

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

St Andrew's Church (Foundation) Junior School

Church Road
Hatfield Peverel
Essex CM32JX

Diocese: Chelmsford

Local authority: Essex

Dates of inspection: 1st October 2012

Date of last inspection: 2007

School's unique reference number: 115102

Headteacher: Mr Chris James

Inspector's name and number: Ann Bard NS 728

School context

St Andrew's is an average- sized junior school serving the village and surrounding area. A number of children travel to the school from outside of the catchment area and most transfer from the community infant school which is next door. The proportion of children who are known to be eligible for free school meals is below average.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Andrew's as a Church of England school are satisfactory

St Andrew's Church of England School is a satisfactory church school which has many strengths. Since the last inspection, the governing body have begun to more actively support the capable and committed senior leadership in strengthening the school's Christian ethos and foundations as a church school. Some progress has been made against the key areas identified for development from the previous inspection.

Established strengths

- The strength of relationships within the school community which contribute positively to children's personal and academic achievement and which are based on Christian principles.
- The partnership between the church and school which supports its distinctiveness.
- The commitment of the Headteacher and other senior leaders in developing the Christian character of the school.

Focus for development

- Senior leaders should ensure systematic monitoring and evaluation of the distinctive Christian character of the school to include all stakeholders with outcomes informing future strategic planning.
- To promote the school's distinctive Christian values so that stakeholders, especially learners, are more readily able to understand and articulate them.
- Ensure that pupils have more opportunities to plan and lead worship.

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

An implicitly Christian ethos is well established in the school and significantly supports pupils' good personal, moral and spiritual development. However, generally pupils do not recognise the values that contribute to this development as having a distinctively Christian perspective. Pupils make very good academic progress and their behaviour is very good. Pupils are happy at school and recognise and appreciate the work undertaken by the staff to enable them to

achieve as well as they can. The school's ethos enables strong and supportive relationships, with staff providing good role models for pupils. Parents say that teachers are enthusiastic and that there are clear expectations of behaviour based on Christian moral values, including respect and tolerance. Pupils are proud of their fundraising efforts enabling them to be increasingly aware of their responsibility to support those less well off than themselves, both locally and globally. Practical expressions of Christian love can be seen through the charities that the school actively supports, such as the Samaritan Shoebox appeal and Harvest for the Hungry. The incumbent is a regular visitor to the school and takes an active interest in its work. The views of pupils and parents are valued but as yet they have not been systematically consulted concerning the effectiveness of the school as a church school. The school is well regarded in the community and the children have opportunities to visit the local home for the elderly where they sing. The presentation of house points has a positive impact and enables pupils to celebrate not only their own achievement but that of their peers. A wide range of extra-curricular activities are well supported. Although the school has established a worship area in the hall, the school environment is currently not used as fully as it could be to promote opportunities for Christian teaching and spiritual development. Religious Education which is often taught through other subjects is enjoyed by pupils and helps to enhance their spiritual and moral development. In one lesson about the Ancient Egyptian belief in the afterlife, older pupils were discussing their own thoughts on what their thoughts were on life after death.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is satisfactory

The daily act of worship is important in the life of the school and much thought has been given to the structure of the daily act. The two –year programme is carefully planned around Christian themes, values and festivals in the church year and is mainly led by the Headteacher and other members of staff. . During the worship observed, the children entered the hall quietly and calmly and were eager to be chosen to come out to the front where they were matching seeds to fruit. Singing, led by the headteacher was lively and meaningful and contributed to the theme of 'Sharing.' Children say that they generally enjoy assemblies, especially those that use video clips, and appreciate their regular visits to services in the church. They are less clear about the purpose of worship and the place of prayer or how it helps them to think about their own lives. Children say that they enjoy opportunities to take an active part in worship and would like further opportunities to be involved in planning and leading it. They also enjoy times provided for quiet reflection which allow them to make a personal response to the themes. Parents are invited to attend services in the local church and these are very well supported. Regular and formal monitoring and evaluation which informs planning and involves pupils does not yet take place.

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

The leadership of the school is committed to giving its pupils the experience of what it is to be part of a 'caring Christian community' This is expressed in the daily life of the school through the motto 'Enjoy, Respect and Achieve.' Whilst the values enshrined in this are implicitly Christian they are not always recognisable, especially to children and some other stakeholders, as being distinctive or linked to Christian values. Further work is required to ensure this distinctiveness is well defined, explicitly Christian and recognised by all stakeholders, particularly the pupils. Parents are very supportive of the school and are appreciative of the happy, caring ethos that significantly supports their children's personal development and achievements. Parents' views are valued and they confirm that issues raised are promptly and effectively addressed. As yet there have been no opportunities for them to contribute to the evaluation of the school's distinctiveness as a church school. The governing body and foundation governors are fully committed to further developing the school as a church school and are now in a much stronger position to take an active part in supporting this than they were at the last inspection. Governing body meetings now start with a prayer and the chair reflected that the school is considered to be part of the church's 'mission field.'