

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Kingsland Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School
Kingsland
Leominster
HR6 9QN

Diocese:

Local authority: Herefordshire
Dates of inspection: 23 April 2013
Date of last inspection: 27 November 2007
School's unique reference number: 116891
Headteacher: Mrs Angela Daniel
Inspector's name and number: Mr J N Cornall 518

School context

This popular village school is close to full with 145 children currently on role. It works closely with the local community using the adjacent playing fields, village hall and car parking facilities on a regular basis. Imaginative use is made of every bit of space in the school so that individual and group needs can be addressed.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Kingsland as a Church of England school is outstanding

Teamwork, at all levels, is encouraged through inspirational leadership. The school is lively, vibrant and welcoming. Worship, at the centre of the school's life, is of the highest standard. RE teaching and assessment are given the same status as the core curriculum. The school's academic achievements are enhanced by the care and nurture given to all members of the school community.

Established strengths

- An outstanding headteacher leads a dedicated staff team.
- Strong links between school, church and local community have been further extended.
- A workable formal system of assessment is in place.
- The importance given to the Ethos Group underlines the school's commitment to Christian values.
- The care and support the school gives to children with special needs.

Focus for development

- Develop imaginative forms of reflective worship and consider the place of other settings alongside current outstanding provision.
- Further develop Christian stewardship in the school grounds.

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

Both the senior leadership team and school's ethos committee make sure that distinctively Christian values are embedded in the life of the school. They identify trust, respect and empathy for all and prayerful support for each other as powerful enablers in their vision for the school. The school is outstanding in the width and variety of provision it provides for all its learners. Religious education and worship are very important parts of the school week, staff have the same expectation for high achievement in these areas as in the core curriculum. Parents and children are passionate in expressing their thoughts about the uniqueness and special qualities of the school. Generous behaviour of learners and an understanding that fairness isn't sameness mean that children with special needs are welcomed and supported by the whole school community. The school, through its thorough multicultural teaching in RE and its very strong links with its global partner school in Tanzania, is fully aware of the diversity and differences between faith communities. Worship, alongside parents and with the church community, has high importance. For example new families of reception children are invited to a welcome party service in the second week of the new school year. Opportunities occur regularly for church and school communities to worship together. Behaviour, values and Christian ethos are strongly linked together. The school's Behaviour Policy is informed by the life and teaching of Jesus. The basic principles and how they link with the school ethos are clearly set out. The school has high expectations, gives positive affirmation of children's achievements and knows that "love can be tough" and that sanctions may be necessary. The overall impact of the above is reflected in high standards and very good attendance.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Outstanding worship in a variety of forms is achieved on a consistent basis. Regular feedback and planning within the ethos group means that future events are imaginatively developed with the aim that the Christian ethos will be the foundation "that inspires vision for the school's policies and practice". Clergy, foundation governors and staff are involved in the group which meets regularly to pray for and steer the growth of the school. All members of the school community place great value on collective worship. There is a strong focus on God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit with the trinity taught in RE lessons and through blessings and prayers. Worship with the church community, including eucharist, is lovingly and imaginatively planned. Significant events in the church year, including Pentecost, are important times for bringing the community together. Children lead worship regularly. Worship time planned and led by the school council during the inspection was on the theme of forgiveness. Many elements of outstanding worship were present. The Bible story about the unforgiving servant was acted out in two freeze frame dramas. A reflection, written and read by one of the pupils gave the worshipers a chance to "think on how you will shape your life". Collective worship is inspirational and inclusive. There is much joy in the high quality of the singing and instrumental support given by the school's many musicians. As well as having strong Anglican support the school welcomes leaders from different Christian traditions to lead worship. Children understand the value of personal prayer and reflection. There is a prayer corner in the school library and most children are able to lead prayer spontaneously at lunch time, the end of the school day and at worship times in class.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

Since the last inspection a focus for development has been developing a system of formal assessment for religious education so that continuity and progression can be identified. Observation of lessons in house has affirmed the high quality of teaching and suggested further issues to be considered. The school uses the Herefordshire agreed syllabus and assesses through the use of level descriptors on the National 8 level attainment scale. Data for RE is part of the whole school data tracking system the school has adopted. Comparisons with data for the core subjects show that RE does achieve standards as good as, or better than core subjects. Evidence in RE books shows that a wide range of topics are taught in imaginative ways. There are RE lessons every week. During the inspection RE teaching was observed in five settings. In KS1 evidence of outstanding RE was seen in bookwork, displays and the wide variety of themes covered during the year. Godly play activities, child led drama and a wide range of visits are coupled with meticulous assessment and marking. This is a much loved subject central to the curriculum. The theme of pilgrimage was being explored in depth in KS2 classes. There was clear progression and appropriate resources to make this theme challenging at all levels. Tasks were appropriate to age and ability. In all parts of the school RE is taught with depth, care and skill by committed staff. By upper KS2 pupils have a wide religious vocabulary and are able to explain what “inspires and influences” them. High attaining pupils are “able to consider the challenges of belonging to a religion”. The subject leader has a very high level of subject expertise. The headteacher is an inspirational promoter of the subject within the county and further afield. Staff, as a whole, have deep expertise in this area. The school is at the cusp of innovation and is fascinated by the overlap between Christian ethos and attitudes to learning and standards.

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

Governors, staff and children, on a daily basis, live out and promote Christian values and vision within the school. The new vicar describes the school as “bubbling and fizzy with new life”. The headteacher inspires trust from all in the community. One parent commented that it would be impossible to envisage a better head in the country. Another wrote “you have often said the children are special people. It must however be said that you and your staff are special people in making Kingsland School an excellent place of learning in every respect”. The governing body works extensively with the school in ensuring high standards coupled with Christian values. Meetings begin with prayers for wisdom and discernment. The head and team love being part of a church school and promote a wide variety of opportunities for church school and community to work together. The ‘learn to love’ ethos group is the basis of the effective self evaluation process of the school. It includes staff, parents, clergy, foundation governors and sometimes pupils and focuses on standards and attainment and their relationship with Christian character, worship and RE. Parents contribute fully to school life and along with local church volunteers support learning in school. Parent initiatives to support the curriculum are encouraged. The school leadership ensures that children experience the widest possible curriculum. Staff have visited Tanzania and promote growing links with Tengeru and other schools. The school has been highly successful in developing staff and governors as leaders in church schools. There are a number of experienced staff in the school community to support new clergy, cover an interregnum and ensure continuity with the school. The headteacher’s skill as an enabler has allowed many in the team to become leaders in their own areas of expertise.

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