

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### **St Georges Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School**

Pastures Avenue  
St Georges  
Weston-super-Mare  
BS22 7SA

#### **Diocese: Bath & Wells**

Local authority: North Somerset Council  
Dates of inspection: 6<sup>th</sup> February 2008  
Date of last inspection:  
School's unique reference number: 134830  
Headteacher: Sandra Medley  
Inspector's name and number: Muriel Griffiths - 268

#### **School context**

St Georges Church School opened in September 2006. It was built in partnership between the Local Authority, the Church of England, the Methodist Church and the Baptist Church, who are all represented on the school's governing body. The building provides excellent spacious accommodation and a good learning environment.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Georges Church School as a Church school are good.**

The school has some outstanding features. A Christian ethos permeates the whole life of the school.

#### **Established strengths**

- The headteacher has a strong vision for the future development of the school as one with a Christian foundation.
- Very positive relationships exist between all members of the school community.
- There is a strong emphasis on personal development underpinned by Christian values of care and support.

#### **Focus for development**

- Review the completed self-evaluation 'Toolkit' for Anglican schools so that governors can be involved in formally evaluating the school's performance as a Church school.
- Establish assessment in Religious Education so that children know which skills they are developing and how they can improve their work.
- Revisit the aims of the school and the mission statement with the whole school community in order to embed the Christian foundation further.

#### **The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is outstanding in the way it meets the needs of all learners.**

There is a very strong Christian ethos which permeates every aspect of the school's life. Pupils flourish as individuals, feeling valued, special and supported in their learning. Pupils talk confidently about their work and the activities that are provided for them. They are proud of their school. All children are secure in the knowledge that they matter as individuals and the school provides very well for their different needs, abilities and interests. The school's distinctive Christian character is well reflected in the pupils' sense of well being and in their care and concern for others. Provision for their personal development and also their spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is good. As a result, pupils' behaviour is excellent.

Very good relationships throughout the school support the good learning that takes place. Issues are dealt with promptly and sensitively. Children learn the values of love, care and respect for each other through the strong Christian ethos. There are good reward systems in place with many opportunities for celebration, such as stickers for being a good friend or receiving a headteacher's 'Golden Certificate'. Many opportunities are taken to help children to think of those less fortunate than themselves. For example, money has been raised for Tearfund, Weston Hospicecare and a link is being established with a school in Kenya, through the local Community Church. Displays around the school show what has been learned in Religious Education (RE) lessons. A Christian Environment Working Party has been set up to consider the provision of visible signs and symbols to make the Christian ethos more explicit. The school is also involving children in decisions about how the school environment should celebrate the school's Church foundation. A special quiet area in the school helps pupils to reflect, pray or be still and provides opportunities for them to say a prayer and 'take a pebble'.

### **The impact of Collective Worship on the school community is good.**

Pupils enjoy the daily act of collective worship and see it as a 'special time when the whole school meets together'. They appreciate its importance in the life of the school as it provides 'a quiet time'. They especially like it when they are actively involved and as one of the pupils commented 'It's more interesting to be part of it'. Pupils learn about Bible stories, religious traditions and Christian values through a carefully planned programme. Collective worship is consistently and recognisably Christian. On Ash Wednesday, the day of the inspection, pupils thought about the time leading up to Easter and listened carefully to the account of Jesus being tempted in the wilderness. They were reminded in the prayer that there are times when they are tempted and have to say 'no'. This gave an opportunity for them to relate what they had heard to their own lives. Children readily joined in different elements of worship with enthusiasm. The use of music, symbols and quiet reflective times developed pupils' understanding of different aspects of worship and enabled them to participate fully. Major Christian festivals, such as Harvest, Christmas and Easter are celebrated in school and parents are invited on these special occasions and much appreciate opportunities to join in worship. Visitors from local churches come to lead worship and children have been able to form good relationships with them, increasing their experience of the Christian church and those who belong to it. The school is now well prepared to put in place procedures for monitoring and evaluating the impact of collective worship on pupils.

### **The effectiveness of the Religious Education is good.**

Religious Education follows the locally agreed syllabus, and contributes well to the social, spiritual and moral and cultural development of pupils and the school's overall ethos. It is recognised as an important subject in school. Achievement and standards of attainment at least match those of other core subjects. Pupils achieve well in RE because of well planned lessons and good teaching. The school ensures the provision of appropriate staffing, curriculum time and learning resources. Pupils have a positive attitude to the subject and work with obvious enjoyment, as evidenced by the interesting work in their books. They are beginning to develop a good understanding and respect for other world faiths and appropriate links are made with other curriculum areas. In a lesson in year 6 observed during the inspection, there were good links made with art when pupils were preparing to make colour block prints based on Islamic symbols. In all lessons observed, teachers' good relationships with pupils meant that children were confident in sharing their views as they knew what they said would be valued. Children in year 1 watched a DVD of 'The Blue Planet' and were learning to develop spiritual awareness through the use of quiet reflection. The subject leader is enthusiastic and provides good leadership for his colleagues. He is aware that the school needs to introduce more formal procedures for assessing children's work in RE.

**The leadership and management of the school as a Church school is satisfactory.**

The inspired leadership and vision of the headteacher contributes greatly to the success of the school as one with a Christian foundation. The commitment to live according to Christian values is strong and this underpins all aspects of the life of the school. The governors are still developing their role and are now ready to be more involved in evaluation and monitoring relating to the Christian distinctiveness of the school. A review of the current self evaluation materials will enable the school to develop further. Adults are good role models and relationships throughout the school community are good. The school is closely linked with a number of local churches and the headteacher feels well supported by them and also by the Diocese. Local churches provide both practical and prayerful support for the school. Parents believe that the distinctive Christian ethos has a positive effect on pupils and say that their children enjoy coming to school and feel safe because of the care they receive. Parents are given opportunities to express their views and these are acted upon appropriately. There are also good opportunities for pupils to 'have a voice' through the School Council and they appreciate the fact that their views are not only listened to but acted upon, such as in the request for a more structured 'Golden Time' each week. The commitment of the headteacher, staff and governors to the children and their families contributes to the very evident 'family feeling' in the school.

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