

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Trinity Newport Church of England Voluntary Aided Middle School

Wellington Road,
Newport
PO30 5QY

Diocese: Portsmouth

Local authority: Isle of Wight

Dates of inspection: 26th April 2007

Date of last inspection: February 2000

School's unique reference number: 118220

Headteacher: Mrs Patricia Goodhead

Inspector's name and number: Andrew Rickett 201

School context

Trinity CE VA Middle School is an average size school for pupils aged 9-13 years. It is the only CE Voluntary Aided school on the Isle of Wight and has a very wide catchment area that feeds from as many as 40 primary schools. Pupils come from an urban/rural mixed background. The number of children with learning difficulties or disabilities is below the national average. The majority of children are from a white British heritage.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Trinity CE VA as a Church of England school are outstanding

The great strength of Trinity CE Middle School lies in the exceptional quality and depth of thought given by everyone in the school community to understanding and developing their personal spiritual identity. This has created an environment with a rich and vibrant faith in which pupils and adults relish every opportunity to explore what it means to live a Christian life.

Established strengths

- All members of the school community have a tremendous commitment to the school's Christian ethos.
- The power of prayer is appreciated fully, with children recognising that it has a far-reaching effect and is a medium through which they can demonstrate Christian love to one another.
- Relationships throughout the school community are based on Christian dignity.

Focus for development

- Provide further opportunities for pupils to experience other faith groups.
- Implement a system to assess and track pupil progress in both attainment targets in Religious Education.

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

Pupils have a wonderful sense that there is something beyond the ordinary in life and that this feeling of otherness has the potential to be of tremendous importance in their lives. The school provides an exceptional environment in which pupils can explore their personal responses to this, by giving them access to a language through which they can express their thoughts and feelings. An environment has been created which encourages pupils to talk openly about their spirituality. The school has thought hard about how to create these opportunities and make them accessible to all pupils regardless of ability. Pupils relish the chance to explore this dimension in their lives and enjoy the challenge of finding a way to articulate their ideas. Pupils understand the vital necessity to understand and learn from their experiences and as one pupil put it, 'we come to school to learn about ourselves.' This emphasis on personal integrity has a profound effect on the development of the pupils. They have the opportunity to acquire a strong sense of identity and feeling of worth in the eyes of

God. They do this without becoming boastful or arrogant because it is a quiet inner strength which parents say will be of value to them for the rest of their lives. Attitudes towards school are very positive and pupils feel that they have an obligation to put something back into the school. This can be seen in the commitment they have to doing well in their learning and in their involvement in extra curricular activities. As a result, standards in the school are very high and learners of all abilities make excellent progress. Relationships between all members of the school community are based on a high level of trust so that pupils feel able to talk openly, knowing that they will be listened to and that their views will be respected by their peers as well as adults.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Worship has a central part to play in school life. It is through worship that the school delivers its core message that God is at the heart of their lives. The power of prayer is recognised by pupils and adults and its effect weaves its way throughout the life of the school. Pupils are able to explain that worship gives them the opportunity to discuss ideas and beliefs and the feelings and emotions that go with trying to understand them. They have a strong sense of something special during worship times and this was expressed by a pupil who said that the hall becomes church when the school worships together. Prayer is used throughout the school day as a time for reflection and this opportunity is highly valued. This was seen when pupils eagerly volunteered to lead their class in extemporaneous prayers and did so with great confidence. Prayer is of such importance that it is even continued when pupils attend church services on residential trips. Attitudes towards worship are excellent, with pupils saying that they particularly enjoy occasions when worship uses humour and actively involves them. Worship is held regularly at the local church where the vicar enjoys a position of authority and is treated with great affection by children and adults. Throughout the year the school holds a Eucharist for different groups of children and their parents. There are close links between the liturgy in the practices of the school and the local church community and this helps to engender a sense of family.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

Standards at KS 3 are exceptional with pupils making enough progress to take GCSE in religious education and achieving very high grades. For example, Year 8 pupils know that although signs and symbols can be an important part of a person's faith, it is in the way that people lead their lives that their commitment to their faith comes alive. In KS2 careful tracking and setting of challenging targets ensures that pupils of all abilities make excellent progress and also achieve very high standards. This was seen in a Year 5 class when pupils explained that parables can be interpreted so that they have a relevance to their lives today. Their views show a high level of maturity that has been carefully nurtured through the skilled questioning of the teachers. They have the confidence to tackle difficult questions and appreciate that some of them do not have clear answers. The quality of teaching overall is very good. In lessons where teaching is highly effective, pupils become stimulated and passionate because they are given opportunities to discuss great questions of faith with their peers. Pupils work very well with each other and listen with respect to opposing opinions. Attitudes towards RE are very good and as a result, pupils' standards are outstanding and all abilities achieve well in advance of expectations. Teachers provide very good role models for the pupils. They are skilful at drawing opinions out of the pupils and in good lessons this was done in such a way that pupils did not feel uneasy. The Co-ordinator for RE has only recently been in post but has already made a significant impact on the quality of the pupils' attitudes and responses to the subject. At Trinity School, religious education provides a marvellous opportunity for pupils to develop their spiritual dimension. The school is very well equipped with a good range of quality resources which are used appropriately to enhance the pupils' learning but the school recognises that it would like to increase the pupils' first hand experiences of other faiths.

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

The Headteacher has an exceptionally clear vision of the distinct qualities of the school. These are reflected in the community who genuinely see themselves as all belonging to the

family of Christ. The Headteacher leads the school in creating a unique environment where everyone has value in the eyes of God. She is fully supported in this by her staff and governors. The leadership of RE and spirituality is superbly led by two members of staff who share the same vision and have a clear grasp of where to take their areas next. The governors are an integral part of the school life and provide advice and support which goes beyond expectations. They are united in their commitment to the school's Christian foundation. The vicar is a very great pastoral strength of the school and a real rapport has developed between him and the school. He is held in enormous affection by the pupils and commands a high regard in the eyes of staff and parents. This creates a very strong bond between the school and church communities. Parents say that the school offers their children something special and speak of the 'otherness' that children seem to acquire. Parents value the explicit Christian values that the school promotes and are very happy that the school encourages a strong moral sense. In particular, parents express the view that the school gives their children an inner strength that will be an invaluable support for the rest of their lives.

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