

## Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools

### Report

School:	<b>Horsington Church of England Primary School, Horsington, Templecombe, Somerset. BA80BW</b>
Status:	<b>Voluntary Controlled</b>
Diocese:	<b>Bath &amp; Wells</b>
Local Authority:	<b>Somerset</b>
Date of Inspection;	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> December 2009</b>
Date of last Inspection:	<b>January, 2007</b>
School's unique ref. no.	<b>123763</b>
Name of Headteacher:	<b>Ian Rumbelow</b>
Chair of Governors:	<b>Lorna Allan</b>
Inspector's name & NS no:	<b>John Angle, no 119</b>

### School Context

Horsington Primary School has 111 pupils on roll. It serves a wide area of villages and fairly isolated hamlets and farms. 80% of the pupils come from outside the school catchment area. The school has achieved many awards including the Activemark, Artmark Silver and Healthy Schools Award. The school site is attractive and has a wide variety of outdoor activity areas.

### Summary Judgement

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Horsington Primary School as a church school are outstanding**

This is an outstanding church school. There is a very strong Christian ethos which permeates all aspects of school life. There is a caring, inclusive and supportive family atmosphere which enables children to thrive and high quality learning and personal development to take place. Leadership and management are very effective and strongly promote Christian values and beliefs.

## **Established Strengths**

- The Head, staff and governors, united in promoting a strong and influential Christian vision for the school
- Excellent relationships modelled by teachers and all involved in the life of the school and mirrored by the pupils
- A strong and effective emphasis on learners' personal, spiritual and moral development in the curriculum, and the day to day life of the school
- A very welcoming, sensitive, caring and supportive family ethos, leading to outstanding pupil behaviour and relationship.

## **Focus for development**

- Integrate an understanding and study of different religious communities in the community cohesion plan
- Identify and share amongst the staff in more detail the spiritual development opportunities arising within the school curriculum

## **The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is outstanding in the way it meets the needs of all learners**

The school is committed to valuing children as precious individuals made in the image of God, and to living in community together. This commitment is evident in all policies, in the development of an inspirational curriculum and in the learning environment. Children and their parents say the school is a safe, friendly, welcoming, enjoyable, exciting and fun place to be. One parent said: "The school gives children the best possible start to their education". Children are given a sense of security and personal confidence, particularly as they move on at the end of year six. The provision of a wide variety of extra curricular activities, the pursuit of awards which benefit the children's development and a teaching style that is engaging, stimulating and motivating all help children to flourish and to grow in body, mind and spirit. Children's spiritual, personal, moral, social and cultural development is an outstanding feature of the school, which is evident in the current curriculum development. Religious Education makes a very strong and effective contribution to learners' spiritual and moral development. Christian values and a concern for children impact on all areas of school life, such as small organisational changes which help children's concentration and learning. Outdoor learning areas and quiet spaces give children the opportunity to enjoy and take risks in a controlled and managed way. There is an emphasis on prayer in the school day, stilling exercises are used and the school has many international links. These activities give children the opportunity to reflect, question, develop in confidence and maturity, to co-operate with one another and to show compassion. Children express their thoughts and feelings with honesty, confidence and openness in circle time, knowing they will be heard and accepted. Older pupils show maturity, perception and eloquence in expressing their thoughts and ideas. Children are enthusiastic and their behaviour is excellent. They know each other well and help and care for each other. Children deal with differences and conflict well, working on restorative justice principles. The staff are excellent and positive role models. The school proclaims its Christian faith and principles through displays and symbols made by children, and strong co-operation and links with the local church community.

## **The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding**

Collective Worship is a vitally important part of the school day. It is overtly Christian in its content, style and expression and takes a variety of forms throughout the week. All staff participate and lead and the parish priest and a variety of visitors are involved. Children are given the opportunity to consider familiar ideas and explore new ones. There is a rich diversity of elements and activities in worship. Children are encouraged to know and understand Christian stories and Christian values, and also to sense and feel beauty, peace, sadness and pity. In one act of collective worship the need for forgiveness, saying sorry, being forgiven and having a new start was ably illustrated by a pupil's dirty hands being washed clean in soap and water in front of the whole school. Such experiences in school encourage children's inward spiritual growth and also outward spiritual and moral Christian behaviour. Collective worship inspires day to day action and gives a strong sense of inclusiveness and community. It also builds children's confidence, trust and respect for each other and the world. Children enjoy collective worship and have a very positive attitude. They contribute musically, artistically and through drama with enthusiasm. They are keen to explore new ideas and benefit from opportunities for reflection and prayer. Sometimes children pray spontaneously. They are beginning to be aware of an inner spiritual life - "what we really are on the inside" said one boy, and the need to deal with their feelings. "Prayer", said another boy, "makes you feel calmer if you're annoyed", and a girl said, "If you're worried it makes you feel better." A wide variety of different styles from the breadth of Anglican tradition, which include set prayers and responses, are used in worship. This coupled with frequent participation in the churches festivals and services in the local church with older children visiting the cathedral, ensures a sense of being confident with various expressions of Christian worship. Children naturally embrace the spiritual dimension and the practice of worship both in and out of school.

## **The leadership and management of the school as a church school are outstanding**

The Head provides outstanding and effective spiritual leadership in the school. The Head, staff and governors enthusiastically promote a distinctive Christian vision for the school. They actively ensure the school's mission statement is fulfilled and are, as it says, "creating within a Christian ethos a happy, secure, stimulating learning environment in which all members of the school community can grow in self esteem and develop their full potential". Prospective parents, new governors and new staff are all fully appraised of the school's Christian foundation. Prayer is encouraged in collective worship, at lunch time and at the end of the school day. Spiritual well-being is seen as an important aspect of the school's promotion of Healthy School status. There are strong links with the local church community. Religious Education is very important in the life of the school, it is well resourced and confidently and enthusiastically led and has a very strong impact on children's spiritual growth. There are effective evaluation procedures to maintain the school's distinctive Christian vision and regular participation in relevant continuing professional development for staff and training for governors. There is an effective and supportive partnership with the Diocesan Education Department and visitors who have artistic ability in music, art and drama are drawn in to make their own contribution to the school's distinctive Christian ethos. Staff work closely together in warm and mutually supportive relationships and it is evident that there is mutual love and respect

between pupils and staff. The parish priest and laity are very effectively and helpfully involved in the life of the school. Parents are very positive giving very high levels of support for the school in questionnaires. The Head encourages staff to take responsibility and participate fully in all aspects of school life and in professional development activities, and to give effective professional and spiritual leadership in the school. The school is functioning as a united, cohesive community. From that strong base local, national and international community cohesion is being developed with very clear aims and objectives, detailed plans and an increasing pattern of activities and visits.

*This inspection was carried out on behalf of the Diocese of Bath & Wells in whose area the school is set, in accordance with Section 48 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection framework used is that established by The National Society of the Church of England for the denominational inspection of church schools for all dioceses in England and Wales.*

*Your comments or complaints should be addressed to the Education Department, The Diocese of Bath & Wells, The Old Deanery, Wells, Somerset BA5 2UG. Further information about inspection of church schools can be obtained from the National Society's website at [www.natsoc.org.uk](http://www.natsoc.org.uk).*