

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

St Margaret's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School,

Tintinhull,

Yeovil,

Somerset.

BA22 8PX

Diocese: Bath and Wells

Local authority: Somerset

Dates of inspection: 6 September 2007

Date of last inspection: 21, 22, 23 September 2005 21, 22, 23 September 2005

School's unique reference number: 123855

Headteacher: Mrs Jan Hunt

Inspector's name and number: Mr David Shears - 423

School context

St Margaret's Church Primary School is situated in a rural part of Somerset. It currently has 87 pupils on roll who increasingly come from a wider area than the village of Tintinhull. The school boasts a good sized playground and field. There have been many changes of staff with nearly all teachers having joined the school in the past three years. A small number of pupils have learning difficulties or disabilities.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Margaret's Church Primary School as a Church school is good

The warm, friendly atmosphere created within this school ensures that all who work or learn there are welcome, safe and enjoy being a part of the team. The love and support that staff show enables pupils to thrive and grow, within a picturesque setting. The school has been rightly focussing on raising standards since their previous Ofsted report and have successfully maintained the Christian ethos which underpins it. They are now ready to continue to extend their provision in RE and Collective Worship by establishing a clear strategic view for improvement.

Established strengths

- Outstanding personal development enables pupils to become confident, caring individuals.
- A committed team of personnel who all share the same vision for the school.
- Rising standards in literacy and numeracy which support the academic needs of all pupils.
- Effective links with the local church and clergy giving opportunities for pupil's spiritual development and learning.

Focus for development

- Develop robust self-assessment in order to establish a clear strategic plan that will support new initiatives in RE and Collective Worship.
- Seek the views of all stakeholders, including pupils, in order to assess the impact of the provision in RE to inform priorities for improvement.

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

Pupils at the school feel safe and secure within a warm, caring Christian environment that nurtures them and provides for all their needs. The school has an 'open door', allowing parents and carers to discuss problems or worries concerning their children. Parents say that they are listened to and supported. This is all brought about by the dedication and care of all the members of both teaching and non-teaching members of staff. Pupils of all ages are

encouraged to become independent learners and they respond with confidence. There is a nurturing relationship between staff and pupils that enables pupils to talk about their concerns, knowing that these will be taken seriously. An air of mutual respect pervades the atmosphere. One pupil remarked that 'the best thing about this school is the lovely teachers'. Pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding, being well supported throughout the whole of the curriculum. An example of this is a 'cookie club' which raises money for children in Egypt who need support. There are effective displays that value the work of all pupils. Pupils in general enjoy coming to school and participate well in all the activities that are provided. The grounds of the school lend themselves well to providing pupils with opportunities for spiritual and social development including a pond area and a quiet area where they grow their own plants. The whole experience for pupils at the school is underpinned by strong Christian values that encourage, praise and support all that happens.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective Worship is seen as an important part of the school day. It complies with all the legal requirements. There are opportunities for pupils and staff to pray, reflect and sing within a context of a respectful atmosphere. All staff participate in leading worship. There is an overall plan for the term, together with a folder that supports leaders in their preparation. The Collective Worship policy is still in draft form. The acts of worship are recorded on the plan with the date on which they have been delivered. This ensures that there is no repetition. This plan is subsequently briefly annotated by the teacher leading the worship, to indicate its effectiveness. Various acts of worship are also conducted by visitors such as the local vicar and a children's evangelist, who enhance the worship experience for the pupils. At Christian festivals, such as Christmas and Easter, the pupils take part in a service in the local church. This is well attended by parents who also enjoy coming to the Wednesday 'good work' assembly. Some foundation governors also attend a number of assemblies although at present they do not report their effectiveness back to the governing body. This evidence would be useful in helping the governors to assess the quality of worship in supporting the Christian nature of the school. At present most assemblies take place at the end of the school day and it would be helpful to evaluate whether this is the optimum time to do so. On a Thursday there is a multi-cultural assembly, which takes into account other beliefs.

The Religious Education is satisfactory

Most of the pupils achieve the required standard in RE with half of last year's Y6 achieving above this. This is in line with their Maths and English results in Key Stage Two and represents satisfactory progress. There is a draft RE Policy which still needs to be discussed and ratified by the governing body. The school follows the units of work in the revised Agreed Syllabus. For the oldest pupils, the work shown in their books shows a good coverage of the Christian aspects of the RE syllabus. The other world religions are covered through specially focused days. Pupils discuss ethical issues although written work in their books could be more challenging. Marking is clear and has good questions to encourage the pupils to think more deeply. The local church is used as a resource for appropriate RE lessons. Displays in the school show a range of RE topics although they could be more interactive. Although it appeared on the day of the inspection that pupils interviewed did not enjoy RE lessons, evidence from the staff seemed to suggest otherwise. It would therefore be helpful to include pupils in a review of the effectiveness of RE across the school. The school ensures that there is sufficient time made available for RE during the week. The RE co-ordinator monitors the lessons and governors also visit, although there is no report written for the governing body. There has not been any professional development for the whole staff in RE in recent years although a session is planned later this term. RE is an important part of the school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and this has a good impact on pupil behaviour and attitudes.

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

The head teacher has a strong vision for the school based on Christian values, which is shared by the staff. They work well together as a team and provide a consistent approach to teaching and learning. Parents at the school speak highly of the atmosphere created by the staff. The governing body has a positive relationship with the school although it has not yet put robust monitoring and evaluation processes in place. This hinders them from being able to support and challenge the school appropriately. The school development plan, although having a section for RE and Collective Worship, does not contain any challenging targets or new innovations to help the school to improve its provision in these areas. Individual governors have some ideas for the future but there is not enough time given to debating these. However, it is important to record that since the previous inspection there has been a very necessary emphasis on raising the standards of literacy and numeracy and this has taken much time. Together, the governing body and the school has worked hard to improve these areas and is now in a favourable position to be able to move forward in the equally important areas of RE and Collective Worship. The key issues from the previous inspection have mostly been achieved with the exception of the monitoring and reporting on Collective Worship. One of the foundation governors has recently attended training on Church School Distinctiveness and the head teacher has also benefitted from attending courses on the new inspection system and 'Stilling and Reflection'. The school has well established links with the local church. These include a Fun Church club which meets monthly as an after school activity. This gives a further opportunity for pupils to enhance their spiritual development.

St Margaret's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School Close, Tintinhull, Yeovil, Somerset. BA22 8PX September 2007