

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### **Kneesall Church of England Primary School**

School Lane, Kneesall, Newark NG22 0AB.

Diocese: **Southwell and Nottingham**

Local authority: Nottinghamshire

Date of inspection: 30<sup>th</sup> April 2008

Date of last inspection: November 2003

School's unique reference number: 122762

Headteacher: Sue Ilett-Coupe

Inspector's name and number: Liz Youngman 465

#### **School context**

Kneesall Church of England Primary School is a smaller than average school of 116 pupils, serving a rural area of Nottinghamshire. Most pupils are White British, and attend the school from several local villages. The number of children eligible for free school meals or with special needs is low. The school has achieved Investors in People, Gold Healthy School, Active Mark and Silver Eco Schools awards in recent years.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Kneesall Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding.**

This is an exceptionally happy, warm and caring school that has prayer at its centre. All stakeholders have a shared strategic view about church school improvement. The Head Teacher, staff and governors have achieved considerable improvements in developing the school's distinctiveness and effectiveness including working closely with the St Bartholomew's church community.

#### **Established strengths**

- The Head Teacher has a passionately articulated Christian vision for the school that is shared by all staff and enthusiastically put into practice.
- Children enjoy and play an active role in well planned acts of worship.
- Children respond exceptionally well to opportunities for spiritual development throughout the school day including making good use of the school's outdoor environment.

#### **Focus for development**

- Develop a manageable system to involve pupils in the evaluation of Collective Worship.
- Make the school's Christian values more explicit in its aims and policies, reflecting current excellent practice.

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

Christian values are highly evident and pervade all aspects of school life. There is evidence in documentation to show this is a church school although the aims of the school do not specifically mention its Christian distinctiveness. The quality of care for pupils, and their behaviour, is outstanding. The children talk about feeling valued and supported. They, for their own part, show respect, kindness and consideration to each other. One child commented, *"There's always someone to help you here, like the Good Samaritan in the Bible!"* They talk confidently about the ways in which Christian values and practice have meaning for their lives both within and outside school. For example, saying prayers used at school, at home and grace used before lunch even on visits such as to the Tutankhamen exhibition in London. Another child said, *"We pray together here, it makes you feel uplifted"*. Evidence of the school's Christian character is found in exemplary displays throughout the school. Staff and parents describe how all are *"enveloped in well being and security"* in school; the ethos is *"like a warm blanket wrapped around you"*. The achievements of all children are celebrated with the youngest and less able encouraged by older ones.

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

Worship and prayer are at the heart of this school community. Learners participate thoughtfully and enthusiastically in acts of worship and behave extremely well throughout. In one, led by the parish priest, all the children listened attentively to the story of the Ascension. This was followed with a reflection time, prayer and blessing; the children were clearly absorbed. They speak positively about the impact of collective worship and benefit from the opportunities for prayer and reflection throughout the school day including using the spiritual garden. Several children talked about how helpful that opportunity was to them personally. In a reflection time at the end of a lesson outdoors one child reflected on the nature of God, *"The world He's made is wonderful so He must be wonderful!"* All staff attend most acts of worship, ensuring a positive impact of worship on the whole school community. No children are withdrawn from acts of worship by parental choice. Parents and staff speak warmly about how acts of worship have touched them, particularly those services (such as Easter and Christmas) taking place in the church and involving the whole school community.

There is detailed planning and record keeping for worship but evaluation, especially by pupils, would benefit from some development.

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

The Head Teacher's vision for the school is very clearly based on Christian values and emphasises prayer as an important feature of school life. The school has spent considerable time on developing its work as a church school. Self evaluation is very detailed and accurate; potential for further improvement is very good. The highly effective and productive links between church and school, as an integral part of village life, are evident in the positive way children talk about what they consider to be "their" church. An example of this is the J Team children's club at church attended by some school pupils.

Foundation governors, the Chair of Governors and the incumbent actively support the school and speak positively of how Christian values are evident in the Christian distinctiveness of the school. They are well informed and regularly monitor school activities, acting as supportive critical friends. Staff work as a productive team and are enthusiastic in contributing to the school's ongoing Christian vision asserting *"Christian values go across everything we do"*. Parents and learners praise the way the school involves them in its work and values their views. They are clear that the leadership of the Head Teacher has had a very positive impact on the development of the school as an excellent and very distinctive church school.