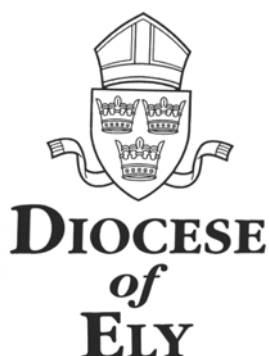


National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report



Inspection under section 48 Of the Education Act 2005

Name and address of school: Dry Drayton Church of England School, Park Street, Dry Drayton, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, CB3 8DA

Type of school: Primary

Status: Voluntary Controlled

Diocese: Ely

LEA: Cambridgeshire

Dates of inspection: 22nd February 2007

Date of last inspection: February 2003

School's Unique reference number: 110787

Name of Headteacher: Mrs M A Prosser

Inspector's name with National Society inspector's number: Michael Kee 316

School context

This is a small rural Primary school with 36 pupils on roll and a pre-school after-school club sharing the same site. The school serves the village of Dry Drayton, but about half the pupils come from outside the school's catchment area. Almost all the pupils are from White British backgrounds and there is a broad socio-economic mix. The number entitled to free school meals is slightly below the national average and the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is relatively high. There is a strong relationship with the Church which is sustained by a close involvement of the parish priest and church wardens in the life of the school and by the commitment of the foundation governor.

Summary Judgement

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Dry Drayton primary school as a Church of England school are good. Christian values and relationships underpin all its work. There is strong creative leadership from the Headteacher and this, together with the dedication and commitment of teachers and support staff, and the consistent support of governors and the Church, provides an environment where pupils can develop both academically and spiritually.

Established strengths

- Strong, imaginative leadership creates an ethos which is clearly valued by pupils and staff and is welcoming for parents
- Strong sense of family pervades all activities and relationships
- The school environment supports the spiritual development of pupils and their understanding of the school's Christian foundation
- Curriculum provision embraces a wealth of extra experiences, both within school and by external visits, which provide exciting opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge, understanding and spirituality
- Excellent ICT provision supports learning in an imaginative way
- Collective worship is an important shared experience for staff and pupils and is consistently and strongly supported by the parish priest and the Church

Focus for development

- Provide a more distinctive declaration of the school's Church status on the outside sign board and on letterheads and other official documentation
- Extend opportunities for pupils to learn about the school's Anglican foundation and practice
- Build on joint projects with the Church and the enthusiasm of the Wardens to provide these opportunities
- Reintroduce visits from people representing other cultures, faiths and countries to support the school's multicultural curriculum

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

The Christian ethos of the school is strong and creates a positive environment for learning within a framework of Christian values, which underpin policies, practice, relationships and the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. The interaction of staff and pupils is good, within the classroom and on the playground. Teachers and all support staff are good role models, providing a safe and caring environment which is clearly valued by pupils. Pupils feel that 'teachers keep us safe' and that everyone is friendly and kind. They also take a pride in helping younger children and looking out for those who feel left out. Pupils are proud of their contribution to good relationships by their writing of the school's anti-bullying policy. The calm, respectful atmosphere of collective worship pervades the whole day and pupils are ready to learn and contribute. They are able to speak in a very articulate manner about their school, its connection with the church and the activities and opportunities provided by the church to support their learning.

Encouraged by governors and ably assisted by the staff, the Head teacher provides a rich learning experience for pupils, both within the daily curriculum of the school, which includes specialist teaching in sport, music and French and in the opportunities for external visits.

The school's environment clearly articulates its distinctive character in a variety of ways which support pupils' understanding of the Christian ethos and the Church of England foundation. This is seen in the cross and candle in the hall and, at the time of the inspection, a range of displays throughout the school depicting aspects of the life of Jesus and his teaching. These displays change regularly to reflect pupil work in RE and PSHE. Collective worship and RE reinforce this further through prayer, song and teaching. Pupils comment well on their learning in RE, which includes faiths other than Christianity.

Pupils' understanding of Anglican faith and practice are well supported through visits to the village church for major festivals and being part of the church's life through study days organised by the wardens and foundation governor. Pupils commented

enthusiastically on their study days which have included learning about baptism, the history of the building and the architecture and the place of music in worship by being shown the organ. They also received guidance on reading in church and developing their presentational skills.

The school aims to prepare children for their future life through a secure knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith. RE, PSHE and Circle time provide strong support for this, as does the perception of staff, that the school has a strong moral code.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship makes a very positive contribution to the start of every school day and includes pupils in organising the hall in preparation, lighting the candle at the beginning and extinguishing it at the end of the assembly, presenting prayers they have written and responding to discussion points raised by the leader. Pupils enter the assembly hall quietly and respectfully while music is played and leave in the same orderly way. Pupils described collective worship as a special time when they can talk to God in prayer, and were pleased that their own prayers are read and then discussed under the guidance of the teacher leading the worship. Pupils were also pleased to have the opportunity to light and extinguish the candle and understood and were able to explain its significance, of Jesus being the light of the world. Collective worship in school benefits from all staff taking a lead role and by the regular leadership of worship by the parish priest whose presence effectively brings the Anglican tradition to the occasion.

Pupils were also keen to talk about their 'sharing' assembly when they are able to show their work to parents who are invited for this occasion and who can join in the pupils' celebration of achievement. This is a good opportunity for pupils to take a leading role in collective worship. The attendance of parents at these occasions is very much encouraged by the school and is something which, together with parents' attendance at services the pupils help to present in church, is something which the school, church wardens and foundation governor wish to develop further.

The use of the Methodist Chapel, which is the only other place of Christian worship in the village, for Harvest festival services, is something the pupils enjoy and which parents attend. These occasions provide an important opportunity for pupils to discover something of other Christian churches and help to strengthen links with the Christian community in the village.

The staff, governors, priest and church wardens give significant support to the place of worship in the life of the school, both in daily collective worship and in the regular visits to church for services and learning.

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

The Head teacher, ably and enthusiastically supported by all staff and the governing body, provides creative and imaginative leadership which clearly promotes the distinctive Christian vision for the school. The aims of the school place the education offered within the context of Christian belief and practice and recognise the religious foundation of the school to promote the spiritual and moral development of pupils.

The Christian vision is able to be seen through specific curriculum areas such as RE, PSHE, literacy, geography and through collective worship. The Head teacher and the staff regularly challenge themselves to ensure they are realising the vision and improving their interpretation of it. The Head recognises the value of the support she receives from the foundation governor and the enthusiasm of the church wardens and is aiming to involve all the governors in a fuller understanding of how the Church is integral to school life. The regular commitment of the parish priest to collective

worship and the enthusiasm of the church wardens and foundation governor in involving pupils in church activities clearly demonstrate the school's distinctive Christian character.

Parents are always welcome in the school and speak enthusiastically about the education being offered and the safe and happy environment. The Head teacher welcomes parent views and elicits these by talking directly and on occasion through the use of questionnaires.

All teaching staff, teaching assistants and supervisors considered that they were valued by the Head teacher and the governors and enjoyed working in the school. They thought it was good to be a Church school as this gave a strong moral and caring core to how children were taught and helped to develop. Staff felt strongly that there was good, effective team work and that they were able to be fully involved in practising and evaluating the school's vision. This is a well- led school which is focussed on the well being of its pupils and staff and which benefits from strong, caring leadership.