

Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools

Report

School:	Dundry Church of England Primary School 110 Dundry Lane, Dundry, Bristol BS41 8JE
Status:	Voluntary Controlled
Diocese:	Bath and Wells
Local Authority:	North Somerset
Date of Inspection;	23rd November 2009
Date of last Inspection:	8th December 2006
School's unique ref. no.	109189
Name of Head teacher:	Rhiannon Price
Chair of Governors:	Anita Heapey
Inspector's name & NS no:	Daphne Spitzer NS-37

School Context

Dundry Church of England School has 76 children on roll and serves the small village of Dundry overlooking the city of Bristol. The majority of the pupils live outside the village, mainly in nearby south Bristol which is an area of social deprivation. The numbers of children with learning difficulties is in line with the national average. The vast majority of the children are of white British heritage. A newly appointed headteacher started in post in September.

Summary Judgement

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Dundry Church of England Primary School as a church school is satisfactory.

The headteacher has a clear vision and has made a good start. She is determined to work with the whole school community for the development of the school's distinctive Christian character.

Established Strengths

- Highly enthusiastic headteacher who is passionate about developing the school's distinctive Christian character
- Strong links between school, church and village which are of mutual benefit.
- Welcoming supportive Christian ethos which is valued by the whole school community

Focus for development

- Include a strand for the development of the school's distinctive Christian character in the school's strategic improvement plan and fully involve the whole school community in monitoring and evaluating its impact.
- Review policy and practice for collective worship in order to raise its impact on the learners
- Allocate and develop an area in the school grounds for spiritual reflection

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

Dundry church school is a welcoming and caring community. Implicit Christian values impact effectively on the learners ensuring that their personal development is good. Children are polite, courteous and considerate. Parents value the school's open and inclusive ethos. Spiritual awareness has been effectively developed since September by the introduction of prayer boards in classrooms. This has provided an opportunity for children to spontaneously write prayers. Children have found this particularly beneficial following the recent sudden death of a much loved governor who was a regular visitor to school. The school council plays an important role. It is currently assisting with the school Travel Plan. The process is promoting an appreciation of the school's position in a quiet village compared to neighbouring schools located on busy main roads. Children enjoy Religious Education (RE) due to the good teaching which effectively promotes spiritual awareness. This was evidenced clearly in an RE lesson with the youngest children where one described giving her love to everybody in the world. During another RE lesson observed, children's views on suffering and the nature of life were challenged. Children's responses were sensitive and demonstrated an understanding of inequality and the difficult issues in life facing Christians and people of other faiths. These older children are currently aspiring to be part of a local project focussing on action for poverty reduction. Relationships throughout the school are good. Staff and parents are caring and compassionate and very supportive of one another. Older children who act as buddies take active roles ensuring that any problems between peers are resolved and that playtimes are happy. One child who had recently joined the school commented that there is "no bullying here, just a lot of nice people." The attractive outside environment which includes a wildlife area owes much to the commitment of the governor who has recently died. The school has plans to

create an area as a memorial to him, at the same time enhancing the environment for spiritual development.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is satisfactory

Collective worship is an important part of the day at Dundry church school. Children enjoy taking part in worship and have appreciated starting to take a more active role, particularly since the new parish priest was appointed. They also thoroughly enjoy singing hymns and songs in worship and do this with enthusiasm. Worship effectively develops spiritual awareness. Parents commented that children often talk about worship themes that have interested them and prayers said that have caused them to reflect. A board in the hall displays the current worship theme reinforcing the focus for reflection. A prayer board has recently been introduced at the children's request. A candle is often lit at the start of worship and is understood by the children to symbolise the light of Christ. A colourful cross also stands on a special table beside the candle. The school is well served by the local clergy enhancing children's understanding of the Anglican faith. For instance, the parish priest has recently introduced the children to the practice of passing the peace which they enjoyed and found meaningful. The major Christian festivals are celebrated by the school in church and are well supported by parents. Collective worship is planned by the new headteacher who has been gradually building on existing practice. She is developing an effective partnership with the parish priest as seen by the way they jointly led the recent Harvest service. She has also begun to evaluate worship by talking to children. Although she usually leads Sharing Assembly on a Friday, she has not yet led the school in worship on a weekly basis. This does restrict the way the school's Christian ethos and values impact on the whole school community.

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

The school has a clear Christian vision which is fully understood by the whole school community. This was developed several years ago and has not since been reviewed. The new headteacher has made an good start in developing the school's distinctive Christian character. Together with the governors she now plans to develop a new Christian vision involving consultations with parents, staff and children. An effective process of self evaluation as church school has been set underway. Parents believe that the school's Christian values influence the way their children behave. They appreciate that the school is a very caring and welcoming place and that support for their needs as well as those of their children is given a prominent role. The headteacher is an experienced RE subject leader. This has already had an impact on raising the importance of the subject as a key aspect of the school's distinctive Christian character. The children's books are well marked and learning assessed, indicating next steps in learning and inviting a dialogue with the learners. However, there is not yet a whole school assessment system in place. Support from the diocese is highly valued. The partnership between the church, school and local community is strong. The parish priest and deanery worker contribute very effectively to RE lessons as well as lead worship. There are plans for local parishioners to be invited to join the school in church to celebrate festivals. The school promotes

church services in its newsletters and the children took part in the parish Christmas card competition. The governors and staff ensure that the school is at the heart of the village. It is now in a good position to build on its Christian foundation and further enhance its distinctive Christian character.

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.