



Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Wenlock CofE Voluntary Aided Junior School
Beaconsfield Road, Luton LU2 0RW

Diocese of St Albans

LA:	Luton
SIAS Inspection:	11 March 2008
Previous S23 Inspection:	22 - 23 March 2004
URN:	109633
Headteacher:	Mrs Barbara Campbell
SIAS Inspector Name:	Mr Bob Hopcraft
SIAS Inspector No:	484

School Context

Wenlock CofE Voluntary Aided Junior School is a larger than average junior school which provides education for pupils from the locality, as well as being the only Church of England school in the town. In recent years there has been a rapid increase in the number of pupils from ethnic minority groups and an above average percentage of pupils now have English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is almost twice the national average and there are a significant proportion of pupils with complex social or emotional needs.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Wenlock CofE Voluntary Aided Junior School as a Church of England school are good.

Overall, Wenlock is a good Church school, which promotes its Christian character well. Staff and school leaders have worked hard in recent years to steer the school through a period of relative turbulence, caused by the large influx of pupils following the closure of a local primary school. Through the consistent application of Christian values and the development of mutual understanding and tolerance, encapsulated in the school's motto "*Learning and growing together within the Love of God*" all pupils have been encouraged to live and work together positively and the school is now well placed to continue its development in the future.

Established strengths

- The care and support for all pupils, which ensures that all feel valued and special
- The clear emphasis on teamwork and the good relationships between pupils and staff
- The vision of the headteacher and the chair of governors for the school as a Church school
- The strong emphasis on social, moral, spiritual and cultural development, which encourages an understanding of other faiths and cultures

Focus for development

- Develop systems for the formal evaluation of the quality and impact of acts of worship
- Develop assessment procedures in RE in order to ensure that pupils have a clear idea of how to move on in their learning
- Develop new governors' ability to monitor and evaluate the development of the school as a Church School

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

This is because the large majority of learners feel valued and special and say that they enjoy school and want to do well. They are clear that teamwork is important and enjoy the opportunities they have to work with others. There is a strong emphasis on Christian values and use of the *Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning* (SEAL) materials supports this well, providing pupils with a vocabulary with which to discuss their feelings. As a result, the school's recent period of turbulence is now firmly behind it and it is looking forward positively to the future. Pupils have many opportunities to demonstrate and develop independence, for example in their membership of the School Council and opportunities to act as lunchtime buddies. Social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good and pupils develop a good understanding of other faiths and their key beliefs. Relationships between staff and pupils are overwhelmingly positive and behaviour overall well managed. The school has developed its accommodation sympathetically over the years and the recent addition of a *Family Room* is encouraging a still closer relationship between school and home. Symbols of its Christian foundation are displayed throughout the school and particularly striking displays in the entrance hall, currently celebrating Lent and Holy Week, leave the visitor in no doubt that Wenlock is a Church school.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Worship is central to the life of the school and clearly reflects its Christian character. Acts of worship are well planned around key themes and values and pupils can talk about the importance of these values in their lives, leading one to remark "... *it helps me to learn to get on with everyone*". Pupils say they enjoy worship and they have many opportunities to become actively involved; however, the school does not at present formally evaluate the quality and impact of acts of collective worship in any way. The school works hard to develop and promote sensitivity to the beliefs of other faiths and cultures within worship and opportunities are provided for quiet reflection, when pupils from all faith backgrounds may worship quietly in any way they feel appropriate. Good use of prayer and song is made to enhance worship and provision is well matched to the age and ability of learners. *The Grace* is used on a daily basis to mark the end of worship and to promote unity among all who work and play here. There are strong links with the parish and deanery and the vicar leads worship regularly. Good use is also made of St Mary's Church, where pupils and staff worship four times a year.

The effectiveness of the religious education is satisfactory

Standards in Religious Education (RE) are broadly in line with those expected nationally and pupils make satisfactory progress, but assessment procedures are currently underdeveloped and as a result pupils do not have a clear enough idea of how to move on in their learning within RE. However the school is aware of this, and the good quality teaching in RE means that the school is well placed to move pupils' understanding to the next level. Pupils enjoy RE and all participate enthusiastically in lessons, whatever their background or faith. Good use is made of both ICT and drama, for example when pupils acted out the Last Supper to develop their understanding of the events and its links with the Passover festival. Pupils demonstrate a good knowledge of the key Christian festivals and the inclusion of action plans for RE in the school's overall development plan indicate that it is a priority for the school.

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

Responses to parent questionnaires indicate that almost all are positive about the school's Christian vision and are clear that Wenlock is a good Church school. The school's Christian character is clear from its key documentation and the headteacher and chair of governors have been instrumental in keeping the school's Christian vision at the centre of its ethos during the recent period of turbulence. However, the recent large turnover in governors means that many are new to the role and have not yet had the opportunity to be fully involved in the self-evaluation of the school as a Church school. The school is inclusive and induction procedures ensure that its Christian character is clear to all. The views of parents are sought regularly and questionnaire responses indicate that parents are very supportive of the school, speaking warmly of its multi-cultural dimension and the impact that its values have on their children's development. Developments for both RE and collective worship are included in the school development plan. The school plays a central part in the life of the local community and enjoys strong pastoral and spiritual links with the local parish and deanery. The local parish works closely with other faith groups within the town and this cultural link is further enhanced by the school's good promotion of cultural and spiritual understanding for all its pupils. Pupils are involved in raising funds for a number of charities, including *Cancer Care*, *Barnardos* and *Children in Need* and are encouraged to consider the needs of those less fortunate than themselves.