

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

St. Andrew's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Dunstan Road,
Burnham on Sea
TA8 1ER

Diocese: Bath and Wells

Local authority: Somerset

Dates of inspection: 5th December 2007

Date of previous inspection: 7th, 8th, 9th July 2003

School's unique reference number: 123785

Headteacher: Mr. S. James

Inspector's name and number: Susan Walker 391

School context

St. Andrew's Church of England Junior school is a popular school with a steadily growing role. There are 299 children most of whom are of white British origin. Five children have statements of special educational need and five have English as an additional language. Children come mainly from Burnham on Sea and are from mixed social and economic backgrounds. The school building has recently been extensively refurbished.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St. Andrew's Junior School as a Church of England school are outstanding.

The Christian character of the school has a dynamic impact on the lives of the children. This is seen in the loving and caring relationships between all members of the school community. It is reflected in excellent preparation of the children as citizens with Christian values through its outstanding provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Established strengths

- The place of Worship at the heart of school life that is a reflection of the strong Christian values of school leaders.
- The strong links between Church and school that have a positive impact on the children's developing understanding of the Anglican faith.
- The preparation of children as future citizens through outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.

Focus for development

- Provide children with opportunities to learn about other forms of Christian worship.
- Make explicit reference to the development of Christian spirituality in curriculum policies.
- Extend opportunities for prayer during the school day.

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

The strong Christian ethos in the school is reflected in every aspect of its life, from the Prospectus and displays of Christian artefacts and symbols through to very strong caring relationships between children and all adults. This is because of the Christian commitment of the headteacher who is very well supported by all staff and by a very effective partnership with the Church led by Foundation Governors. Children are happy in school and they and their parents are confident that their views are taken seriously by all adults throughout the school day and through the work of the School Council. Children have a very good knowledge of Christian festivals and of their meaning. Worship and religious education provide outstanding support for the spiritual and cultural dimensions of children's lives. Many opportunities are given for them to reflect on their feelings and to develop their spirituality, especially through music and art. However, curriculum policies do not give sufficient

guidance on ways of developing explicitly Christian spirituality. Excellent behaviour, good manners and the self confidence of children illustrate outstanding social development. Foundation Governors are very supportive of the school and are fully involved in monitoring and evaluating its work through regular formal as well as informal visits to school. Parents speak enthusiastically about the impact of the school's teaching on their children's understanding of right and wrong and on their ability to reflect on their own beliefs and those of others. They are unanimous in their praise of the school as a church school and its popularity is reflected by a rising role.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding.

Worship is central to the life of the school and has a very positive impact on the lives of the children, especially on the spiritual dimension of their development. Children say that they enjoy this special time in the school day, particularly the lighting of the candle. Worship is regarded by school leaders as being at the heart of the school's Christian ethos and of its high aspirations for children. Its impact on the lives of the children is seen through the very caring attitudes that they have towards each other. They talk about worship themes that help them to learn how to behave towards each other, for example themes about courage, selfishness and actions speaking louder than words. They are given many opportunities to contribute to Worship through leading class assemblies and through helping during Worship led by adults. The Vicar regularly leads Worship and his contributions are very popular with the children. However, there are limited opportunities provided to widen their understanding of other forms of Christian worship. A carefully planned and detailed Worship programme is based on the Christian calendar. The programme gives excellent support for the development of Christian spirituality and for, moral, social and cultural guidance based on Christian values. It also provides excellent guidance to all adults who lead services. During the inspection children were prepared for Christmas through being led to understand its true meaning through reflecting on the giving and receiving of Christmas cards. Children's attitudes to Worship are outstanding. They demonstrate genuine interest and enthusiasm to participate. They praise God in wholehearted high quality singing whilst showing true reverence as they pray and as they enter and leave the hall. There is a mature understanding of the meaning of prayer. Children know the Lord's prayer and some say that they pray at home on their own. However, there are limited opportunities for prayer at other times during the school day. Links with the Parish Church are very strong. The whole school community is joined by, governors, parents and members of the congregation as they celebrate major Christian festivals. These occasions are very popular with the parents who appreciate opportunities to Worship with their children in a community that is "like a family".

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

School leaders have established a learning community that has Christian values at its heart. This is reflected in the high expectations of an effective staff team who fully support leaders' vision for the development of the school as a church school. It is also seen in the very high standards achieved by all children in all areas of their lives. The commitment to sustaining and developing the Christian Character of the school is clearly identified in school documentation, for example in the prospectus and on the web site. Curriculum policies give guidance on providing opportunities for children to reflect on their feelings in order to support spiritual development. Christian values are implied in these policies, but opportunities are missed to explicitly identify those experiences that will develop distinctively Christian spirituality through reflecting on and celebrating God's work in the world. The leadership team has a clear vision of how to sustain and improve the work of the school as a Christian community through its monitoring and evaluation programme. Foundation Governors are fully involved in this through frequent formal as well as informal visits to school. Parents and children are very appreciative of the many opportunities provided for them to contribute to the development of the school. Parents are asked their views through questionnaires and their responses are published on the web site. Children are asked their views about Worship and religious education lessons and their responses are used to suggest areas for improvement.