

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Turnditch Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Ashbourne Road,
Turnditch, Belper,
Derbyshire.
DE56 2LH

Diocese: Derby

LA: Derbyshire

Date of inspection: 16th and 17th November 2006

Date of last inspection: 24th, 26th April 2001

School's Unique reference number: 112894

Name of Headteacher: Mr Mark Mallender

Inspector's name: Mr A R Gilroy National Society Number: 007

Context of the school

Turnditch Church of England VA Primary is a small, popular school serving a close-knit rural community in Derbyshire. The long-serving headteacher retired in the summer, the new head taking up his appointment at the start of the autumn term.

Summary Judgement

Turnditch is an outstanding Church of England Primary school with an exceptionally distinctive and effective ethos. The previous headteacher, working with the staff, governors, parents and the community, has developed a strong Christian ethos which has been embraced by the new headteacher as the school moves forward under his leadership.

Established strengths

- The quality of the leadership and management from the staff and governors
- The firm commitment of the school to the spiritual development of the children
- The distinctive and open Christian character of the school
- The depth of understanding for religious matters shown by the children
- The quality of Collective Worship

Focus for development

- Review the scheme of work used to teach Religious Education to make it more relevant for the learners in this school.
- Develop the role of the Foundation Governors in monitoring and evaluating the impact of Collective Worship and Religious Education on the children.

The impact of the distinctive Christian character of the school in meeting the needs of learners is outstanding

The school is exceptional in nourishing, encouraging and challenging the learners who are unusually confident in expressing their views and opinions, which are clearly and firmly rooted in Christian teachings. Learners show a pride in and ownership of their Christian school. They feel valued and special. The school works very effectively at addressing their needs and interests.

Parents appreciate the family atmosphere, the respect and values that are taught throughout the school - 'You can always tell a Turnditch child' -, which produces confident, articulate children. Teachers have a real concern for each and every child; they work in a nurturing environment, which enables the child to develop his or her potential. There is a strong emphasis on being part of a team, and on being part of both the school and the church community, which will stand them in good stead in the adult world.

Learners play across the age groups on the playground enjoying each other's company. No one can remember an incident of bullying or bad behaviour; the culture is such that right from the foundation class, learners are taught respect for one

another.

There is a system of rewards plus a weekly celebration assembly, which strongly demonstrates the value of and commitment to pupil achievement in all aspects of school life. This gives a good opportunity for children to be affirmed for their talents and acknowledged for their contribution to the life of the community.

The learners speak of happiness, opportunities to succeed and develop personal strengths and have a real sense of achievement at the school.

The Christian ethos is at the heart of the school curriculum. It makes excellent provision for learners of faith and of none, encouraging and challenging the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development of all.

The learners respect and value the opportunity for prayer and reflection in worship and at the end of the day and lunchtime.

The learners have a very positive sense of self-value. They have a good understanding of right and wrong and can explain the importance and reasons for good behaviour and that the concepts are based upon Christian teaching.

The school has a wide range of charitable giving to both national and international charities. Of particular note is the support that the community gives for a school in South Africa with which a strong relationship has been built.

A recent development has been the School Council, which has already given the learners a voice in the development of the school, which they value and enjoy.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

There is a strong sense of the spiritual in the school, in the conduct of all adults and staff. This is clearly enhanced by a strong commitment to placing worship at the heart of the life of the school and through relationships with the local parish.

The school does not have a hall so the children crowd into the largest classroom in a warm spiritual atmosphere. Music is played to set the tone; staff take it in turn to lead the worship. Stories are told that every child can relate to as they gather round the teller, they sit engaged and enthralled. The learners greatly value worship and see it as a vital component of their daily life. They like the lighting of the candle, the calm, peaceful atmosphere. They say that it is a time to be thoughtful, to pray and to consider the wonders of God's world. It is important to them to be all together in a close assembly to talk about God. One boy said that you could not replace worship, that the school would be emotionless without it.

School celebrations are regularly marked by joint services with the parish, which may be held in the school or in the church. Learners make valuable contributions to worship on a regular basis and in a structured way that makes good use of their talents, intellect and experience. They regularly play music, share experiences and, when the school worships in the parish church the learners lead in the service. The recent Remembrance service taken by the children in the church and attended by the whole community was a very thought provoking experience, which moved many of the older participants to tears.

The festivals of the Church Year are celebrated with services that involve the clergy and are held in the parish church.

The school, through a balanced programme gives the learners a variety of experiences during worship. Hymns, songs and prayers are appropriate to those present. They are related to the worship theme and contribute to the atmosphere.

The learners are able to recite the Lord's Prayer and know its meaning.

There is an age appropriate school Eucharist that takes place on Ascension Day in the parish church. The learners understand and value this occasion.

The vicar is regularly in school. Children enjoy this and see it as a highlight of their worship.

The effectiveness of Religious Education is good

The quality of teaching and learning is good and the subject makes a very significant contribution to the learners' spiritual and moral development, which is reflected in the life of the school.

RE is recognised by governors, SMT and other staff as being of particular importance in this Christian school and the subject's status reflects this.

Pupils' attitudes to RE are good; there is a high interest and learning is very effective. The learner's achievement in both attainment targets is good in relation to core subjects and the syllabus used and the quality of learners work over the year shows a good level of improvement.

The learners make use of a religious vocabulary with which to express their understanding of and belief in religious teachings.

Teachers are knowledgeable, confident, and enthusiastic and enjoy teaching RE.

They demonstrate a good knowledge of the subject and have prepared well.

Teaching may be lively and dynamic or quiet or reflective, depending on the topic, whilst being conscientious and interesting.

Learners, regardless of their faith background gain considerable spiritual and moral development and insight from RE. They can talk openly about their beliefs and acknowledge that staff and other learners take their views seriously.

There is challenge in discussion, activities and questioning which elicits a positive response from pupils and encourages learning. Their ideas are valued and followed through appropriately. Year 5-6 discussed the issue of the will of God and this raised fundamental issues for both the Christian learners and for those of no faith, which resulted in a stimulating discussion. Classmates listened to one boy, who says he does not believe in God, in a respectful manner whilst he expressed his views. He in turn heard them, as they eloquently expressed their faith.

In all the lessons observed, the learners were notably curious, questioning and reflective about the world that they live in, spiritual issues and moral challenges.

Currently the school follows the agreed syllabus for religious education. However, a review is needed to develop the syllabus to accommodate the needs of the learners and relate directly to the school's individual circumstances. As part of this review, the school should also consider how best to record pupil progress in a curriculum which is based around discussion and activity.

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

Turnditch is a church school deeply committed to the learners and the wider community that it serves so effectively. The headteacher, staff and governors speak confidently and accurately about the schools Christian vision. This is evident both within the school building and on printed material, signage and school uniform, which clearly communicate the Christian foundation of the school, which is well known by all the learners. The school is highly inclusive; parents, learners and other stakeholders speak positively of the way in which the school seeks and values their views.

The committed and well-qualified foundation governors strongly promote the meaning of the Christian status of the school through their work as members of the governing body. They make regular visits to the school to carry out their duties. They are active Christians who are committed to sharing their faith to the benefit of all.

Religious Education and Collective Worship are seen as important for the school, which takes every opportunity to include all staff in Collective Worship, to develop good resources for teaching and learning and to make best use of available advice.

The school enjoys the active, regular and informed support of virtually all parents in its role as a Christian worshipping community. The school has highly effective, productive and supportive pastoral and spiritual links with the local church community. The good contribution from the clergy and the church community to school life enables learners to confidently discuss spiritual matters. The church and school give practical and prayerful support to each other particularly over significant events.