learning is good and the pupils are stimulated by enthusiastic teaching and a variety of methods and activities. Pupils are able to confidently discuss issues of faith and recognise that their views are taken seriously by staff and other learners.

The impact of collective worship on the school is outstanding.

Collective Worship is central to the life of the school and involves high levels of participation and a positive response from those attending. The hymn singing is of a high standard and it is apparent from the appropriate behaviour of pupils that they enjoy worship. The spiritual life of pupils is reinforced by prayer, not only during collective worship but also in the classroom, as was evident from displays. Acts of worship are well planned and recorded by the Headteacher who also holds the role of Collective Worship co-ordinator, and pupils are involved in the evaluation and development of worship. The school creates an atmosphere of spiritual depth where the presence of God is celebrated. The ethos of the school reflects an explicit system of values and collective worship is used effectively to transmit and underpin these. It was clear in talking to pupils that they enjoy collective worship and many regard it as a special time which can be used for reflection, commenting that they enjoy the opportunity to discuss issues during worship. Visitors who attend special times of collective worship are invited to leave their comments in a book. The links with the local churches ensure that there is an ecumenical presence within the school, as well as worship based on Anglican structures.

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

The Headteacher, staff and Foundation Governors provide outstanding leadership with clear direction and purpose for the development of the school as a church school. Policy documents are now established and implemented within the context of the aims and values of a Church of England School. The Christian nature of the school is clearly evident both around the school and in public documentation and communications. The Chair of Governors spoke with enthusiasm of the school's Christian foundation and all staff are committed to create a positive Christian ethos for the learners and their families. The views of all members of the school community are recognized and valued. The effective school council has a

genuine influence on the management of the school and the present Chair of the school council ensures that all members have the opportunity to express a viewpoint. The School Council has recently organised a number of events to raise the money to buy a drum kit for the school which arrived on the day of the Inspection and was proudly arranged in the entrance area. There are high levels of involvement in the school by the local community including other Christian denominations and community partners. An environment has been created where pupils enjoy coming to school and obviously delight in learning. Staff commented that they are both encouraged and enabled to engage in planning and decision making, and value the culture of shared leadership. The Headteacher's vision for this Church of England school is an inspiration to all.

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