

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Welshampton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School,
Welshampton,
Ellesmere,
Shropshire
SY12 0PG

Diocese: Lichfield

LA: Shropshire

Date of inspection: 7th November, 2006

Date of last inspection: March, 2001

School's Unique reference number: 123510

Name of Headteacher: Mrs G Dunkerley

Inspector's name: Mr M Powell 200

Context of the school

Welshampton is a small rural school of 61 pupils who are drawn from the village itself, two other local villages and the nearby town of Ellesmere. All pupils are from a white British background. The school buildings have been considerably improved and remodelled in recent years.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Welshampton as a Church of England school are outstanding

Welshampton is an outstanding church school which encourages and enables all its pupils to thrive in its strongly caring and distinctively Christian ethos.

Established strengths

- The distinctively Christian ethos that permeates the school's life and work.
- The central place of worship in the life of the school and its positive effect on pupils' spiritual and moral development.
- The excellent relationships that exist between all members of the school community.
- The very close links between the school, the church and the wider community.

Focus for development

- When next reviewing the policy for Collective Worship, ensure that it acknowledges the Anglican principles on which worship is based.
- Make other changes to the policy document in order for it to be a true reflection and guide to the excellent practice and ethos for worship that pertain in this school.
- Give an occasional report to the governing body on the quality and content of the school's programme of worship in order to assist them in their monitoring of this central aspect of school life.

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

The school's strong Christian values and attitudes are affirmed in its Mission Statement and are abundantly evident in practice. Excellent relationships within the school contribute to the creation of a strongly caring ethos in which all pupils flourish and their individual needs are recognised and nurtured. Pupils speak highly of their pride in their school, where they feel secure and happy. Their feelings of self worth are enhanced by the knowledge that their teachers and other staff seek their views and value their opinions on a range of matters relating to school life. The standards of work attained by pupils are judged by Ofsted to be exceptionally high. The importance placed by the school on promoting healthy living and eco awareness has a considerable and beneficial impact on pupils. Those pupils interviewed expressed strong feelings of responsibility for their own learning, for others and for the wider environment. They were well aware that they belong to a church school and felt that this fact contributed strongly to its caring ethos. They respond very positively to the many opportunities provided by the school for their spiritual development, particularly

to times for quiet thought and the chance to express their own feelings in art, music and writing. Parents greatly value the school's caring ethos and are very supportive of it.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding.

Worship is very well organised by the coordinator, who maintains a daily record and provides a varied and well-balanced three-year rolling programme. Worship is led by each member of staff in turn and by the recently appointed parish priest once a week. Worship occupies a very prominent place in the life of the school and makes a significant contribution to its Christian ethos and to pupils' spiritual and moral development. The act of worship seen during the inspection was of very high quality. The leader engaged the interest of the wide range of pupils present and questioned them skilfully to encourage their responses. The service was well paced and ended with a quiet period of reflection on the subject of remembrance. Sensitive singing and playing of appropriate recorded music contributed strongly to the calm atmosphere of worship and reflection. In talking about worship one older pupil said "You can sometimes come into assemblies wound up and go out calm." The strong impact that worship has on pupils at this school is also illustrated by a remark made by a younger pupil in response to a school questionnaire, where she said "I like it when we have a candle burning because it makes me feel as though God is sitting right here next to me". Worship at the parish church is an important element in school life and occurs at least once a term. Elements of Anglican worship are included, such as well-known prayers and responses. These services are always led by the pupils themselves. The Worship Policy document is in need of some revision. It does not adequately reflect the excellent practice and ethos for worship that pertain in this church school. It should include an acknowledgement of the school's Anglican status and of the fact that worship shall be wholly Christian in nature and in accordance with the school's Trust deed.

The leadership and management of the school as a church school are outstanding.

The headteacher, staff and governors work closely together to promote and maintain the school's Christian ethos. The recently appointed parish priest is already very committed to the school and is a regular and welcome visitor. The school's Christian foundation and purpose are communicated through the exterior notice board and the various displays and artefacts inside the school. The Mission Statement has a prominent place in the prospectus. Its claim that children are encouraged to put into practice the Christian values and attitudes that underpin the school is amply realised in practice. Views of parents and pupils on the school and its ethos are regularly sought by means of questionnaires, and responses indicate a high level of satisfaction with the school as a caring Christian community. The governing body is very supportive of the school and some members are closely involved with school based activities such as after school clubs. It would further develop their role of monitoring the worship in their church school if they were to receive an occasional report on the quality and range of worship provided for pupils.