



Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Old Church Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

School Street
Darlaston
Walsall
West Midlands
WS10 8DL

Diocese of Lichfield

Walsall LEA

SIAS inspection: 18th September 2008

Date of last inspection: September 2004

School's Unique reference number 104224

Head teacher: Mr J Perrins

SIAS Inspector NS Mr John Lawton 318

Context

Old Church school is a large, popular and oversubscribed school serving an area where the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is above average. Most pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties, including those with statements of special educational need, is generally below average, although there are variations in year groups.

Summary Judgement

Old Church Church of England Controlled Primary School is a satisfactory Church school. Christian values of love, care and respect provide learners with a happy and secure environment. Behaviour is good and learners are actively encouraged and challenged by a broad and rich curriculum and wide range of extra curricular activities which meet the needs of all learners. Good relationships and mutual respect provides for effective educational, social and spiritual development.

Established strengths

- The high quality of care and relationships throughout the school
- The development of self worth in all learners and the extent to which each individual is recognised, valued and celebrated
- The hard work and commitment of all staff
- Good supportive links with the church and local community

Focus for development

- Develop a secure practice for staff and governors to monitor and evaluate the impact of Collective Worship
- Consolidate the emerging pattern of self evaluation to include Foundation governors

The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is good in meeting the needs of its learners

Learners are experiencing strong Christian principles from a very early age and the quality of relationships within the school community and with stakeholders is good. Staff work extremely hard and provide good role models for learners. Christian values of love, forgiveness and inclusiveness underpin what happens within school. The school celebrates learners' individual achievements on a weekly basis and learners expressed their appreciation that all achievements are celebrated. Learners are proud of their school and the School Council provides them with good opportunities to raise and resolve issues. Respect for other cultures and beliefs is shown and this results in an open and positive atmosphere where learners' curiosity and excitement about the whole world is encouraged. Care and concern for others extends beyond the school environment with regular support given to charities thus helping to develop learners' attitudes to Christian service and gratitude. Parents expressed their satisfaction with the support offered by the school and recognise the value of the school as a Church school.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is satisfactory

Learners attend a daily act of collective worship. Familiar rituals, for example lighting a candle, help learners to appreciate the distinctive atmosphere of worship. Learners were able to explain the significance of the lighted candle and were also able to identify aspects of worship they particularly enjoyed. Worship forms an integral part of school life and consists of a variety of methods of presentation including staff, clergy and pupil led acts of worship. There are satisfactory examples of learner and staff involvement in worship through hymn singing, story telling, questioning, reflection and prayer. Themes for worship are inclusive and sufficiently flexible to accommodate local and national issues. Major festivals are held in St Lawrence church and the Rector is very supportive, also regularly leading worship in school. The church is also used as a valuable learning resource. Stories, prayers, music and drama are central elements of collective worship which provide inspiration and impact upon learners' spiritual growth. Parents' comments show they value collective worship in school. Planning of worship is coherent; however there are currently no formal means of evaluating the impact of collective worship to ensure consistent high quality.

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

The leadership and management of the Head Teacher and senior management team are good. All staff work very hard and make contributions to the development of learners and the vision and values of the school. The resulting quality of relationships between learners and staff is good and a cornerstone of the school's clear sense of corporate purpose. The levels of care shown for the health and welfare of pupils are good. School self evaluation is satisfactory but currently Foundation governors are not sufficiently involved in their monitoring and evaluation responsibilities. Governors share in acts of worship from time to time and are supportive of the school community. The Mission Statement is good but currently the school does not celebrate its Christian witness sufficiently for example through its tangible promotion in the school prospectus. Links between the school, St Lawrence church and the community are strong. Communications between the school and parents are good and parents are consulted by means of questionnaires. Learners too are consulted through questionnaires. Parents and learners are confident that their views will be listened to and considered. Parents consulted during the inspection were highly supportive of the school and spoke of the happiness and readiness of their children to attend this oversubscribed school.