

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Salway Ash Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Salway Ash
Bridport
Dorset
DT6 5JE

Diocese: Salisbury

Local authority: Dorset
Date of inspection: November 15th 2012
Date of last inspection: May 10th 2007
School's unique reference number: 113809
Headteacher: Mrs Lisa Crew
Inspector's name and number: Angela Sumner 580

School context

Salway Ash Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School is a 4 mixed age class village school. It serves a wide rural community. There are 114 pupils and 22% have special educational needs. Almost all pupils are of White British origin and no pupils have English as an Additional Language. Within the last two years there has been extensive building development which enhances the school accommodation.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Salway Ash Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding

This popular school is held in very high regard by all stakeholders. It is characterised by caring relationships within an holistic approach to learning. The distinctive Christian ethos is clearly evident throughout and makes an outstanding contribution to teaching and learning. Pupils receive outstanding care and support and are encouraged to fulfil their potential within an inclusive environment based on explicit Christian values lived out in the whole school community.

Established strengths

- ⌚ Welcoming, inclusive, nurturing environment based on explicit Christian values, underpinned by strong element of prayer
- ⌚ Dynamic, proactive, empowering leadership by headteacher and governors which strongly supports the Church of England foundation
- ⌚ Strong Christian role models provided by Headteacher, staff and governors
- ⌚ Excellent, well established links between school, church and wider community, offering a creative curriculum with extensive extra curricular opportunities.

Focus for development

- ⌚ To develop detailed planning, monitoring and evaluation of Collective Worship to include an evidence base, and to include all stakeholders
- ⌚ To continue to develop Religious Education assessment to include an evidence portfolio, to inform future planning.

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

The aims and ethos of the school are based on explicit Christian values, such as honesty, respect and empathy, and are highly evident in all aspects of the school community. Christian values are lived out in practice, and are explained consistently by all stakeholders. Pupils very confidently say how these values are helpful in their daily lives, for example in the way they could talk about their friendships. Pupils benefit from the excellent quality of relationships throughout the school with everyone cared for and valued as individuals, pupils say "everybody is important". Pupils talk about school and church very enthusiastically and with enjoyment. This is because pupils are given excellent opportunities to develop their potential within a nurturing and inclusive environment which is enhanced through the strong supportive relationship with the church. Pupils confidently describe Christian symbols displayed around the school, explaining their meaning with clarity and mature understanding. The school's documentation and school environment proclaims the school's Christian character shown for example, in the way pupils talk about the meaning of the school entrance Psalm 150 display and reflection chair. Pupils talk about the Conservation area positively as a quiet area for personal reflection, and stewardship of the natural environment as "taking care of God's world". The school has identified continued development of the outdoor environment to provide further spiritual development opportunities. Established contacts between local and international communities, and ongoing developing contacts with national communities, offer further spiritual development opportunities. The school's Christian ethos of concern for others extends beyond the school itself and is evident in the charitable work done in the wider community, for example in fundraising for the Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance and the Kwaggafonten Farm School in South Africa. Consequently these links between school, church and wider community further support spiritual development.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Worship offers pupils outstanding opportunities for spiritual development and as a result they speak enthusiastically about its impact on their lives. Pupils encounter a range of worship styles and age appropriate activities, including class, whole school and church based experiences. In worship observed a reverent atmosphere was established by use of music and stillness. The use of Anglican responses defined the worship. Skilful, interactive explanation about the life of Saint Cecilia enabled enthusiastic engagement. Pupils were able to use personal reflection to think about its meaning, and relate this to their own lives "makes you feel happy, joyful for brand new day". Pupils' positive attitude to worship and enjoyment was obvious in their wholehearted participation in singing accompanied by the proficient Worship music group. Stimulating visual artefacts and use of candles help pupils to focus their thoughts in prayer or reflection. Pupils know the Lord's prayer and school prayer, confidently explaining their meaning. Pupils speak very positively and sensitively of the support received from prayer, "talking to God to say thank you for everything, feel happy to be alive". Because prayer is an important element of the whole school life, there are excellent opportunities for spiritual development. The effective collective worship programme is actively and enthusiastically supported by local clergy and member of church community, who lead worship weekly. This involvement greatly enhances the learners' understanding of the Anglican tradition. The recently appointed clergy team is proactive in initiating worship activities, and has clearly made impact on Collective Worship. The development point from the last inspection has been addressed with regard to understanding of the wider Anglican tradition. All stakeholders speak very positively and enthusiastically of services held in church, for example in celebrating major Christian festivals. Therefore learners have an excellent understanding of the sequence of the Church's year. Worship is planned according to Christian themes, and links between school and church worship leaders support and develop distinctive Christian worship. Monitoring and evaluation of Collective Worship by governors and parents is informal. This is a missed opportunity to develop further the involvement of all stakeholders in planning, monitoring and evaluation of Collective Worship.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

Religious Education is given equal status alongside core subjects, with standards of attainment at least comparable with those in Literacy. Pupils show a very positive, open attitude and clearly enjoy Religious Education. Pupils talk positively of the range of activities provided and pupils' views are valued and respected. Pupils place high value on Religious Education and express its importance in helping them in their future lives. This then provides clear opportunity for spiritual development. The quality of teaching observed is outstanding and is underpinned by outstanding subject knowledge. Learning is promoted by clear objectives shared with pupils with effective use of resources and learning styles. Work is challenging for all abilities of children. Effective cross curricular links are made where appropriate, for example in a lesson observed linking Religious Education, Literacy and Anti Bullying Week. Pupils sensitively discussed and reflected on rights and responsibilities, involving the lives of key Christian people and their own lives. Pupils are highly motivated and explain their understanding clearly and confidently using appropriate religious vocabulary, for example, in one lesson where pupils were able to discuss the meaning of prayer and promise. In another lesson observed pupils were confidently able to reflect on the importance of the Bible, making strong links with their own lives. Consequently, Religious Education provides outstanding spiritual development. The subject leader is dedicated, encouraging and confidently expresses a focused vision for Religious Education. The subject leader speaks of the value and impact of involvement in ongoing professional development, for example diocesan training on the Agreed Syllabus. Formal monitoring, evaluation and assessment procedures for Religious Education are well established with further development identified. The development point from the last inspection with regard to visits to places of worship of other faiths continues.

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

The head teacher and governors very confidently articulate a clear focused vision based on explicit Christian values, which are at the heart of the robust leadership and management of the school. The vision is very effectively shared with all stakeholders in many ways, such as through the ready accessibility of all staff, newsletters, open days and the local parish magazine. Parents speak very positively of the open and inclusive ethos of the school, and say school is welcoming and that all are "encouraged to flourish and be the best they can be". Stakeholders speak enthusiastically of the positive impact of the successful PTA. Governors are effective and very supportive through an extensive range of activities including governor links to curriculum areas. Governors, formally and informally, monitor and evaluate the school as a church school regularly. Foundation governors have a very clear understanding of their role within the life of the school, and are effective in supporting the Church of England foundation. Well established commitment to ongoing professional development training, for example in attending diocesan training on the Agreed Syllabus, Foundation governors, and Spirituality informs and drives future school development, and has clearly made impact on the school's progress. The strong commitment to sustained school development is further demonstrated for example, through the active engagement of all stakeholders in the mission statement review. Excellent links between church, school, and the wider community are evident, for example in the range of events including the village fete, sport and music performances, together with celebration of church services such as Harvest and Christingle. The combined supportive approach taken by all stakeholders clearly means that the school has continued outstanding capacity to improve as a church school.

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