



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Cockernhoe Endowed Church of England Primary School

Cockernhoe Green
Luton
LU2 8PY

Diocese: St Albans

Local authority: Hertfordshire
Dates of inspection: Thursday 06 June 2013
Date of last inspection: 09 September 2008
School's unique reference number: 117446
Headteacher: Mr Paul Quinton
Inspector's name and number: Mr Bob Hopcraft NS484

School context

Cockernhoe Endowed Primary is a small school with four mixed-age classes, located in a rural setting. A relatively small proportion of pupils come from the village of Cockernhoe, with the remainder coming from the outskirts of Luton. Almost all pupils are from white British backgrounds and have English as a first language. The proportion of pupils with disabilities or special educational needs is broadly similar to the national average, while the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Cockernhoe Endowed C of E Primary School as a Church of England school are good.

This is a school with distinctive Christian values at its heart. As a result, all pupils are valued and make good progress in all aspects of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Strong links with the church and local community continue to be key aspects of its ethos.

Established strengths

- The commitment of school leaders and governors in promoting a school community rooted firmly in clear Christian values;
- Good quality acts of worship which strengthen and deepen pupils' spiritual development;
- Continuing strong links with the Church, other Christian denominations and the local community

Focus for development

- Develop systems to monitor the impact of collective worship on pupils and the wider school community;
- Develop rigorous assessment procedures in RE to enable pupils to make even quicker progress and to reach higher standards;
- Develop systems for governors and school leaders to translate areas for development identified through self-evaluation into action plans for future development.

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

This is because Christian values are implicit in all aspects of the school's work and lie at the heart of its day- to-day life, enabling pupils to make good progress and to achieve well. Values are made explicit throughout the curriculum and play a particularly important part in worship. As a result, pupils are able to make strong links between the values they learn and a range of bible stories, for example the linking of 'courage' with the story of David and Goliath and 'forgiveness' with Christ's passion. Values contribute effectively to pupils' developing spirituality and their social, moral and cultural awareness, resulting in a cohesive and supportive school community in which relationships are good at all levels. This manifests itself in the distinctive family atmosphere which is so evident throughout the school and which was reflected in many of the discussions with governors, staff and pupils during the inspection. This 'family feel' is also much valued by parents who speak of the positive impact of the school's work on the daily lives of their children and the whole family. The school environment promotes spirituality effectively, for example through the presence of active prayer walls in all classrooms. Pupils are involved in a wide range of charitable giving and their global understanding is developed effectively through the school's support for two children in the Philippines through the 'Hands of Mercy' organisation.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good.

Worship is an important part of the school day and impacts positively on both pupils and adults within the school community. This is because worship is well planned and matched to the needs of all learners, providing many opportunities for both pupils and adults to participate actively and to grow in their spiritual understanding. This was illustrated very well by the high quality act of worship observed during the inspection which explored the idea that we are all stronger when we work together. This theme was linked clearly to the writings of St Paul and was illustrated graphically by encouraging a pupil to stand on a tray of eggs, which survived her weight because 'like us, they are all stronger together'. Pupils say that this is typical of the experiences they get during worship, enabling them to make explicit links between values and Christian teaching. As a result, they have a strong knowledge and understanding of the bible and demonstrate a clear understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit as '*God being all around us and with us all the time*'. They have many opportunities to lead significant parts of worship, including the regular worship in church. The strong links with the Church noted at the time of the previous inspection have continued and effective use is made of local places of worship, enabling pupils to develop an understanding of Anglican tradition. The quality of worship is now monitored effectively, but the impact of daily worship on pupils and the wider school community is not yet evaluated regularly.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good.

This is because pupils make good progress in RE lessons and attain good standards as a result of good teaching. Improved monitoring of RE has enabled teaching to improve over time and effective use has been made of opportunities for staff professional development, for example through courses run by the diocese, which has strengthened and developed their RE teaching. Lessons observed during the inspection moved at a brisk pace and provided many opportunities for pupils to learn actively and to make links between Christianity and their everyday lives. A good example was the key stage 2 lesson on the theme *'Where is God?'* which encouraged pupils to explore the outdoor environment in groups to collect objects that represented God to them. This invoked many thoughtful responses such as *'I chose the long leaves to represent God reaching out to all of us'* and *'God is all around us: He is everywhere and gives us peace'* which reflect pupils' growing understanding of deep questions. Understanding was further strengthened by clear reference to the theme followed in worship earlier in the day. While assessment of RE is developing, school leaders are clear that this is an important area for future improvement which will allow staff to identify next steps in learning more sharply and to move pupils' learning forward at an even quicker pace. Tasks are challenging, enabling pupils to make links between Christianity and other faiths and as a result, pupils demonstrate a growing knowledge of Christianity and are able to discuss the differences and similarities with other major world religions. This is strengthened further by effective use of visits and visitors to widen pupils' understanding, for example through the recent visit to the Mandir.

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

This is because school leaders, including governors, consistently promote a clear vision for the school which is rooted in distinctively Christian values. This is evident in all the school's major documentation and no one can be in any doubt on entering the school of its Christian foundation. Leaders and governors have developed clear and accurate strategies for self-evaluation as a church school; however, these are not yet translated sufficiently well into action plans for future development. Nevertheless, the work of the governing body and senior leaders has ensured that the school's expression of its distinctive Christian character and the quality of collective worship and RE have improved over time, successfully driving improvement in the areas for development identified in the previous inspection report. As a result, the school continues to develop as a cohesive community with Christian values at its heart. Links with the local Church and parish have remained strong in spite of recent changes to personnel and very strong links have been forged with representatives from other denominations, who contribute effectively to the life of the school. The school continues to maintain strong links with its local community in which it plays a key role.

SIAMS report June 2013, Cockernhoe Endowed CofE Primary School, LU2 8PY