

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools

### **Webber's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School,**

Holcombe Rogus,

Wellington,

Somerset

TA21 0PE

**Diocese: Exeter**

LA : Devon

Dates of inspection: 5th June 2007

Date of last inspection: January 2001

School's Unique reference number: 113434

Name of Headteacher: Mrs Deborah Eveleigh

Inspector's name with National Society inspector's number: Dr Vanessa Rowe 187

### **School Context**

Webber's is a small rural village school on the Devon/ Somerset border with a mixed catchment area. The number of free school meals is well below average and the school has double the national average of children with SEN. There is also high mobility in the school population. The school has been without a substantive head for the last 18 months but recently has appointed a young and energetic headteacher who has had a positive impact on raising standards.

### **Summary Judgement**

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Webber's Voluntary Aided primary school, as a Church of England school, is unsatisfactory.**

Although the school provides an ethos of care for each pupil and provides a rich curriculum which contributes to the development of the whole child it does not proclaim and celebrate its Christian foundation. Its documentation is insufficiently distinctive and RE and Collective worship is not compliant with statutory requirements. The school has shown considerable improvement lately but has yet to develop a shared vision and understanding of itself as a church school.

### **Established strengths**

- The warm, inclusive atmosphere throughout the school
- The attitudes, enthusiasm and behaviour of the children
- The rich, creative curriculum which promotes the all -round development of each child.
- The new head who is establishing an agenda for change and sustainable improvement throughout the school.

### **Focus for development**

- Ensure the Christian values apparent in school are made explicit in the school's documentation and the status of being a Church school is overtly made and celebrated
- Develop the process of the Church school self evaluation by involving a broader range of contributors.
- Clarify the leadership of RE and develop more formal assessment methods to inform future planning and learning.
- Ensure legal requirements and good practice are met in Collective worship and RE.

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

There is a warm and welcoming atmosphere in the school where children feel well cared for, safe and secure. Children are confident, well-behaved, and enthusiastic. They listen to and work well together and feel their concerns are listened to and treated with respect. Attendance is good and pupils enjoy coming to school. There is a rich, creative learning environment both inside and outside, which contributes to the all round development of each child. This is supported by excellent displays around the school particularly evidenced by the Art work. A range of enrichment activities provide opportunities for the achievement of all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are particularly well supported, although care is needed as to the use of withdrawal from lessons. The school has a very good reputation with parents moving into the catchment area or requesting places for their children with special needs. New materials are about to be introduced which will serve to update and strengthen the personal, social, moral and health education, so better ensuring challenge and progression for all children. Classroom space is limited which restricts the development of the curriculum particularly in the Foundation stage and in Key Stage 1. The ethos of the school is rooted in Christian values but documentation is insufficiently explicit about the school's Christian distinctiveness and how this underpins the school's purpose, aims, policies or practices.

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

Collective worship is held in the hall which, together with the altar, altar cloth, candles and cross, provides a good atmosphere for worship. Children appreciate the opportunity for them to have a quiet space in their school day and the times of silence allows those of other or no faith to be included in the occasion. Pupils enjoy collective worship and respond enthusiastically. Themes are well planned and followed through into class worship. Pupils know simple Anglican responses and prayers and children are encouraged to produce and use their own prayers and poems for use in worship and at other times in the day which are of a high quality, showing empathy and insight. The regular involvement of the Vicar also reinforces the children's experience of Anglican worship. Collective worship contributes well to children's knowledge and understanding about the Christian faith and to their spiritual and moral development. However, there is no formal evaluation of worship and there is also insufficient distinction is made between assembly and collective worship. Unfortunately, the impact of worship on the school community is limited by not all staff attending and by some children with special needs being withdrawn for extra lessons. This is not compliant with the statutory regulations concerning Collective worship.

**The effectiveness of the Religious Education is unsatisfactory.**

Religious education is in a state of flux with teacher's responsibilities and contracts unclear and insecure. However, plans are afoot to develop the subject, with a new co-ordinator having been recently appointed. The new co-ordinator has limited up to date professional development in the subject but this has been identified and is an area for development. A new link governor for RE has been appointed. The subject is poorly supported by display work. Sometimes a child with special educational needs is withdrawn from religious education by the school for additional support. This is not only means that the school does not fulfil statutory requirements but also threatens this child's entitlement to a full curriculum. These points together raise questions about the profile and priority given to RE in a Church school and account for the judgement given above. However, Religious Education does have some good attributes. Pupils have good attitudes to the subject and enjoy it. Teaching observed was committed and enthusiastic. Very good questioning was used to challenge and promote deep learning. A range of recording strategies were used but assessment is, as yet, only informal which, makes insecure the judgement of children's standards and weakens the capacity to plan for and ensure all children's progress in the subject. RE's contribution to spiritual development is good and promotes respect for and the celebration of different views and faiths. Children with Special Educational Needs are well enabled to achieve. Standards would seem to be at least commensurate with core subjects.

**The leadership and management of the school, as a church school, is unsatisfactory.**

The school has been on a difficult journey over the last few years and the new headteacher should be commended for bringing to the school fresh vision, energy and leadership since her arrival. The school has made considerable progress in relation to various aspects of its improvement, but the school's character is insufficiently distinctive and its documentation insufficiently explicit about its Christian foundation. The school questionnaire to parents is not distinctive and governors are not sufficiently proactive in promoting its Christian foundation. Its status as a church school is insufficiently reflected in the school improvement planning and the school's priorities. Processes of self-evaluation as a church school are not in place and there is lack of clarity regarding the place and leadership of RE in the school. Collective worship and RE policies are out of date. However, parents are pleased with the school and there are good links with the church, community, Diocese, Local Authority and support agencies which, together with a strong will to improve, augers well for the continued development of this school.

SIAS report: Webber's VA primary, Holcombe Rogus, Wellington, Somerset TA21 0PE