



Statutory Inspection of Schools Report

Olveston Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Elberton Rd,
Olveston,
Bristol,
BS35 4DB

Diocese of Bristol

Local Authority: South Gloucestershire
SIAS inspection : 9th July 2008
Previous Section 23 inspection : 9th and 25th November 2004
URN : 109170
Headteacher: Faye Bertham
SIAS Inspector NS268: Muriel Griffiths

School Context

Olveston Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School has 212 pupils on roll and was originally founded in 1836. The school serves the village of Olveston and the surrounding area. The school has been extended considerably over the years and the most recent development is a new hall. The school is close to the Parish Church of St. Mary's. The headteacher has been in post for six months although previously she was acting headteacher.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Olveston Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding.

The strong Christian vision of the headteacher is well supported by staff and the governors in sustaining an ethos that has Christian values at its heart. The impact of these values is evident in the caring relationships between all members of the school community. The school provides many opportunities to encourage pupils to flourish in both their learning and their personal development.

Established Strengths

- The outstanding leadership of the headteacher, supported by governors and a very committed staff team, gives the school clear purpose and direction.
- The strong Christian ethos permeates every aspect of the life of the school.
- The promotion of Christian values is the basis for pupils' excellent personal development and well being.

Focus for Development

- In future parent questionnaires the school should invite responses about the school's distinctive Christian character.

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

There is a very strong commitment to the development of the whole child within the context and environment of an extremely supportive school community. All children flourish as individuals, feeling valued, special and supported in their learning. They know that 'every child matters' and enjoy coming to school. They talk confidently about what they are learning and the many interesting and varied activities that are provided for them. They are proud of their school. Parents say that the school provides 'a great beginning for their children's lives'. They feel very welcome in school and one parent commented that 'the school is part of my life'. The school's distinctive Christian character is expressed by the high regard for individuals. There are effective reward systems in place with many opportunities for celebration. Weekly celebrations of personal and academic successes known as 'Twinkling Stars' are celebrated with the Vicar each Friday and a prayer is chosen from the school Prayer Box to be read on these occasions. Pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is outstanding because of the school's excellent provision to which RE and collective worship both contribute strongly. This was evident in RE lessons observed during the inspection. Year 2 pupils shared an aptly chosen poem, 'Footprints in the Sand' with their teacher and discussed how God's love helps them through difficult times. Older children in year 4 thought about festivals that they celebrate to remember special events, as they learnt about the Jewish festival of Pesach (Passover). In both lessons, children were confident in sharing their thoughts and opinions as they knew that their views would be valued. Children are encouraged to think of those less fortunate than themselves with many opportunities for fund-raising. Many Christian signs and symbols celebrate the school's Church foundation, such as the 'Angel of Olveston' and the school banner and reflective areas such as one with a mirror with the words, 'There is no-one in the world quite like you'. There are attractive displays all around the school, showing what pupils have learned in RE. There are also places for quiet reflection both in the school building and also in the school grounds, such as in the willow arbour and the bench around the 'Tree of Life'. The school has an exciting link with a school in Bristol, which is well promoted in school with a display and appropriately named 'friendship tiles'.

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

Collective worship has a central place in the life of the school. It has an excellent impact on pupils' spiritual and moral development. They enjoy the daily act of worship and have a good appreciation of its importance in the life of the school community. The school uses a scheme, 'Values for Life' which provides a theme used by the Vicar on his visit each week and then followed up during other acts of worship. This gives excellent support to the Christian values already promoted so strongly in school. 'Peace' was the value for the theme of collective worship observed during the inspection and the children entered the hall to the accompaniment of 'Make me a channel of your peace' played on the piano. Pupils were actively involved in a number of ways during the time of worship, and joined in all elements enthusiastically. The school has carefully considered the impact of collective worship on pupils and has consulted with them, through their Worship Council, about the effectiveness of the daily act of worship. Children have put forward ideas and the recently appointed Worship Co-ordinator, who has been involved with this review, is keen to use her findings to show the children that their views are being taken seriously. Pupils learn about Bible stories, religious traditions and Christian values through a carefully planned programme. Worship is led by the Vicar and also the Verger once a week. These visits are much appreciated and give the children opportunities to form good relationships with them, increasing their experience of the Christian church and those who belong to it. An annual assembly explores the meaning of the Lord's Prayer and this is used as a prayer regularly as are appropriate prayers and responses. Major festivals in the Church calendar are celebrated with the Harvest, Christmas and Easter services held in the Parish Church. Parents appreciate invitations to join their children for worship on these occasions and also to the Friday celebration assemblies.

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

The headteacher's leadership is inspirational and her vision is clearly communicated to all members of the school community. The headteacher, staff and governors ensure that the church foundation is at the heart of the school and are pro-active in developing this dimension of the school. Governors know their school well and are very involved in evaluating how well the school is performing as a church school. The commitment to live according to Christian values strongly underpins the school ethos. Adults are good role models and provide direction for high expectations of behaviour. The school's Christian vision is evident both in the school environment and in all documentation and communication. Pastoral support is provided by members of the governing body for the whole school community and is much valued. There are strong mutually supportive links with both the local church and the community. These many links include taking part in many parish events during the year. Children share their writing in 'Meeting Point', the parish magazine. The church's Breakfast Club meets in school on Sunday and there are excellent links with the local home for the elderly. The RE subject leader provides very good leadership and is both effective and enthusiastic in her role. She has developed a scheme of work specifically for the school which has had an impact on raising standards and achievement in the

subject. Parents' views are sought through questionnaires and also a 'Comment Box'. The school now wishes to invite their opinions on the performance of the school as one with a Church foundation. The school enjoys excellent support from the Diocese and staff and governors are looking forward to opportunities to attend in-service training sessions linked to being an effective and distinctive church school. There are good opportunities for children to have a voice through the very active School Council. Parents recognise the strong link between church and school and recognise that it contributes to the promotion of Christian values. The Touchwood fence project has been a recent initiative involving parish councillors, governors and parents/carers in creating with the children a most attractive and welcoming fence along with the children. As stated on the school website, 'Olveston School is a very special place to be'.

SIAS report July 2008 Olveston Primary CEVC, Olveston, Bristol BS35 4DB