

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

The Queen's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Cumberland Road
Kew
Richmond
Surrey
TW9 3HJ

Diocese: Southwark

Local authority: Richmond Upon Thames
Dates of inspection: 18 and 26 November 2008
Date of last inspection: May 2005
School's unique reference number: 102921
Headteacher: Jane Goodlace
Inspector's name and number: John Viner NS144

School context

The Queen's Primary School is of historic foundation with a royal connection. This two-form entry school is located in the prosperous area of Kew in the Borough of Richmond upon Thames. Attainment on entry is above the national average while the percentage of pupils with learning difficulties or English as an additional language are lower than average. There are good links with the nearby Parish Church of St Anne's and with the other Kew Anglican churches. Slightly more than half the learners attend Christian churches.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of The Queen's School as a Church of England school are outstanding

Every aspect of the school's work is rooted in and founded on Christian values. This provides a rich environment for the spiritual development of both staff and pupils. The strong, cohesive Christian vision that is shared and promoted by the headteacher and governors promotes high standards and encourages the whole school community to combine in ensuring that pupils become responsible, compassionate people with a strong foundation to their lives. The school is a beacon of Christian love and care.

Established strengths

- The strong strategic Christian vision of the headteacher and Governors that is communicated to all stakeholders.
- Christian values underpin every aspect of the school's work.
- Collective Worship and prayer are at the heart of the school.
- Religious Education (RE) is given high priority by staff and pupils resulting in high standards.

Focus for development

- Embed the assessment of RE so that pupils know how well they are doing.
- Provide sufficient release time for the leaders of RE to monitor its provision across the school
- Consider extending the use of the cross as a visual reminder in all classrooms rather than a few

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

Christian values underpin the school and are evident in every aspect this popular Church school. Staff and pupils, governors and parents all understand the declared mission for every child, "to reach their full potential, nurtured and supported in a Christian community" and that it is lived out in the school's daily life. Pupils know that they are valued, special and cared for.

Both teachers and pupils comment, "there is a lot of love here". This creates the very high quality of relationships between and among adults and pupils and a wonderfully supportive environment where mutual care is evident. Teachers and other adults know the pupils well and, because of this, pupils know that they are safe and always have someone to turn to. One child remarked that the school was "like a holy family". Pupils know that prayer is important and experience joy and release in being able to pray privately and publicly. The prayer corners in each classroom provide good opportunities for both. This Christian ethos helps pupils to become responsible, mature, compassionate people who make good, informed moral choices with a sense of social responsibility. Because adults and pupils cooperate well there is very little conflict and, where there is, it is dealt with in a spirit of forgiveness and reconciliation. Pupils leave the school as well-rounded and responsible individuals with a positive view of others. One pupil remarked, "we are special because we all have talents and are actually very special." Some parents support the school through fundraising activities while others do so in regular prayer, although this has been more difficult since they lost a place to meet. The school building is bright and welcoming, while the Christian displays in the entrance lobby and elsewhere immediately confirm to the visitor that this is a Church school. Crosses at various points in the building and in some classrooms, but not all, confirm the school's Christian identity. The school has judged this aspect of its work to be good overall but the high quality of relationships and the underlying Christian values make it outstanding and staff, pupils, governors and parents are right to be proud of it.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship has a central and core place in the school. Through worship pupils develop their spiritual awareness, celebrate together and understand the importance of prayer. The daily act of worship is, for both learners and staff, a special time. This is reflected in the pupils' excellent attitudes, enthusiasm and reverence, with which they take part. Worship is carefully planned around weekly themes, providing a focus for thought and sometimes for action. Pupils enjoy the opportunities for personal response and reflection and this helps them grow in understanding and commitment. Several pupils remarked how the recent Remembrance assembly had touched and moved them. Whether as a whole school or in separate key stages, worship leaders - which include the headteacher, staff and visiting clergy - lead sensitively. They use a good variety of approaches that engage the pupils, including elements of Anglican worship, which help to prepare pupils for own experience of church. Music and choral singing in worship, often accompanied by the school's excellent orchestra, are outstanding. Sometimes classes prepare and lead their own acts of worship. These occasions are open to parents who attend in large numbers. Some worship takes place in church, when parents attend in even greater numbers. Parents speak highly of these times, especially of the moving Leavers' service, when Year 6 pupils are each presented with a Bible. One parent remarked that, "it is as if every child has been blessed". Through worship pupils learn the importance of prayer and how to apply it to their own lives. They learn respect for each other so that pupils of all faiths and of none are able to enjoy worship, and learn from it. Because worship is so important to the school community it contributes to an atmosphere of spiritual depth that is embedded in its culture so that, when prayers are said at the end of the school day, these too become part of worship and of pupils' deepening encounter with Christianity. The school has judged this aspect of its work to be good overall but this does not do justice to the quality of worship or the positive impact that it has on the work and life of the school. It is outstanding.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

Because RE is given high priority in the school it is a strength and aspects of it are outstanding. Pupils are clear that RE is as important as other core subjects and they work hard, some of them producing work of a very good standard. Standards are above the expectations of the diocesan syllabus on which RE is based because the subject is well taught by knowledgeable teachers and pupils value it. One pupil remarked, "this isn't any subject, this is RE!" The very good attention paid by pupils means that their knowledge and understanding are above expectations for their age. They recognise this and are rightly proud; in the words of one child, "we know the Bible well; if a teacher asks for an example of a parable everybody can answer with lots." This good knowledge of the Bible, and key aspects of other faiths, makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development. Teachers teach with great sensitivity about other faiths as well as Christianity,

ensuring that artefacts from them are treated with due reverence and respect. This helps all pupils to develop healthy and respectful attitudes to those who have a different faith position from their own. RE lessons are well planned and supported by plenty of good resources. Teachers ensure that there are opportunities for pupils not only to learn about religion but also to apply this learning to their lives so that it is relevant to them. In addition, members of the parish clergy visit the school to teach specifically Anglican aspects of RE, such as the sacrament of baptism. RE is well managed by enthusiastic teachers who provide good support and advice to their colleagues. They in turn are well supported by diocesan officers who have provided training for all the staff. There has not been sufficient time for the subject leaders to monitor the delivery of RE or share best practice among teachers and the assessment of pupils' progress is not yet embedded enough for pupils really to know how well they are doing. The school has rightly judged this aspect of its work to be good overall, with outstanding contributions to pupils' spiritual development.

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

The combined leadership of the school operates in a climate of a completely shared vision and total mutual trust and it is this that makes leadership outstanding. The parents also share the trust and understand the vision. The highly regarded headteacher is shortly to move onto another post and parents made it quite clear that they have complete faith in the governors to secure the right successor. The strategic vision for the school that is articulated by headteacher, incumbent and governors is firmly rooted in Christian values. This Christian vision for the school is evident in all public and internal documentation so that each stakeholder is aware of its underpinning nature. The headteacher's strong leadership and clear spiritual guidance are appreciated and respected by staff and parents alike. Governors know their school well and effectively share strategic leadership with the headteacher. They have taken responsibility for regularly canvassing the views of parents so that they not only know the school's strengths and weaknesses but are in touch with parents and families and know about their children. There are excellent relationships with each Anglican church in Kew and especially with the parish church of St Anne's. The incumbent is highly regarded for the chaplaincy support that he provides for the staff and families of the school, regular church attenders or not. This is a very happy and inclusive school where the views of staff, parents and pupils are valued. Pupils are proud of their School Council and know that their views are taken seriously. They point to decisions they have made, especially in regard to charity support, that have had an impact on the school. Their parents say how proud they are of the responsible, caring attitudes their children show to others as a result of the good guidance they receive at school. There is a real sense of Christian community, illustrated by the pupils' Fair Trade presentation to the governing body, which was instrumental in the parochial church council's decision to become a Fair Trade parish. The strong partnership between the various stakeholders and their shared evaluation of the school's work is correctly judged by the school to be outstanding.