

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### **Walkwood Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School Middle School**

Feckenham Road

Headless Cross

Redditch

Worcs

B97 5AQ

#### **Diocese: Worcester**

Local authority: Worcestershire

Dates of inspection: 18<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> September 2006

Date of last inspection: 1<sup>st</sup> November 1999

School's unique reference number: 116987

Head Teacher: Mr. Peter Garner

Inspector's name and number: Mrs. Lynne Phoenix 291

#### **School context**

Walkwood caters for over 700 nine to thirteen year-olds. School provision includes a Mainstream Autism Base for ten pupils and the proportion of children with special educational needs is higher than usual. Walkwood is oversubscribed but not the provided school for children from the parish Anglican First School, its intake being predominantly from a large, neighbouring Community school. A small number of pupils have faiths other than Christianity.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Walkwood Middle School as a Church of England school are outstanding.**

A deep spirituality, based on awe, wonder and a sense of God's mystery permeates the school, whose Christian stance is articulated in the Head Teacher's Vision and in the school's Statement of Christian Ethos and Character. A common purpose of inclusion, tolerance, respect and care encourages pupils and staff to value and create opportunities to contribute to each other's and the wider community's well-being. Strong links with local churches benefit all.

#### **Established strengths**

- Staff and pupil commitment to the very effective school support systems
- Global awareness demonstrated through links with other countries, educational visits to Europe and charitable work initiated by pupils and staff.
- The high quality of pupils' spiritual, moral, social, cultural and academic development.
- Whole school outdoor Eucharist to which parents and parishioners are invited.

#### **Focus for development**

- Imaginative use of the school hall for daily collective worship in order to evoke an extremely positive response from all those attending
- Frequent use of the school grounds and the church as settings for collective worship.
- An updated Collective Worship policy document to reflect the importance of worship in the school and how this is demonstrated.

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

The school's Christian values impact on the whole school community, across the curriculum, in standards of care and in relationships so that both academic and personal development of pupils is outstanding. An interactive focal point for reflection in the reception area, part of the main school thoroughfare, celebrates the Christian stance of the school and invites those

who pass by to pause and explore the implications of 'opening the door' to Jesus. Curricular displays around the school and the ongoing development of school grounds are indicative of the very high priority given to spiritual development. The school has achieved nationally recognised awards such as Artsmark, Healthy Schools Award and Eco Green Flag. Assessment for Learning is embedded into the curriculum and Self-evaluation is secure. Pupils are very well supported in all aspects of school life, especially when experiencing difficulty. Excellent role models are set by the Head Teacher and all adults in the school community who lead by example through their high standard of care, respect for each other and respect for the pupils. The school's Talkshop enables all pupils to express their views and influence school improvement.

**The impact of collective worship on the school community is good.**

Pupils value a daily opportunity for quiet reflection. A Year 8 pupil feels that worship 'helps you feel part of a community and loved by God.' Weekly whole school worship, led by the Head Teacher, has a powerful impact, particularly when pupils have the opportunity to develop the theme through discussion, role play and poetry on their return to class. Reports from pupils on their initiatives to raise funds for charity form part of collective worship, emphasising the Christian ethos of the school. Major Christian festivals and events in the life of the school are celebrated, both in school and in church, although each pupil only visits the church once a year. Pupils' response to the use of the local church and the outdoors as settings for worship is very positive and pupils suggested that greater use of these resources would be welcomed. Learners and staff of all faiths derive inspiration, spiritual growth and affirmation from collective worship, for example in their response to a school bereavement, when not only those at school but also two groups participating in residential visits sought the comfort of worship on hearing the news. Close links with the Parish Priest, who is a Foundation Governor, have supported both evaluation of collective worship at school and publicising of youth activities at the church. Contributions to worship are made by staff, pupils and outside speakers during the week when a variety of groupings makes a daily act of collective worship possible for everyone in the school community.

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

Christianity and the relationships stemming from it lie at the heart of the school's purpose and the stated aims are met well. The Head Teacher is fully committed to creating an excellent school, filled with tolerance, respect, awe and wonder, in which he is supported by staff and governors. Governors are actively involved in implementing the School Development Plan. The Head Teacher, senior management team and Parish Priest seek and respond to the views of parents and pupils over aspects to do with the school's distinctive Christian character and both school and community value its Christian distinctiveness. The Parish Priest is seen as a key link between the school and the local community and she provides effective leadership and support for the school. Indeed, there is a very supportive ethos throughout the school with teamwork and shared values at the centre. Pupils respect the Head Teacher's level of care, demonstrated through his personal rapport with them. Guidance for pupils is also readily available from different leaders, so pupils respond with growing independence and confidence, contributing to the happy, positive and caring environment.

SIAS report September 2006 Walkwood C.E. (VC) Middle School, Reddich B97 5AQ