



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Whickham Parochial Church of England Controlled Primary School

Broadway
Whickham
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE16 5QW

Diocese: Durham

Local Authority: Gateshead

Date of Inspection: 8th July 2013

Date of last Inspection 7th February 2008

School's Unique Reference number 108381

Headteacher Mr Peter Armstrong

Inspector's name and number: Mrs Gillian Wild 636

School context

Whickham Parochial C of E Primary School is a very successful one form entry school of average size situated in the Whickham South Ward of Gateshead. A well-below average number of pupils are eligible for pupil premium; a below average number of pupils are supported at school action and action plus or have a statement of special educational need. Pupil mobility is significantly below national rates and attendance is significantly above national rates. The school meets the Government's current floor targets for English and Mathematics.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Whickham Parochial as a Church of England school are outstanding

Outstanding Christian ethos rooted in love, lies at the heart of this successful school and permeates all areas of school life. As a result, high expectations and exemplary pastoral care enable all to flourish; individual needs are met. Parents comment that their children feel safe, valued, supported and challenged to reach their full potential.

Established strengths

- The strong and effective leadership of the Head Teacher and Deputy Head Teacher supported by a committed team of staff, governors and the local church community.
- The clear and explicit Christian ethos based upon high expectation, mutual support and outstanding pastoral care
- The children's enjoyment of all aspects of school life, including the spiritual, and especially Collective Worship.

Focus for development

- To extend the delivery of Collective Worship to include leaders at all levels
- To produce an updated School Improvement Plan for RE and Collective Worship
- To develop an Ethos group and embed strategies for rigorously and robustly monitoring and evaluating the school's effectiveness and progress as a Church of England school.

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

The Christian character at Whickham Parochial Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School is evident in the high-quality relationships that exist between all members of the school community. There is a warm, friendly and welcoming atmosphere because Christian values underpin the school's ethos and are constantly evidenced in the work of the school. As Christian values are high on the agenda, children respect and understand many points of view. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding, and as a result, pupil behaviour is exemplary; very good attitudes make a positive contribution to learning and relationships. Children understand how their decision making affects both self and others and how God can help them make the right decisions.

Parents speak warmly of the very good relationships that exist between the school and parental body and, as one parent expressed, "Care for our children is underpinned by the ethos of caring for the child as a whole as well as providing a good standards of education". This statement is backed up by the schools own data which shows that all children achieve well and continue to make good progress. This is as a result of the school's commitment towards meeting the needs of all learners at the highest level and developing the whole child, both academically and spiritually. In all year groups children learn about the content of Religious Education at the same time as they improve their skill development. Because of this they learn to become good citizens through conflict resolution and exploring the links between rights and responsibilities. Children feel safe and report that there is no bullying as 'the buddies and staff look after you'; they know who to turn to if they are worried or concerned.

High quality displays and artefacts are used to promote the school's distinctive Christian ethos as well as supporting spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Christian values impact further upon pupils' personal development because the school actively promotes regular fundraising activities contributing towards Christian stewardship and global community cohesion as well as allowing the children to experience the Christian values of service and gratitude.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Worship is a key element in the Christian distinctiveness and witness of the school, contributing to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the whole community. Inclusive acts of worship are planned around a cycle of carefully selected themes, including key questions for reflection and citizenship. These provide opportunities for spiritual development, to learn about the Anglican year, the significance of biblical texts and SEAL themes and issues.

Celebration of the Eucharist takes place regularly throughout the year with the parish family joining the school on these occasions; this does much to cement their relationships and to remind the children that they belong to an Anglican family. Pupils fully realise the importance worship plays in the life of the school; they behave well and their reverence ensures that worship takes place in an atmosphere of calm and respect.

Staff take an active part as worshippers alongside the children and a variety of people participate in leading worship including local clergy and the children themselves thus are providing diversity and richness in the worshipping experiences within the school. In discussion, pupils were able to clearly articulate their perceptions of worship and how it may be used to affect the school community; they see worship as 'a special time where they "learn about God" and learn "how to be nicer to each other"'.

Reflection provides opportunities for all pupils, including those of other faiths, to 'think about what's been happening and if you are wrong, say sorry.' Children understand the importance of Jesus Christ and "how he spread the word of God".

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

The Head Teacher, supported by a very effective Deputy Head Teacher, is committed to promoting a distinctive vision based upon Christian values. Thoughtful and insightful leadership, together with secure partnership with governors, is based firmly upon Christian values that are clearly articulated. Within the school community there is no doubt that this is a Church school as the ethos of trust, support and corporate ownership is understood, valued and embodied by all those connected with the school and in the wider community. One governor pointed out that, "The staff are wholly supportive of the core Christian values and highlight them in a positive way". Parents are very appreciative of all the school has to offer. Governors are effective in their role because they have good procedures in place for seeking the views of parents and children. For example, analysis of recent questionnaires reflects the genuine consultation that takes place, and the school's follow-up response makes everyone feel valued and ensures high levels of satisfaction and respect for the work of the school. The Governing Body closely monitors the work of the school. A degree of critical challenge ensures that they know the school well and also have a good understanding of its development priorities. Close links exist and are valued between the school, the church and the local community. The church building is well used and the vicar makes an excellent contribution to the distinctiveness of the school as a church school, supporting both worship and pastoral care.

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