

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

West Alvington Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

West Alvington
Kingsbridge
Devon
TQ7 3PP

Diocese: Exeter

Local authority: Devon
Date of inspection: October 31st 2006
Date of last inspection: 16th & 18th April 2002
School's unique reference number: 113404
Headteacher: Mr. Colin Butler
Inspector's name and number: Mrs. Jenny Pestrige (153)

School context

This small, rural village school is situated on the outskirts of Kingsbridge, and therefore benefits from links with the local community college, and the wider Christian community. There are an above average number of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of West Alvington Church of England Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding.

The strong Christian ethos, led and managed by the Headteacher, is reflected in the impact made on the lives of the learners. The school is very well supported by staff, governors and local Clergy. The Christian ethos, collective worship and spiritual and moral development are some of the 'many strengths' referred to in the recent OfSTED report.

Established strengths

- The clear leadership and management of the school by the Headteacher, who has identified and implemented ways of expressing the Christian faith within the school.
- The enthusiastic and committed support of the Foundation governors to the school's progress.
- The involvement of a range of Clergy from the local Christian community, who enrich the learners' experience of what it means to be a person of faith.

Focus for development

- Introduce a rolling programme for acts of collective worship.
- Formalise the evaluation process for collective worship, to include all stakeholders.

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

Learners are confident and feel valued by all the adults in the school and relationships are outstanding. Learners are excited about their learning, and reflect the impact that the Christian ethos is making on their lives. One girl spoke about the fact that religious education lessons had helped her "to believe in God", so that she was able to pray for a member of her family in difficult circumstances. Another said she would "thank God" when she left for all she had learnt at the school. Learners are inspired by the Christian ethos, and it is affecting their

self-esteem, the way they treat others and their own personal beliefs. Religious education provides outstanding opportunities for spiritual development, such as in a Year 3-4 lesson on Rites of Passage, with a focus on Hindu marriage, and in a Year 1-2 lesson on Jesus as the Light of the World. The outstanding teaching and commitment to religious education results in learners' ability to reflect on ultimate life questions. The participation of Learning Support Assistants in all classes is outstanding, and Mealtimes Assistants lead grace before meals, in addition to continuing a high level of pastoral care. Displays of learners' creativity in pottery, felt work, art and dance reflects the impact of the wide variety of enrichment activities, such as day and residential trips and input from Kingsbridge Community College.

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

"Welcome to the Worship Area" is an outward sign, which indicates the high priority given to collective worship in the school. There is a reflective atmosphere, created by collective worship displays and a large draped cross, which is used in regular Passion Plays. Therefore, worship is at the heart of the school. Learners particularly benefit from the range of Clergy who participate in leading worship, so that they experience the variety of Anglican practice. They also experience worship led by a Baptist minister, a Methodist minister and a Roman Catholic Priest, all of which is making an exciting impact on the lives of the learner. The act of worship observed on All Hallows Eve, about 'all the saints' was outstanding, as it was inclusive, involving role play, music, prayer and reflection. The new collective worship co-ordinator is in the process of developing the current planning, moving towards a rolling programme, which will ensure breadth and continuity. The outstanding policy needs to include an explanation of an evaluation process.

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

The Headteacher is giving a clear direction for the school, with an uncompromising Christian stance, which also takes into account the beliefs and integrity of all learners and staff. The inclusive approach of the Headteacher means that all the staff are included in a team leadership approach, and share in the concept of being equal participants in the spiritual leadership of the school. This school is a reflective learning community. When asked, learners said they were given time to reflect "all the time". This is making an impact on their lives, as seen in a Year 3-4 class, when a boy asked about the connection between baptism in the Church of England, and becoming a Christian. "Do I have to be Christened to be a Christian? I already believe in God". The Foundation governors are enthusiastic and very committed to promoting the Christian ethos of the school, and express the fact that the present success of the school is a result of prayer. Prayer is encouraged throughout the life of the school, including governors' meetings, and this significant factor indicates the explicit Christian character of the school.