

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

St Peter's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Alvescot

Bampton

OX18 2PU

Diocese: Oxford

Local Authority: Oxfordshire

Date of inspection: 7 February 2008

Date of last inspection: October 2003

School's Unique reference number: 123189

Name of Headteacher: Mrs Sam King

Inspector's name and NS inspector's number: Mrs Mari Powell 143

Context

This rural Infants' school is situated in a very attractive small village near a large RAF base. The school is very proud of its links with its local community. A recent Ofsted inspection judged the school to be outstanding.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Peter's as a Church of England school are outstanding

A deeply held belief in Christian values permeates all aspects of the life of the school. Everyone connected with the school is totally dedicated to the school's mission "to provide the best possible education for each child in a happy, caring, secure and stimulating Christian environment".

Established strengths

- The inspired vision and leadership of the headteacher, fully supported by all the staff.
- The dedication and energy of the governors.
- The school's excellent relationship with its families and the wider local community.

Focus for development

There are no foci for development.

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

The school provides an outstanding quality of personal and academic development for all its learners. Its overt and deeply held commitment to promoting a Christian ethos as an underpinning for all activities is the factor that drives the life of the school. The quality of care for every member of the school develops their sense of self worth and very successfully promotes their spiritual, moral and social growth. The adults provide an excellent role model of sensitive and reflective attitudes. In turn, the children treat each other with respect and revel in their mutual achievements. One child, commenting on celebration assemblies observed "I love clapping for my friends". A refreshing sense of common purpose binds the whole community, embracing those working daily in the school, governors, families and the wider community including that provided through church links. The indoor and outdoor environments have a spiritual quality which reflects how the Christian faith is embedded in the school's work. It also reflects a well developed appreciation of the natural world.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Acts of worship are seen as a very enjoyable part of each school day. In the words of one child "I love all of it". Another observed how she liked the quiet moments when she could "talk to God". School leaders are clear in their view that this period of the day is special. Acts of worship are meticulously and thoughtfully planned around a very appropriate range of themes. The planning takes very good account of the church calendar and of events and stories in the Bible. When appropriate, and to support learning in religious education, themes and events in other religions such as Judaism are included. The children spoke readily of how much they enjoyed special periods of worship in church, and the involvement of church leaders. The children recognise the rhythm of the church year and anticipate the various festivals with pleasure. They willingly undertake lead roles and value opportunities to read and say prayers. Children and adults consistently spoke of their appreciation of the fact that an area of a large classroom has been set aside for worship. This has made it possible to set up a worship table, the contents of which are changed as appropriate and which provides an inviting focus for spiritual reflection.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

The high standards seen at the last inspection have been maintained. Planning and monitoring of teaching as well as regular assessment of children's progress and levels of understanding are very well established. They ensure that high standards are the norm. The children have a remarkably good knowledge of Bible stories. They are able to talk in some detail about the life of Jesus and the stories he told. One child remarked "Jesus wanted to tell his stories so that people could do the right thing". Observation of lessons revealed how well the children have understood the underlying messages of the parables. One class gave very clear interpretations of the significance of seeds falling on different ground and how this could be applied to the human condition. Teachers plan their work very well and use a variety of attractive resources to engage interest. Some excellent art work accompanied displays of work in religious education. Children were eager to talk about these and showed very good recall of what they had learned and recorded in their drawings and paintings. Learning in religious education makes a very significant contribution to the spiritual, moral and cultural development of the children.

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

The school is led by an inspired headteacher, very well supported by the staff who provide a high quality of teaching. The knowledgeable and dedicated governors know the school very well and are tireless in support of the drive for continuing improvement. They provide excellent pastoral support for all the staff and also perform the necessary role of critical friends with great dedication and insight. The foundation governors, together with leaders of local churches have a very strong commitment to fostering the best qualities of the school to ensure that its Christian character is recognised and maintained across the wider community. The headteacher is dedicated to ensuring that the whole community feels ownership of the school. Parents were loud in their praise for all the school's outreach activities and the quality of communication with all its constituents. They greatly appreciate the fact that the school regularly canvasses their views on different matters and responds to them. The quality of leadership and management of this school is pivotal in the success that the school enjoys. A prominent feature is the sharp, sensitive evaluation of the distinctive Christian ethos and practice of the school in which all school leaders engage.