

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### **Wingfield Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School**

Church Lane,  
Wingfield,  
Trowbridge  
BA14 9LW

**Diocese: Salisbury**

Local authority: Wiltshire

Dates of inspection: 17th July 2007

Date of last inspection: December 2001

School's unique reference number: 126484

Acting Headteacher: Mr Neil Baker

Inspector's name and number: Mr A W G Rickett 201

### **School context**

Wingfield is a smaller school than the national average. Children are from favourable economic and social backgrounds, coming from the village and surrounding area. Most of the children are of white British heritage. The number of children with learning difficulties or disabilities is well below the national average.

There have been significant changes to the leadership of the school in recent months. Two acting headteachers have led the school for short periods following the absence on sick leave of the substantive headteacher in January 2007.

### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Wingfield CE VA School as a Church of England school are satisfactory**

The distinctive Christian character is successfully being rekindled as the school community starts to rediscover the many Christian values that lie at the core of its ethos. This is having a positive effect on the attitudes of children and adults towards their learning and personal development.

### **Established strengths**

- The care for children lies at the heart of the school ethos.
- The school displays a strong commitment to improving the quality of the experiences it offers children.
- Relationships between adults and children are based on mutual respect.

### **Focus for development**

- Governors to lead a dialogue and identify the impact of the school's Christian values on the learning and personal development of children.
- Develop the governors' involvement in the monitoring and evaluation of collective worship and religious education.
- Develop a distinctive focus in class worship.
- Develop the role of children in the monitoring and evaluation of collective worship.

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

Wingfield is successfully improving its provision for learning following a particularly difficult time. The Christian ethos never deserted the school but it is now reasserting itself and this is having a marked effect on the attitudes towards learning and the children's feeling of self worth. Children say that they are much happier now that they feel physically safer because

behaviour has improved, enabling them to pursue their learning. The school has not only provided the children with a clear set of expectations regarding their behaviour towards each other, but also the reassurance that it is a good thing to work hard and to achieve well in the classroom. The previous culture of the school is re-establishing itself, where achievement is seen as a positive thing to be celebrated. This is giving children a sense of their own worth and their unique value as an individual who contributes towards the school community. Children say that they appreciate the efforts made by adults to improve the quality of the learning environment. This was well illustrated in all the lessons where children were consistently engaged in their work and felt positive about the challenges set for them. There is still some resistance to this from a small minority of children but this group is nevertheless responding to the improving culture. However, standards are not yet at a level where they are in line with children of their age nationally. The quality of teaching has improved significantly though and older children in particular are now re-engaging in their work and enjoying their learning once again. The school is making a very strong, and so far successful, effort to re-establish its central principle which is to put the care of children at its heart. As the school so rightly says, it is giving the children the opportunity to 'give them themselves back'.

#### **The impact of collective worship on the school community is satisfactory**

Collective worship is one of the key areas in which the Christian ethos of the school is being rekindled. Children say that they can see a difference in worship; that it is more interesting because there is more variety of opportunities for them to become involved. For example, in one act of worship, nearly the entire school became actively involved in a game to identify friends and they did this with both enthusiasm and fun. Attitudes are therefore improving. A cross and a candle provide a focus during worship and children understand the significance of both of these. As well as saying that it represents Jesus as the light of the world, children explain how it can represent the way to light from the dark places through Christ. Prayers are said which relate to the theme and although children sit quietly a significant number do not participate in the prayer itself. Songs of praise are sung quite enthusiastically by the children but they maintain they would like to sing a greater variety of songs. Children enjoy the class-based worship and would like this to become a more regular part of the worship pattern of the school. The local church is used by the school several times each year to celebrate and reinforce the church's special festivals. Children recognise that these occasions are important and say that they value the links with the church.

#### **The effectiveness of the religious education is satisfactory**

Standards in RE, although comparable to the other core subjects, are below national expectations. Younger children achieve well because there is a good balance between learning about Christianity and other faiths and exploring what the children have learnt from this study. Attitudes at this stage of schooling are very positive. This level of progress is not maintained through to the older children however. Despite the good level of teaching in KS2 at the moment, the children have not in the past had sufficient opportunities to explore and develop their own thoughts and beliefs. In the best lessons, teaching set challenging tasks for the children and presented the learning in very creative ways. This was seen in a lesson where older children responded to God's love for everyone by exploring friendship through art and thereby created some effective pieces. The emphasis on learning through creative means is having a positive influence on the attitudes of the older children. The proximity and ease of access to the local church means that it can easily be used for teaching. The vicar has participated in explaining baptism as well as showing children the different parts of the church.

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

The current acting headteacher is having a significant impact on the Christian ethos of the school. Children say that it is since his arrival that the school has started to change for the better and that they are much happier with the calm atmosphere and emphasis on celebrating success in their learning. Through his leadership the school is focussed on raising

the standards of attainment. Governors are extremely committed to the school and take their role seriously in holding the school to account. They recognise that they need to have a closer involvement in monitoring and evaluating the school and are keen to do this particularly for collective worship and RE as they see these as being key areas in the life of the school. The passionate involvement of foundation governors in the school and their closeness with the local church through the Parochial Church Council has created a close bond between the two communities. The vicar and his curate are familiar figures in the school. The RE Co-ordinator has a good grasp of the subject and how to use assessment to help raise standards. She also has a clear vision of the contribution RE makes in developing the children's own views of themselves and in acquiring a sense of appreciation for others. The school has been through a difficult time recently but has started to reaffirm itself and celebrate as it rediscovers its core Christian values.

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