

Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools

Report

School:	Curry Rivel Church of England VC Primary School, Church Street, Curry Rivel, Langport, Somerset, TA10 0HD
Status:	Voluntary Controlled
Diocese:	Bath and Wells
Local Authority:	Somerset County
Date of Inspection;	20th October 2008
Date of last Inspection:	7th/8th June 2005
School's unique ref. no.	123752
Name of Head teacher:	Mrs Amanda Tutt
Chair of Governors:	Mrs Ingrid White
Inspector's name & NS no:	Mrs Jenny Pestridge (153)

School Context

The majority of the 150 learners are white British. There is pre-school provision within the building in this village school. There is a new setting for the Foundation stage and development to the outdoor environment. The new Headteacher has been in post for one year. The school had previously experienced three Headteachers in four years.

Summary Judgement

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Curry Rivel Church Primary School as a Church school is satisfactory.

The new Headteacher is establishing a rapidly improving, caring Christian ethos, with a commitment to high standards. Explicit references to the school's Church of England foundation are now visible both externally and internally, and symbolise a renewed emphasis on a Christian context for learning.

Established Strengths

- The leadership of the new Headteacher in establishing a purposeful, caring Christian ethos, in which relationships are becoming supportive and enabling.
- The support given to the school's Christian ethos and the collective worship programme by the vicar, and local clergy.
- The commitment shown to the well-being of learners by teachers, governors and all adults working in the school.

Focus for development

- Monitor and evaluate the overall impact of the school's Christian ethos, including education in values for life, and spiritual development, in the lives of learners. Involve all stakeholders in this process.
- Separate collective worship from religious education in the prospectus, and reflect the school's Church of England foundation in this section.
- Develop the church/school partnership by increasing the involvement of the local church community, in addition to the established link with the vicar.

The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is satisfactory in the way it meets the needs of all learners

The majority of learners are happy with school life. They particularly enjoy opportunities to be involved in decision-making, such as the effective school council and the eco-committee. Learners are confident and feel safe. This is because their teachers, the new Headteacher, and all adults working in the school are committed to their well-being. Learners work well with each other and respect the views of others. Relationships between staff reflect rapid progress, following an unsettled period due to several changes of leadership. A renewed team identity is resulting in an improved working ethos for staff. This reflects the school's emphasis on social and moral values. Christian values are now implicitly expressed in relationships in the school. SEAL material (social and emotional aspects of learning) supported by Christian values form the basis of collective worship planning. However, the school has not yet identified specific Christian values within its written aims. Developments regarding the explicit Christian identity of the school reflect rapid progress. The presence of the cross, both externally and internally and focus tables in classrooms, symbolise a renewed emphasis on the foundation of the school. These explicit symbols are beginning to reflect the growth of the Christian ethos within relationships, and in the life of the school. The impact of the policy for spiritual development, including education in social and moral values, is not currently monitored or evaluated across the curriculum.

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

Collective worship reflects the development of the Christian ethos in the school. It is well led and managed by the Headteacher, using a two-year rolling programme based on values, supported by biblical material. Planning and recording are good. However, there is no formal evaluation process, including all stakeholders. The Headteacher has been modelling the pattern, structure and tone of collective worship. She has a strategic approach to the development of

this aspect. This includes the participation of staff and learners in leading worship. This level of management is good practice. In the act of worship observed, the value of trust was illustrated; firstly through reference to the learners' own experiences. The extension of the theme through the story of Jonah meant that learners were introduced to the Christian concept of trusting in God. The inclusion of learners' prayers through the use of a 'prayer box' is good practice. Learners particularly comment on their enjoyment of the talks given by clergy, and those that involve visual aids. The sports hall used for collective worship is entirely bare, due to health and safety regulations. However, the Headteacher makes maximum use of a special table displaying Christian symbols. This provides a focus for learners. The use of large computer projected images also helps to illustrate the theme. However, the hall has a utilitarian atmosphere. A lack of creativity in the hall detracts from the sense of 'sacred space' when used for collective worship. The involvement of the vicar in collective worship reflects her commitment and enthusiasm for the church/school partnership. The inclusion of two other clergy in an ecumenical partnership is best practice. Currently, the reference to collective worship in the prospectus is included within the section on religious education. This reference does not sufficiently reflect the Christian ethos of the school, based on its Church of England foundation

The leadership and management of the school as a Church school are satisfactory.

The Headteacher has begun to redefine the Christian ethos of the school. This was necessary because of a turbulent period, involving 3 changes of leadership in a short space of time. Developments are evident in explicit signs and symbols in the school. The Headteacher has been supported in these developments by the enthusiasm and commitment of the vicar. Her encouragement of the wider church community to share in the church/school partnership is good practice. There is currently a vacancy for a foundation governor. This is significant, at this time of renewed emphasis on Christian distinctiveness. Staff now feel that there is a considerable improvement in the quality of relationships in the school. This is because of their trust and confidence in the leadership. Parents speak highly of the way in which the teachers know and understand their children. They are happy with the approachability of the Headteacher and staff, and the way in which incidents are dealt with effectively. Religious education and collective worship are managed efficiently, and with enthusiasm. The governing body are committed to supporting the Headteacher, and are proud of the rapid progress made by the school during the past year.

This inspection was carried out on behalf of the Diocese of Bath & Wells in whose area the school is set, in accordance with Section 48 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection framework used is that established by The National Society of the Church of England for the denominational inspection of church schools for all dioceses in England and Wales.

Your comments or complaints should be addressed to the Education Department, The Diocese of Bath & Wells, The Old Deanery, Wells, Somerset BA5 2UG. Further information about inspection of church schools can be obtained from the National Society's website at www.natsoc.org.uk.