

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Eye Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Eyebury Road
Eye
Peterborough
PE6 7TD

Diocese: Peterborough

Local authority: City of Peterborough

Dates of inspection: 21 June 2011

Date of last inspection: 29 April 2008

School's unique reference number: 110825

Headteacher: Clare Clark

Inspector's name and number: John Weaver 402, accompanied by Dr Joy Widdows

School context

The school is larger than average (roll 319), serving a growing village north of Peterborough. It is a popular school, and currently plans to extend to accommodate 420 pupils. Most pupils are of white British heritage, but the cultural mix in the community is becoming more diverse. The school has gained the International Schools intermediate award, Healthy Schools status, and the Eco Green Flag award.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Eye Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School as a Church of England school are good

Parents and pupils understand the ways in which the school lives out its Christian foundation. All staff act as good, Christian role models, and this has enabled them successfully to put into practice the vision, held by successive school leaders, of the school's mission as a church school. Because of this all pupils, whatever their starting point, are enabled to reach their full potential.

Established strengths

- Relationships between the staff (teaching and non-teaching) and the parents, based on availability at all times, and mutual understanding, are very good.
- The head teacher's strong Christian faith underpins her clear vision of the school's development as a church school, and her can-do attitude inspires others
- Pupils thrive and grow within an ethos of Christian love and trust, and this has given them the confidence to take both individual and corporate responsibility.

Focus for development

- Develop assessment in RE so that National Curriculum levels can be more closely identified throughout the school
- Establish a regular programme of visitors and visits to diverse communities within the area so that the pupils gain first-hand experience
- Consider alternative ways of seating the pupils in whole-school worship so that fewer of them are at a distance from the worship leader

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

Pupils in this school have been given many opportunities to take responsibility for their actions because the staff believe that their first duty is one of love and care. This is the shared Christian ethos of the school, and because of it the pupils relish being here. 'No-one gets left out' was a comment from a child that summed up their feelings about the school. Parents talked about the high levels of communication between staff and themselves, and of the approachability of all staff. Because of this, any problems that arise are solved very quickly. The school 'golden rules', fully espoused by all the pupils and supported by the parents, ensure that the pupils are constantly given positive models for their behaviour and daily actions. They respond in kind. The school environment supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development well. Each class has a prayer focus, which the children are used to using. Good displays of work in religious education (RE) are everywhere, emphasising that RE is treated as a core subject. An

area in the grounds is set aside for reflection, and because of all these pupils reflect as part of their daily routine. RE also makes a strong contribution to the development of very good relationships within the school. Children are taught to look beyond themselves. A parent said, 'My child sees models of outreach to other communities through the charity work the school leads'. The recent award of the Eco' Green Flag' suitably rewards the work the children have done in raising awareness of environmental matters, and the International Schools intermediate award reflects work beyond their community. All pupils contribute toward decision-making, initially through class councils, and to the leadership through the school and eco councils. They are proud of their school because it reflects their wishes. Recently, pupils have been involved, at the invitation of the parish council, in the design of the new village playground, a good recognition of their contribution toward the community.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Pupils enjoy collective worship (CW). They say that acts of CW enable them to think about the meaning of the stories and themes, which always have a moral. Periods of reflection are always included. They sing with enthusiasm, the result of having skilled pianists on the staff. The weekly 'Praise Assembly' is said to be 'inspirational'. Pupils share the task of evaluation of CW with adults. Year 2 and Year 6 pupils dictate their evaluations to a member of staff. They always include statements of impact and suggestions for improvement, which are fed to the leadership and acted upon. An example of this is the suggestion to lengthen the vicar's assembly to give weight to the story. CW makes a contribution to the pupils' good SMSC development. They were able to talk about how they have, for example, been taught to pray through the importance placed on prayer and reflection in CW. They cited examples of occasions when they have prayed spontaneously. The impact of CW would be further enhanced in whole-school worship by a re-arrangement of the pupil seating so that fewer of them were at a significant distance from the worship leader. The vicar leads worship in school, and the school worships in church regularly. Because of this the pupils have gained knowledge of the seasons of the church's year and the traditions of the Anglican church. The importance of CW is demonstrated by the expectation that all staff will attend and that all teachers will lead some acts of CW. Worship planning revolves around the church's year, Biblical stories, moral and spiritual themes and links with the social and emotional aspect of learning in school. There is now a prominent focus formed by a candle, a Bible and a cross. This was a focus for development in the previous inspection. Pupil responses confirm that they understand the significance of this.

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

Monitoring and evaluation of the school as a church school, and of the effectiveness of CW, were two of the foci for development in the previous inspection. The governing body has taken these fully on board. An annual cycle of self-evaluation and monitoring of the school as a church school is now in place. The foundation governors work with enthusiasm, fully supporting the leadership and embracing new developments with relish. This represents good progress in all that was asked of them in the previous inspection. The head teacher articulates a clear vision, based on a strong personal Christian faith, of where she wants the school to go. She is effective in enabling and empowering the staff to build on existing achievements. Governors hold the school to account well. Their self-evaluation is accurate, and good use is made of data from parent and pupil surveys to build improvements. The RE co-ordinator, despite working part-time, has had a significant impact on the development of the subject. Teaching staff are confident in their approach to the subject, knowing that good-quality help is at hand if needed. Assessment of standards in RE show that most children reach average or above-average attainment. The school should now develop assessment in RE to identify National Curriculum levels more closely. Teaching staff appointments are made in the expectation that the Christian foundation of the school will be upheld, and through encouragement to develop themselves as teachers in a church school staff are enabled to consider future leadership of a church school. The partnership between school, church and community is strong. A good example of partnership is 'Bible Buddies', an after-school club jointly run by foundation governors and staff. The governors' community cohesion committee has been responsible for raising considerable awareness in this area, and the pupils, coming as they do from a mainly white British community (although that is gradually changing) have benefited from greater knowledge and understanding of other communities. A regular programme of visitors and visits would give the pupils first-hand experience.