National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Saint Mary's Church of England Aided Primary School,
Mucklestone,
Market Drayton,
Shropshire.
TF9 4DN

Diocese: Lichfield

Local authority: Lichfield
Date of inspection: September 24th 2007
Date of last inspection: May 6th 2002
School's unique reference number: 124342
Headteacher: Mrs Judy Udale
Inspector's name and number: Mr Huw Williams : 348

School context

Saint Mary's Church of England Aided is a small primary school situated in the middle of the village of Mucklestone. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. After a period of instability the school is now looking forward more positively. A newly appointed Headteacher started at the school this September.

Summary Judgement

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Saint Mary's as a Church of England school are satisfactory.

Saint Mary's is an inclusive school where all feel valued and special The school provides a safe and stimulating environment in which the children are keen to learn. The Headteacher, Chair and Foundation Governors are committed to developing the school as a church school.

Established strengths

- Good quality collective worship, which impacts on the school's distinctiveness.
- Children's personal, social and moral development is consistently supported throughout the school by all staff.
- Children's good behaviour and caring support they show towards each other.

Focus for development

- Provide training for Staff and Foundation Governors so that they can evaluate the Christian distinctiveness of the school.
- Include Foundation Governors, children, and staff in developing a systematic approach to monitoring, assessment and evaluation in Worship and Religious Education
- Use the different worship settings to support children in the planning and leading of worship.

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

Caring and supportive relationships between pupils and staff reflect the school's Christian ethos. The creation of a 'family ethos' within the school helps encourage the children in developing a sense of identity and security. Pupils speak positively about the school, they enjoy being at school, and acknowledge that the '*teachers make things special for them'.* Visual Christian displays and symbols, in the entrance area, are limited. Parents were pleased with the positive way the new school year had started and recognised that the newly appointed Headteacher had already made encouraging changes. Pupils recognize the significance of rules and have a good understanding of what is right and wrong. This means

that in the main pupils behaviour is good. Pupils are very supportive of each other and there is genuine concern shown by the older pupils towards the younger ones. Pupils enjoy the learning experiences provided and work well together showing good support for those in difficulty. They are well aware that they belong to a church school and that this supports its caring ethos. The School Council and ECO committee have a positive influence and ensure pupils are involved in decision making in school. The after school Christian JAFFA club is very popular and is seen as a vital link between school, church and community in supporting the children's spiritual development. Children's achievements both academic and non academic are promptly recognised and rewarded. Children and staff show a high degree of care for and consideration towards each other. Staff are good role models. Relationships in the school and the wider community are good, reflecting the ethos and values of the school. The school site has potential for many creative and spiritual opportunities. In addition the creation of space to be reflective in the classrooms is important to the pupils' spiritual development.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective Worship has a high status in the school. The well planned three year Collective Worship programme ensures children's enthusiasm for worship. They remember details of favourite worship times. Staff regularly attend whole school worship and this not only supports its importance within the school but also reinforces the school's 'family ethos'. Pupils are aware of the distinctive nature of worship and enter and exit the hall in a quiet and respectful way. In the worship observed they interacted appropriately with the leader and sang with enthusiasm and actions to the hymn *'Lord I lift your name on high'*. Pupils also recognise the significance of being quiet and reflective as a valuable time for personal thinking. Children, parents and community are welcomed to the church for all the major festivals. This is a time for the whole community to share in celebration. The newly introduced Eucharist service has had a positive impact in the school and community. The recently retired Vicar had, during his time in the parish, made a positive contribution to the spiritual and pastoral life of the school. Understanding Anglican rituals is supported through school worship by the use of prayer and symbols. Children are keen to talk about their faith.

The effectiveness of the religious education is satisfactory

Religious Education is recognised as an essential component of the whole school curriculum and is managed well by the coordinator. Teaching and learning is good. This was evidenced in the lesson on '*How God breaks down barriers'*. A variety of teaching and learning techniques were well used such as 'hot seating' and group work. There was also good use of information technology and the bible. Pupils enjoyed their lessons, listened attentively and interacted well with the teacher. Children work willingly and respond readily with enthusiasm and enjoyment to the tasks presented. The school recognises that although there is a system for assessing achievement it fails to identify key factors related to raising standards. Monitoring and assessment of the subject is not fully implemented. This restricts pupils' potential. Overall standards are in line with Diocesan expectations.

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

The newly appointed Headteacher, with the support of the Worship/RE co-ordinator, Chair and Foundation Governors is committed to promoting a Christian vision for the school. There is strong support of the school's church foundation and along with the Christian ethos is seen as an important aspect in promoting the school within the community. The Foundation Governors role in monitoring and evaluating the worship life of the school is yet to be fully developed. Governors are supportive of the school but have recognised that they need to be more challenging**.** There are good links with the local church. The school and the vicar have worked together to provide the children with many experiences of Anglican traditions. With the retirement of the vicar, and the church now in a period of interregnum, Foundation Governors are crucial to the success of maintaining church school links. After a time of instability the new headteacher's vision for improvement has already made parents feel more confident in their relationships with the school and that their concerns will be dealt with fairly. Parents consulted during the inspection were pleased with the progress made by their children not only academically but also with the level of care they receive. They are also supportive of the school's community involvement and are happy with the readiness of their

children to attend school. The school generates positive attitudes, a clear vision and is working hard to ensure a successful future.

Saint Mary's Church of England Aided Primary School, Mucklestone, Market Drayton, Shropshire. TF9 4DN September 2007