



Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report



**Christopher Reeves VA C of E Lower School
Hinwick Road, Podington, Wellingborough NN29 7HU**

Diocese of St Albans

LA: Bedford Borough
SIAS Inspection: 3 November 2009
Previous S48 Inspection: 24 April 2007
URN: 109622
Headteacher: Sue McNally
SIAS Inspector Name: David Underwood
SIAS Inspector No: 96

School Context

Christopher Reeves is a small school located in the north Bedfordshire village of Podington. The village has few amenities and no pre-school provision. The school serves a wide local area both from catchment area villages and nearby Northamptonshire towns.

The overall distinctiveness and effectiveness of the school as a Church of England school is outstanding.

This is because the staff, governors and parents have all worked together to build a school firmly rooted in Christian values which has a positive impact on all its pupils and the local community.

Established strengths

- The school staff and governors have a clear vision underpinned by Christian values that makes the school both distinctive and effective.
- The school's well developed Christian values make a significant contribution to the excellent relationships and behaviour that exist throughout the school.
- The high quality worship engages all members of the school, and makes a significant impact on the spiritual and moral development of all pupils.

Focus for development

- Develop more focused strategies for the assessment of pupils' work in Religious Education.
- Ensure that Religious Education is focussed on learning about and from religions.
- Extend opportunities for pupils to explore cultural and religious diversity, locally, nationally and globally.

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

Everyone readily agrees that the school's Christian values underpin all parts of school life and have made a significant contribution to the excellent relationships and behaviour that exist throughout the school. Pupils and parents alike feel motivated, supported and challenged by the school, and acknowledge that any problems are resolved quickly, fairly and consistently. The care and attention to detail that has gone into the school environment, especially the spiritual garden has had a major influence on the spiritual and social development of pupils. The Christian character of the school has a significant impact on pupils' understanding of their role in local, national and global communities and this continues to develop further.

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

Since the last inspection the impact of collective worship now extends throughout the day and beyond. The high quality worship engages all members of the school, and everyone feels included and affirmed. The careful preparation, setting and well chosen resources make a significant impact on the spiritual and moral development of all pupils, who readily say how much they enjoy worship and how they are involved and participate in it, often leading significant aspects. Staff, governors and pupils all contribute to the careful and creative planning of worship, incorporating a wide range of experiences which inspire and challenge the whole school community. Pupils are familiar with a range of traditional Anglican practices and also enjoy innovative worship drawn from other sources. Regular use is made of the parish church and then worship involves parents and participants from the local community. Currently evaluation is mainly done verbally at staff meetings but a more formal system is in its early stages.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good.

The effectiveness of Religious Education has improved since the last inspection and is now good with some outstanding features. Assessment is used regularly to inform teaching and learning, but this is still being developed, and at present pupils are making average progress across each key stage with standards in line with those of other subjects. Appropriate differentiation ensures that pupils participate fully in lessons. Pupils clearly enjoy their R.E. and are often reflective and able to relate their learning to their own experiences. They cooperate well and talk confidently about the subject. RE is well led and continuing to develop. Good planning, resources and subject knowledge impact on pupils who are increasing in their spiritual and moral awareness through their experiences in the subject. However occasionally lessons are biased towards Christian nurture rather than learning about or from religion. R.E. makes a significant contribution to the effective understanding pupils have of Christian faith and practice. Staff and pupils celebrate religious and cultural diversity locally, nationally and globally and are actively developing links which will improve this.

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

The school staff and governors have a clear vision underpinned by Christian values that makes the school both distinctive and effective. Everyone associated with the school has shared in the development of the values programme and it is now woven into the fabric of school life. Pupils and adults alike readily say how much Christian values have enriched attitudes and behaviour throughout the school, and all agree that any issues of concern are dealt with consistently. The school continues to develop through its rigorous self-evaluation in which everyone has a voice. The school has a clear understanding of its future development needs as a church school and some strategies have been put in place. There are strong links with parents, the local church and village community which are mutually beneficial. Links with the diocese and the world wide church are good and developing further.

SIAS Report November 2009

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