

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools

### **Treeton Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School**

Wood Lane

Treeton

Rotherham

S60 5QS

**Diocese: Sheffield**

LA: Rotherham

Date of Inspection: June 7<sup>th</sup> 2007

Dates of last inspection: February 2002

School's Unique Reference Number: 106946

Headteacher: Mr Philip Haller

Inspectors' name and number: Margaret Ralph 272

#### **Context**

Treeton School is an average sized primary school serving a former mining village whose population is changing as new housing is built in the area. There are 250 pupils on roll who come mainly from Treeton village. There are currently no pupils speaking English as an additional language and the percentage with learning disabilities or difficulties is below average. Staffing is generally very stable and reflects the commitment to the children by the whole school community.

#### **The Distinctiveness and Effectiveness of Treeton Church of England Primary School are Outstanding**

Treeton School is a very good school with many outstanding features. Pupils are nurtured as part of an extended Christian family, and the headteacher's vision has created a rich learning environment in which children and adults thrive because each individual is valued. Pupils are proud of their school, respect their teachers and enjoy every moment of their day; as a result they achieve well and are confident and articulate young people with a strong sense of commitment to each other.

#### **Established strengths**

- The vision, commitment and strong leadership of the headteacher, ably supported by the staff and Governing Body.
- The high quality of teaching in RE and collective worship, leading to very good levels of understanding, achievement and progress
- The very good relationships between all those working in the school and with the parish church.

#### **Focus for development**

- Develop the global dimension of the school's provision to develop learners' understanding of the world-wide Anglican Communion..
- Put in place a formal monitoring system for Governors so that they can fulfil their monitoring role in relation to collective worship and RE.

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

The school's strong Christian ethos permeates all aspects of its life. Staff, adults and children recognise this as being the foundation of the outstanding relationships between all adults and children in the school. It is visible in the warm, welcoming and friendly atmosphere and in the way in which pupils' personal development and well being are fostered. Each child is known and cared for as an individual and as a result they show similar care and respect for each other. They have a strong awareness of those less fortunate than themselves and are involved in supporting a number of

charities such as Children in Need and El Shadia Charitable Trust. The distinctively Christian character of the school is evident from the signage outside the school and the very visible cross on the roof; inside the building Christian signs and symbols are very visible and there are many high quality displays of a religious nature, incorporating the children's work and celebrating their growing understanding of Christianity. A panel in the school hall links the cross to the village's mining history and older children can talk with pride about what this means. The Christian ethos of the school is tangible and often commented upon by parents and visitors. Although the school population comes from predominantly non-religious families, parents do value the strong principles that the school affirms and frequently choose the school because they strongly believe that the ethos and the values underpinning it will give their children the very best start to their education. Children love coming to school, they are happy and secure and speak of seeing it as an extension of their family. There is a very strong sense of care and compassion at every level. This is evident in the way the children take responsibility for each other, ensuring that no-one is without a friend or someone to look after them if they are distressed. The behaviour of children is very good and they know that they must speak out if they are aware of other children being bullied, as this will not be tolerated. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. They have a clear understanding of right and wrong and a strong sense of justice.

**Overall, the impact of Collective Worship on the learners is good.**

Collective worship is a very strong feature in the life of the school and provides a meaningful focus to each day, encouraging reflection and reverence. Worship is carefully planned and regularly evaluated and the majority of staff lead worship regularly. The incumbent and a local youth leader from the Rivers Team also lead a series of acts of worship; representatives of other faiths occasionally lead worship and they all bring an added and valued dimension to the children's experience. Christian symbols and displays around the hall, as well as reflective music contribute to the atmosphere and children respond to this with extremely high standards of behaviour and concentration. They sing well, and contribute with thoughtful responses to questions, and a willingness to take part by playing an instrument, reading a prayer, contributing to discussion or acting out a role. The pattern of worship reflects Anglican practice, and children are familiar with simple responses such as the Grace and a number of prayers, which are also used at lunchtime and the end of the day. The termly school Eucharist is seen as a very special occasion by staff, children and their parents, in which they are fully involved. Some older pupils can articulate what this means to them and speak of the 'holy' atmosphere in church and of 'being in God's house'. The school community regularly visits church for festivals and special events and are well supported by both parents and Governors.

**The effectiveness of Religious Education in the school is outstanding.**

RE is recognised as an important subject in the curriculum and makes a very strong contribution to the spiritual and moral development of the children. Pupils' achievements and progress in all key stages are very good. This is because the teaching is extremely well planned, imaginatively delivered and uses questioning skills very effectively to tease out the children's understanding. Lessons are stimulating, they are well resourced and they provide a high level of challenge to the learners, who remain interested and absorbed throughout. Teaching and support staff are skilled in helping children to make connections between what they are learning and their own lives. In KS1 children were able to discuss the symbolism of the school badge and to make the connection between a religious symbol and what it represented. KS2 children considered the parable of the workers in the vineyard and through hot-seating explored the issue of 'the labourer is worthy of his hire' with considerable maturity and balanced views. Good use is made of the Diocesan syllabus and other sources in long term planning, and the subject is well resourced. There are good cross-curricular links, such as the work in Y5 on Judaism within the context of a World War 2 project which led to some excellent writing about Anne Frank. Children learn about major world religions, focusing on the similarities between them and celebrating the beliefs of children from other faiths who may be in school at the time. However, there is little awareness of the wider Anglican communion. Opportunities for staff training have been limited in recent years because of budget constraints, but the subject leader provides strong and knowledgeable direction for staff. The assessment and recording of pupils' work is informal and uses evaluation of lessons and pupil responses to ensure progress, which is good.

### **Leadership and management of the school as a church school is good.**

The headteacher and staff provide very strong leadership and a sense of direction that ensures learners achieve well and develop as well-rounded individuals in a supportive and caring environment. They are supported by a strong and active Governing Body who understand their role, are committed to the school and act as true critical friends, challenging and supporting as appropriate. Everything that happens in school has a meaning and purpose that is clear and evident to all who work there or visit this vibrant community. The leadership style is democratic, encouraging all staff to lead in their own area of expertise for the benefit of others; this makes them feel valued and so they give of their best. The headteacher and staff are very effective in their approach to the assessment and the monitoring of RE and collective worship and governors are beginning to become more directly involved in monitoring. Pupils are given some opportunities to develop their own leadership skills through being members of the school council, helping in collective worship and informally at playtime and lunchtime. There is scope to further develop this area. The views of parents are sought through questionnaires and the open door policy which parents value and use. They speak strongly of the school being at the heart of the community and as a place where their children are "safe and secure, able to be valued for what they have to offer and can share and celebrate their successes with their extended family, the school" There are also strong links between the school, the parish church and the village community and pupils become engaged in local projects which widen their horizons.

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