

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Whitbourne Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Whitbourne
Worcester
WR6 5SP

Diocese: Hereford

Local authority: Herefordshire

Dates of inspection: October 4th 2006

Date of last inspection: November 2001

School's unique reference number: 116855

Headteacher: Mr Andrew Ellis

Inspector's name and number: Mr Brian Allaway. NS 397

School context

Whitbourne Church of England Primary School is a small school with 63 pupils on roll. There are one infant and two junior classes. Year 2 pupils are currently taught separately in the mornings. The school serves a wide rural area and there are no pupils from minority ethnic origins. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is below average. The Headteacher has been in post for a year.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Whitbourne C of E Primary as a Church of England school are good.

The school is a happy, well organised learning community where relationships are very good at all levels. School self evaluation is well established. Christian values are clearly evident in the day-to-day life of the school. The valuable and productive links with the Rector enable the church and school to work well together in promoting the Christian Gospel.

Established strengths

- The school is a strong caring family
- The Rector provides excellent support for worship and religious education (RE)
- Religious education is lively and relevant and makes a strong contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education
- Pupils have positive attitudes to their work and their behaviour is very good

Focus for development

- Update the school prospectus to include an agreed statement which makes explicit the Christian values and principles of the school
- Seek out and consider the pupils' ideas and opinions about religious education and the act of worship
- Provide pupils with more regular opportunities to actively participate in worship

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

The Christian ethos in the school is good. Adults and pupils enjoy working together. The relationships between staff and pupils are relaxed but productive. Pupils are respectful and behave very well. The school is a calm, ordered community and the building and grounds are cared for very well. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their work; they concentrate well and make good progress in lessons. Pupils' displayed work celebrates their achievements and pupils make good use of it as a focus for discussion and reflection. The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of extra-curricular activities which the pupils enjoy. Pupils are cared for very well, they are confident and happy. A pupil echoed the view of many when he said, 'If you are upset or worried you can go to any adult in this school and they will help you'. Pupils have a very well developed sense of moral responsibility and talk enthusiastically about

support they give to others through charitable fundraising and their productive links with a school in Tanzania. The RE curriculum provides imaginative opportunities for pupils to appreciate some of the important milestones in the life and teaching of Jesus. They are also beginning to learn about the main features of some of the other major world religions. RE also provides pupils with good opportunities for them to explore their own ideas and beliefs. In this way the R E curriculum provides good opportunities for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school prospectus sets out clearly the purpose of worship and RE. However it doesn't currently make explicit the Christian values and aims of the school as a church school.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Despite being very cramped for space the school makes appropriate provision for a dignified act of worship. Silence and music and a calm reflective atmosphere enable the pupils to gain much from assembly time. Prayer is a regular feature of worship and pupils have a good understanding of the Lord's Prayer. Pupils' singing is tuneful and lively and indicates their enjoyment. In discussion one pupil said of assembly time, 'It's good because it gives you time to have your own thoughts and prayers in your head'. Worship records demonstrate that over time pupils have a wide range of opportunities to experience the teaching of Jesus and the lives of other Christians. Worship also enables pupils to discuss and celebrate the achievements and skills of pupils throughout the school. The school liaises well with the parish church when it celebrates the major Christian festivals and a leavers' service at the end of the year. Pupils and parents consider these special times in church to be memorable occasions. Pupils respond well to worship, they enjoy the experiences and talk with enthusiasm about times when they've been involved in reading prayers. Many of the pupils are confident and articulate but currently have too few opportunities to plan and participate in worship on a regular basis. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the assemblies led by The Rector. They value the significance of artefacts used during worship. This was evidenced during an act of worship when a statue of St Francis and a lighted candle provided an important focus and helped capture the children's attention. Worship has a positive impact on the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and provides a meaningful experience for adults and pupils.

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

The leadership of the new Headteacher is good. He has identified a comprehensive programme for school improvement and recognises that the school prospectus is due for review. He sets a good example in the way he relates to colleagues and pupils. Teaching and learning are good because pupils are motivated and make good progress. The teaching fulfils the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus and plans are in hand to develop further the recommended approaches to assessment. Religious education gives appropriate emphasis to the school's Christian foundation. Some parents feel that the school's Christian foundation is clearly evident in the way it 'rubs along very happily side by side with the church' and by the significant support it receives from the Rector. The school council feels valued and class representatives recognise that they have some influence on the issues they discuss. For example the use of the playground. Pupils have worthwhile views on RE and worship but these views have not been systematically sought to help staff develop policy or to contribute to the school's self evaluation process. Foundation Governors know the school and support it well. The school includes mention of its Christian foundation within the aims of the school but does not provide sufficient details to parents about what this means. The school works closely with parents and responds appropriately to their views. Teaching and non-teaching staff work very well together and relationships between all members of the school community are good.