



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

St Anne's Church of England (VA) Primary School

London Road
Godmanchester
Huntingdon
PE29 2WW

Diocese: Ely

Local authority: Cambridgeshire
Date of inspection: 28th June 2012
Date of last inspection: 28th & 29th November 2006
School's unique reference number: 131238
Headteacher: Mr Adrian Shepherd
Inspector's name and number: Mrs Judith Ruff 528

School context

St Anne's is an average-sized primary school with 216 pupils on roll. This represents an increase from the previous inspection and demonstrates the expanding housing programme in the area and the school's popularity amongst parents who greatly value the church foundation. The parish church of St Mary the Virgin is a 15 -20 minute walk from the school. In addition there are very close links with the local Baptist church.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Anne's VA Primary as a Church of England school are outstanding

The 'St Anne's Spirit' guiding expectations of behaviour shines like a beacon throughout the school community. A community built upon the bedrock of Christian values, modelled in a determined and committed way by all stakeholders, permeating into pupils' homes where parents speak of the importance that children place upon this code for living and learning. The deep value that all place upon the school's church foundation is tangible.

Established strengths

- The effective teamwork of all stakeholders, who fully understand Christian service and use dedicated and unstinting efforts to nurture the children in faith and to pass on values which will strengthen and guide them in future years
- The creative and innovative approaches to Collective Worship and RE which inspire and enthuse pupils to learn, reflect and apply what they have learnt to their daily living
- The strong programme of visiting speakers, local clergy and youth workers who give generously of their time to talk and discuss questions relating to faith and religion

Focus for development

- To ensure that pupils understand next steps in their learning and that written outcomes match the verbal abilities of pupils, particularly of the higher attaining pupils in RE through the effective use of the 'I Can' assessment statements
- To strengthen monitoring procedures in RE so that both governors and the RE Subject Leader are clear about standards achieved across the school

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

'Christian values are at the heart of everything at St Anne's' said a staff member. Governors speak of the privilege of serving in such a school. Parents describe the support and pride they have of being part of school's journey. In particular the comprehensive, thoughtful process, just completed, of reviewing the aims and values of the school. As one parent commented, 'It is not just the point at where this school is now, but the fact that I am confident that it is on the right pathway.' The spiritual awareness of the pupils is outstanding. Their understanding of prayer and reflection as precious opportunities to build a relationship with God is impressive, but this has been carefully nurtured by an enthusiastic staff, encouraging pupils' confidence and ability to express their feelings. As one child said, 'Prayer helps you to have a moment of calm and ask God for help, 'cause God will never give up on us.' Around the school there are many visual symbols and artefacts to support thought and reflection. The school has worked particularly hard on the reflective areas, both inside and outside. This was an action point very successfully addressed from the previous inspection. Behaviour of pupils is excellent with the 'St Anne's Spirit' positive behaviour code guiding the way the whole school community works together. High quality displays around the school demonstrate the value given to every individual. There is a strong sense of school identity and older children care and support their younger friends across the school with enthusiasm.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

The importance of Collective Worship is evident within the life of the school. Pupils and staff insist that it should start each school day with comments such as, 'It sets me up for the day' and 'It helps me reflect on what is important to me.' Real impact of deepening pupil levels of understanding and appreciation of the importance of Collective Worship can be seen in pupil surveys across the year, with the most recent outcomes showing a growing maturity of response. Planning and evaluation of worship are detailed and thorough. The pupils participate in worship well. They enjoy the 'Headteacher Challenge' from each worship theme. The staff have worked hard to build links between the Collective Worship theme and the classroom curriculum. Prayer is an example of where there are good links between whole school worship and children's interests. For example, the recently formed 'Dragon Club' at the school spontaneously wrote a group prayer for the club. External visitors such as 'Gener8', local clergy and youth workers are all welcomed and enjoyed for the sense of fun and energy that they bring, whilst respecting that there is a serious message to be learned. The church is used well for Collective Worship, including Eucharists for both staff and pupils. Pupils are familiar with the Anglican welcome liturgy.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

The outstanding leadership of both the headteacher and RE subject leader ensures that the profile of RE throughout the school is very high. Over the past year, a whole school focus on the planning and assessing aspects have successfully improved practice and built cohesion and consistency. Teaching was observed in all year groups and was judged good to outstanding. Strengths are in the creative and innovative approaches used to inspire and enthuse the pupils for the subject. Excellent links are made with art, dance and music. An outstanding lesson involved a class of pupils interpreting the 'Lord's Prayer' with groups of dancers able to articulate clearly the significance of the chosen movements to illustrate phrases from the prayer. Pupils speak enthusiastically of the 'Window / Mirror' approach to learning in RE. This has had a profound significance for them in learning about religion through the 'window' and using the 'mirror' to learn from that religion or faith idea as to how it might have impact on their lives. Assessment practice, using the 'Can do' statements is developing well, but the school intend to embed this further within classes. Pupils interviewed showed outstanding progress in their oral understanding and appreciation of RE. This is not yet matched by high quality written outcomes, particularly from the most able pupils. Planning for RE is detailed and thorough. Good use is made of the school environment to stimulate discussion. For example the creative work observed around the colourful wooden crosses. The 'Enquiry Led' approach is very effectively used in RE, stimulating opportunities for discussions and 'mind mapping' approaches which harness the pupils' curiosity and natural enthusiasm for learning. Monitoring is not yet fully developed to enable the RE subject leader

and governors to be clear about current standards in RE.

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

St Anne's has an outstanding leadership team, which is totally committed to achieving the very best for all pupils within a strong Christian framework. The enthusiasm, range of talents and expertise which are available to build leadership capacity is most impressive. Twelve governors and parents gave up their time to talk eloquently about their passion for the school and their commitment to enabling its pupils to develop as future citizens who understand the importance of living their lives on the foundation of Christian values. Recruitment processes highlight explicitly the importance of the Christian ethos. Surveys of stakeholders are regular and provide valuable information for future developments. Links with the Diocese are valued and expertise is used effectively in many ways, raising levels of confidence and supporting improvement strategies within the school. Relationships between the school, local churches and faith communities are excellent. All work together as a team 'because of our Christian values we are accepting, non judgemental and inclusive.' The Links with the Ugandan school has enabled pupils to meet with an African Bishop and to understand more deeply church leadership in another culture. A range of charity events, including the current 'Raise the Roof' church appeal are enthusiastically supported by the whole community.

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