

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Wilton & Barford Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Burcombe Lane,
Wilton, Salisbury.
Wiltshire.
SP2 0ES

Diocese: Salisbury

Local authority: Wiltshire Co. Co.
Dates of inspection: 17th September 2008
Date of last inspection: n/a - two schools federated in January 2007
School's unique reference number: 135142
Headteacher: Mrs Jan Nock
Inspector's name and number: Mr Tim Reynolds NSIN: 237

School context

This school, on two sites, is an amalgamation of Wilton CE Primary (market town - 157 pupils) and Barford CE Primary (4 miles away, in a rural village - 12 pupils). The school has only 4 pupils who are not of White British Heritage. Wilton has classes from Reception to Year 6; Barford has one class from Reception to Year 4. Wilton is housed in bright, airy, well-used buildings, with good outdoor facilities, including team-game pitches and a swimming-pool; Barford still uses the old village school site built in 1854).

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Wilton & Barford CE Primary as a Church of England school are satisfactory

The school proudly welcomes visitors to experience its work and activities which are evidently based on Christian values and principles. While these are well observed, there is a need to review and clarify the schools shared understanding of Church of England faith and practice. Learners and all staff are expected and inspired by the dedicated and experienced Headteacher and her supportive Governors to promote the Christian ethos. There are many examples of the effective impact of school life on learners - working in class, in sport, in social and spiritual activities, and in general deportment. However there are some issues to resolve, caused by the amalgamation of the two schools, but these are being readily and clearly addressed.

Established strengths

- the Headteacher's experience, needed to upgrade the school in spite of the difficulties caused by amalgamation.
- the happy, welcoming and Christian environment that exists through the school.
- the sporting successes that help to knit together the learners in their community.

Focus for development

- to re-appoint governors with responsibility for Collective Worship (and RE).
- to increase awareness of Anglican faith and practice .
- to re-word the school's mission statement to include reference to 'Christian' values.

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

The Christian ethos of the school is evident in many parts of both sites. Whilst effective in many ways this is residual from both predecessor schools and now needs clarification. For example, the school mission statement makes no mention of the fact that the values it supports are 'Christian' values. There are appropriate displays inside the front entrance, and examples of RE work in all the class-rooms. The two RE lessons observed indicated a high degree of teaching skill, preparation and self belief, reflecting the clearly composed curriculum as found in policy documents. Learners love being at the school. They work keenly, treat civilly their peers and the staff; they are enthusiastic about out of class activities such as charity work, plays, sport and a weekly church club meeting. They feel secure and loved by all the adults. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is nurtured by events and strategies organised by teachers, local clergy and parents, as well as from village and town interest. Learners with Special Educational Needs (SEN) enjoy well-structured courses tailored to meet their individual needs, with qualified staff to assist; healthcare and exercise have a prominent place in the daily routine. Sport figures largely in their lives; they achieve excellent results for a small school, success which contributes to their feeling of communal Christian bonding.

The impact of Collective Worship on the school is satisfactory

The Headteacher is the Leader of Collective Worship, and has well-constructed themes which are reviewed annually. She works closely with the teaching staff who evaluate acts of worship with her. Pupils are not currently involved in the evaluation of worship but in conversation with the inspector learners said they enjoy attending these occasions. They were observed to enter and leave the hall with quiet reverence; they join loudly in the singing and prayers. The teacher leading the worship observed used multi-media, props and a pupil to present his theme. However toward the end of the act of worship some pupils had become restless and this reduced the effectiveness of the worship. Local clergy give the school good support, and frequently lead acts of worship in the school and in the churches. Seasonal services are well supported by parents who are also invited to attend school worship at certain times. Parents are also clearly informed of their right to withdraw learners from Collective Worship; at present there are no withdrawals.

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

The Chair of Governors leads an enthusiastic team which firmly supports the Christian ethos of the school. She works closely with the Headteacher, meeting with her officially once a week, and many times besides. The governors are very conscious of the difficulties that have to be addressed concerning the two school sites, and are working hard in order to improve matters. Foundation Governor support for Collective Worship (and RE) is currently not very effective, due to an interregnum, but when the newly inducted rectors take their places as governors this should be addressed. The Headteacher has vision and enthusiasm for the ideas needed to improve the school as a church school, and the capacity to achieve this improvement. It is the aim of Senior management that all children will have the opportunities and the environment to achieve in a comfortable, safe and learning culture. A very large majority of parents approve of what the school does, and a group of learners interviewed said that it is a 'brilliant' school.