

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Westbury-on-Trym Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Channells Hill
Westbury-on-Trym
Bristol
BS9 3HZ

Diocese: Bristol

Local authority: City of Bristol
Dates of inspection: 8th May 2007
Date of last inspection: September 2002
School's unique reference number: 109150
Headteacher: Mrs Pam Derham
Inspector's name and number: Mr Andrew Rickett 201

School context

Westbury-on-Trym is a larger than average sized primary school. The socio-economic background of the catchment area is diverse. The number of children with learning difficulties or disabilities is below the national average. The majority of children are from a white British heritage.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Westbury-on-Trym as a Church of England school are outstanding

Children at Westbury-on-Trym are shown very clearly how distinct Christian values can make a positive difference to the quality of life of every individual. The personal development of each child is nurtured sensitively, creating a community in which everyone feels special and is encouraged to reach their potential.

Established strengths

- Distinct Christian values underpin all aspects of school life.
- Children are encouraged to develop an emotional awareness of themselves and others.
- The leadership of the school provides excellent role models for the whole community.

Focus for development

- Increase the involvement of children in collective worship.
- Develop learning strategies in RE so that they match more closely the aim of the lesson.

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

There is a vibrant feel in the school which comes directly from the impact of a set of specific values. These values are based on clear Christian teaching and are rapidly becoming central to the school's whole ethos. All members of the community are encouraged to discuss and extend their understanding in order to develop real depth of meaning and full appreciation of these values. For example, this term the focus is on justice and because of the many opportunities for discussion, children are able to identify successfully why it is relevant in their lives. The quality of these interactions means that the relationships around the school are very positive with individuals treating each other with great consideration. This was particularly seen in a lesson where children were encouraged to talk about some complex issues and did so with great sensitivity amongst their peers. Children are hugely supportive of each other and this skill comes very naturally. The school has taken a lot of thought and care about its distinctiveness and has created a very successful package where Christian teaching is complemented by work being done in personal and social education. As one child said, 'the way we behave at school is a way of life'. Attitudes towards learning are very positive

because children know that their work will be valued highly. Standards are good and children with learning difficulties or disabilities in particular make significant progress. The school is very proud of its Council which is totally committed to making a difference to the lives of the children in the school. The great emphasis which is placed on the appreciation of others both in the community and in the wider world is reflected in the active support of many charities and the very successful work done in establishing the school as a place of excellence in its concern for the environment. The very high quality of visual displays around the school are a fitting tribute to the importance of RE in the life of the school.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

The 'Values for Life' programme is increasingly being used to great effect in the worship life of the school. It is providing a framework through which fundamental questions of life can be explored, thereby making a significant difference to the quality of the collective worship. The values identified have their roots in the Christian way of life and children are then given further opportunities to explore these values in greater depth in the more intimate atmosphere of their class worship. As children acquire a deeper awareness of their emotions they are developing a language of great richness. Even very young children are being challenged to express their appreciation of others, for example through exploring the meaning of justice in a story which contains a moral dilemma. Attitudes towards worship are good because children can see that it is relevant to their lives. The importance of worship in the life of the school has been enhanced by increasingly regular visits to the parish church for worship. Children enjoy these occasions and younger ones say that it makes worship special because they are in God's house and that He will listen to them there. Local clergy lead worship regularly and they are popular because they get the children actively involved. Worship is recognisably Anglican in its content with familiar prayers and songs of praise which children sing with enthusiasm.

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

The Headteacher has a very clear vision for promoting the school's Christian vision. She is committed to encouraging everyone in the school community to develop their spiritual dimension. This is reflected in the recent day set aside for staff to explore the school as a place of spirituality. People in the school community talk about a fresh feel to the school which comes from the enthusiasm of the Headteacher. Links with the local church have been strengthened by the close partnership between the Headteacher and vicar who is also Chair of Governors. He is a familiar figure in school and is popular with the children. The Deputy Headteacher's recent appointment to the Parochial Church Council is also giving the school a valuable bridge to bring the two communities closer together. The governors are committed to enhancing the school's Christian character and have a good grasp of the issues that are needed to take this forward. The RE Co-ordinator has a very good understanding of the role that RE has in developing every child's sense of there being something beyond the everyday. She is very enthusiastic and has put in place systems that ensure that all children have opportunities to make good progress. Parents are very supportive of the school and recognise that it offers their children something special. They say that school is a place in which children can flourish and which has the capacity to change their lives.