

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Saint Matthew's Bloxam Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Webb Ellis Road,
Rugby,
Warwickshire.
W22 7UA

Diocese: Coventry

Local authority: Warwickshire

Dates of inspection: January 30th 2008

Date of last inspection: March 2003

School's unique reference number: 130883

Headteacher: Mrs Suki Owers Acting Headteacher: Gerry Bailey

Inspector's name and number: Mr David Huw Williams : 348

School context

Saint Matthew's school is situated close to the centre of the town of Rugby. An acting headteacher is covering for the headteacher who is currently on maternity leave. The newly appointed deputy headteacher took up her post in January 2008. Although the majority of the children are from white British backgrounds there is a significant number of children from different ethnic minority groups.

Summary Judgement

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Saint Matthew's as a Church of England school are good.

Strong Christian principles underpin all aspects of school life and this has a positive impact upon pupils' learning and behaviour. The creation of a safe and secure community ensures that the children are maturing both spiritually and academically. The caring attitudes of the staff exemplify the way in which the school's Christian principles are the foundation to its drive to be successful.

Established strengths

- The commitment of the headteacher and staff to the care and support of all pupils.
- The good links between the school and the church.
- The support for the school and the confidence expressed in it by governors and parents.
- The children's good personal, social, moral and spiritual development is consistently supported throughout the school by all staff.

Focus for development.

- Extend the variety of worship settings and style so that pupils can have greater involvement.
- Build on the good links between the church and the school by using it as a resource to support the development of Anglican rituals and traditions.

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

The recently appointed headteacher, ably supported by senior staff and governors, is establishing a positive climate where all pupils are challenged to achieve. She is determined to ensure that the school's ethos is underpinned by Christian values. There is already evidence to support this in the love, care and respect afforded to all. The totally inclusive nature of the school helps to encourage in the children a sense of identity and security. Pupils, parents and visitors feel welcome, safe and valued. Pupils and parents are confident in the structures for help and support within the school. Parents commented positively '*that there is a lovely feel to the school*' and '*that we all are treated fairly and with respect.*' Pupils' behaviour is good. This is due in the main to a very positive behaviour policy and the excellent support that is afforded to all the children. The school council is an affirmative influence and ensures pupils are involved in decision making in school. Decisions made include involvement in setting up the quiet reflective area outside and the selection

of new playground equipment. There is enthusiastic support for charities which has helped the children to look outwards and foster a caring ethos of service and gratitude. The staff's good use of the knowledge they have of the individual pupil enables them to provide the support and challenge they need for successful achievement. Children's achievements both academic and non academic are promptly recognised, rewarded and celebrated through a system of appropriate awards. The school's Christian distinctiveness is supported by symbols and displays. The entrance area had several good displays, the '*Epiphany board*' and the excellent '*Give thanks*' display are first-rate examples. A Christian logo on the school badge and permanent Christian symbols around the school would help to reinforce the schools' distinctiveness and help the children to know that this is a church school. The spiritual development of the children is encouraged through reflection at worship. The recent creation of a quiet space in the school grounds and the delightful '*sanctuary*' area inside the school are good and positive additions in support of the children's spiritual development. Relationships in the school and the wider community are good, reflecting the philosophy and values of the school. The school has established positive and beneficial links with the nursery unit who occupy buildings on the same school site. All staff are good role models for the children. The positive status that religious education is given is in recognition of its importance to the spiritual and cultural well being of the pupils. Appropriate consideration is given to the learning of different faiths in addition to Christianity.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Worship is an important part of the everyday life of the school. A good variety of themes have been delivered by an appropriate number of leaders and these include governors, clergy and other faith representatives. The two year worship programme is supplemented with themes based around Christian festivals. The well planned collective worship is presently informally evaluated. The introduction of a more formal monitoring and evaluation process is the next step to ensure consistently high quality worship. All staff regular attendance at worship would help to reinforce the family ethos of the school. Parents welcome the invitation to be part of worship at the church and would like this to extend to appropriate worship in the school. Pupils are aware of the distinctive nature of worship and enter and exit the hall in a quiet and respectful way. Children speak positively about worship and look forward to the daily act of worship. In the worship observed on '*how our thoughts and actions impact upon other people*' children were used in a positive way to explain the story of 'Rosa Parkes.' Children responded well to the appropriate call to prayer and to the time of quiet reflection. The children were attentive and respond well with thoughts and opinions. The children love singing and appreciate the special assembly time dedicated to this. Pupils are not at present involved in leading worship and this is an area for development. Children's wider experience of worship is supported through Key Stage worship. The church and school come together for special festivals in the church to which the parents are invited. Relevant understanding of Anglican rituals is aided by appropriate prayers and symbols used in worship. This is underpinned by regular visits to the school by the vicar and members of the church community.

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

The recently appointed headteacher has a very clear vision for the school. The core of which is the creation of a loving, caring environment, based upon a Christian foundation which will underpin the school's drive for continual improvement. Good relationships between the governors and the school have positively enhanced the educational provision for the children. Governors are supportive of the school's progress which has had a positive impact upon pupil's achievement. Foundation governors support the schools Christian distinctiveness and must keep this as a constant priority in the school's development. The newly appointed deputy headteacher is enthusiastic in her support of ensuring that this important dimension of school life is taken forward. Adults in the school provide very good role models. The headteacher values the support from the chair, governors and the church. The foundation governor's role in monitoring and evaluating the worship life of the school is as yet limited. The school, the vicar and the church are working together to provide the children with good experiences of the Anglican rituals and the Christian cycle of festivals. Links have been established with the diocese. The children are eager to share their views with others and play their part in the development of the pastoral and social life of the school. Parents consulted during the inspection were very supportive of the school. Parents were also pleased with the school's community involvement and the happiness and the readiness of the children to regularly attend school.