

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Westbury Leigh Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Sandalwood Road

Westbury

Wiltshire

BA13 3UR

Diocese: Salisbury

Local authority: Wiltshire

Dates of inspection: 11th September 2007

Date of last inspection: 18 -19 March, 2003

School's unique reference number: 126370

Headteacher: Mrs. Mary Murray

Chair of Governors: Mr. I Dovey

Inspector's name and number: Susan Walker 391

School context

Westbury Leigh is a larger than average Primary School. Three years ago the site moved from a small village to a new building on a housing development of over 1000 homes on the edge of the village. All learners are of white British origin and come from a wide range of backgrounds. Far more learners than is usual have joined the school other than at normal admission times and it has doubled in size.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Westbury Leigh C of E. Voluntary Controlled Primary School as a Church of England school are good.

The headteacher is well supported by the Governors and the clergy in sustaining an ethos that has Christian values at its heart. The impact of these values is evident in the strong caring relationships between all members of the school community. These relationships are recognised and appreciated by all the learners and their parents.

Established strengths

- The Christian ethos of the school in which all learners are nurtured and highly valued.
- The leadership of the headteacher, clergy and senior staff that provide strong Christian role models for learners.
- The good links between religious education, PSHE and the philosophy curriculum that supports the successful development of learner's Christian spirituality.

Focus for development

- Establish links and develop a strong partnership with the new Parish team.
- Establish a system for monitoring and evaluating the impact of Worship on the everyday lives of learners.
- Improve learners' cultural development by providing more opportunities for first hand experience of the places of worship of faiths and cultures other than their own.
- Make the Christian character of the school more explicit in school publications.

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

The school demonstrates a total commitment to developing loving and caring relationships between all members of its community. These relationships are firmly founded on Christian values. This is seen in the outstanding behaviour of learners, the mutual respect that learners and teachers have for each other and in the way in which everyone shares the common aim of providing for the needs of all learners. Parents say that they chose the school because it was a small school and that despite great change its ethos has been maintained. They appreciate the support given by the Vicar and all agree that the school has done much to form a caring community at the centre of a very big new estate. Learners are unanimous in their praise of the care given to them by all staff and appreciate the way in which the school welcomes new children. Good examples were seen of teachers supporting spiritual development through teaching in RE. Older learners demonstrate that they think deeply; for

example, interpreting Jesus' words as meaning that he "is a guide to heaven". Learners appreciate their PSHE lessons and in particular the personal support they get from circle times. Links with schools in Kenya provide good opportunities to learn about other cultures, but opportunities to visit other Christian places of worship and those of other religions are limited. There are good examples of links between Philosophy and R.E. but much written work is poorly presented and is not a good reflection of learners' enthusiasm when they talk about what they have learnt Whilst everything that the school does is clearly founded on its Christian vision, its very strong Christian mission statement is not included in the Prospectus and the school aims do not affirm its distinctive Christian character.

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

Worship has a very good impact on learner's spiritual development and is central to the life of the school. Great care is taken to provide a focus through a cross and through a candle and flowers placed on the worship table. Themes are appropriately planned each year by the headteacher, who is the coordinator, and by the Vicar. Governors attend worship when possible. There is however, no formal procedure for monitoring the impact of worship on the lives of learners or of its impact on the spiritual aspect of their development. The Vicar or a member of his team leads worship each week and learners talk enthusiastically about these occasions. Worship themes are linked to the Church year and always provide opportunities for prayer and quiet reflection and these were well linked to the theme of "Jesus as the light of the world" during the inspection. Learners' attitudes to worship are outstanding. They demonstrated respect and reverence throughout the service and enthusiastically contributed their ideas about where and for what purpose candles are used. The school ensures that worship is distinct from Assembly and this was shown during the inspection when there was a clear break between the end of worship and the giving of rewards. Learners know the Lord's prayer and older ones are able to explain that prayer is a way of "sending God messages". There are no opportunities for the school community to worship in Church as the new building is too far from the Parish Church. However, all major Festivals are celebrated in special Worship in the school hall. Parents say that their children enjoy worship and that their "leading" questions are proof that it plays an important part in developing their children's spiritual awareness.

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

The headteacher is strongly committed to acting out the Christian mission of the school through "The Love of God and the Joy of Life" and provides an outstanding role model for staff and for learners. This is recognised by parents one of whom stated that "it all boils down to leadership" which they "can't fault". She is very well supported by senior teachers and by the Governors. . A new coordinator for RE has recently been appointed and he aims to widen the range of teaching strategies to include art, music and literature to further support the spiritual aspect of learners' development and the school's Christian vision. Whilst he has evaluated staff development needs, there are as yet no formal whole school procedures for monitoring the impact of worship and RE on the everyday lives of learners. There are very effective links with the Church, led by the Vicar. The headteacher and Chair of Governors are very aware of the importance of developing a good relationship with the new team so that the school's Christian vision will continue to be underpinned by a strong partnership with the Parish. Whilst the Christian character and vision of the school is very well supported by all staff and Governors there have been no opportunities provided for training to extend their expertise in maintaining and developing Christian distinctiveness.