

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Hucknall National Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Montague Road
Hucknall
Nottingham,
Nottinghamshire
NG15 7DU

Diocese: Southwell and Nottingham

Local authority: Nottinghamshire
Dates of inspection: 20th June 2011
Date of last inspection: 7th March 2008
School's unique reference number: 128075
Head teacher: Mrs L Youngman
Inspector's name and number: Mrs L Patterson (310)

School context

Hucknall National (VA) School is a large primary school which currently comprises 424 pupils. The vast majority of pupils are from a White British background and there are fewer than average with special educational needs. The school has a long history in the town dating back to the 18th century. In 2006 the junior and infant schools were amalgamated to form the primary school as it is today.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Hucknall National Church of England (VA) Primary School as a Church of England school is outstanding.

Christian values underpin every aspect and dimension of the life of this church aided school. This is having a significant impact on learners and adults. The quality of relationships observed during the inspection is very good. All members of the school community feel valued and special. Children are very polite, considerate and well behaved. The school community is very proud of its Anglican foundation. Everyone here is truly 'growing together in learning, love and faith'.

Established strengths

- The outstanding caring Christian environment for all involved in the everyday life of the school and the significant impact this is having on learners.
- The support and nurture of every child, enabling them to achieve well and develop into spiritual, confident and caring individuals.
- Excellent quality Collective Worship and Religious Education which is positively impacting the Christian distinctiveness of the school and the spiritual development of all involved.

Focus for development

- Develop formal assessment and monitoring strategies in Religious Education now that the new scheme of work is underway.
- Ensure that the high quality Collective Worship and Religious Education are reflected in the school brochure and on the website.
- Improve external features to reinforce the Christian foundation of the school.

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

The very strong Christian ethos permeates every aspect and dimension of the school, including relationships and classroom practice. This is based on work undertaken to clarify twelve values for all members of the school community to focus on. Discussions around the school motto resulted in a clear statement of intent, 'growing together in learning, love and faith'. The values are clear and well displayed and are having a significantly positive impact on all those involved with the school, especially pupils. The valuing of the individual and the quality of care displayed during the inspection are outstanding. Staff, both teaching and non-teaching, and visitors are making a positive contribution to the work of the school, resulting in very good behaviour and progress. There is a significantly purposeful and orderly atmosphere within this very large primary school. Children are very confident, welcoming and polite, showing consideration and respect to all adults. This was demonstrated during the inspection with the acceptance of pupils from Belarus into games at break times. Pupils are shown respect and kindness by adults and there are ample opportunities to discuss issues. When these opportunities are taken by pupils they feel that they are listened to and taken seriously. Prayer is a very strong feature of the school, with pupils enjoying prayers at various times of the day and within worship. Prayers are also said at staff meetings and governors meetings. All of this results in pupils and staff being happy to come to school and be part of the outstanding Christian ethos.

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

Worship occupies a central place in the life of the school. It provides opportunities for pupils and staff, who all attend regularly, to further their spiritual development. Time to listen, sing, pray and thought provoking reflection are key elements of the worship here. Children respond very well to questions and are thoroughly engaged in the worship. There is an atmosphere of respect and reverence, especially in times of prayer and when anyone is speaking. Music is used to good effect and singing is clearly enthusiastic, making a significant impact on the spiritual dimension and enjoyment of the worship. The twelve Christian values form a solid basis for the collaborative planning of worship. Pupils say that they enjoy being all together for worship but say that 'it's easier to concentrate in Key Stage worship'. The school visits the church for the significant events of the church year. Pupils thoroughly enjoy these visits and like it when parents attend. The contribution made to worship by visitors, especially the lay chaplain, is greatly enjoyed and much appreciated by pupils. They comment positively on these acts of worship in particular. The distinctive Christian nature of worship is not currently reflected in the school prospectus.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good.

Standards in religious education are on a par with other core subjects. Teaching and learning are observed to be good over all. Pupils demonstrate a good knowledge of religious stories and terminology. The subject is seen as important within the school and is given appropriate time and budget. The religious education delivered supports and enhances the Christian character and ethos of the school, with pupils responding positively to the content and styles of delivery. Religious education is well led and managed with limited assessment and monitoring taking place. Planning is more secure and a new scheme of work is currently being introduced. Pupils demonstrate good spiritual development, making searching and thought provoking statements. The year 1, when working on creation, asked questions like, 'how does God make seeds?' and one said, 'He could be an artist'. World faiths are taught appropriately, giving pupils a solid foundation for further study. The subject is making a significant contribution to the spiritual and moral development of learners. The school has benefited from high quality input from the diocese in a number of areas.

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

The leadership and vision provided by the head teacher and governors is central to the success of the school. A strong shared vision is firmly grounded within the Christian faith. A Foundation governor commented that 'we are planting the seeds of faith'. Staff feel valued and appreciated and there is a good team spirit. Governors are very supportive of the head teacher and the Christian ethos, and provide challenge where appropriate. The foundation governors are

providing a very good sounding board and are critical friends regarding the way that Christianity is interwoven into every aspect of school life. Adults are excellent role models and provide direction for the high expectations of behaviour, care and respect for the individual, which are characteristics of the school. Pupils have a voice with an active and supported school council. They feel that their ideas and suggestions are taken very seriously. Links with the local parish are currently strong through the outstanding work of the Lay Chaplain. There are significant benefits both for the school and church. Parents express considerable satisfaction with the school as a church school. There is little externally to demonstrate the Christian foundation of the school. There has been very accurate self-assessment using the toolkit.

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