

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Powerstock Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Powerstock
Bridport
Dorset
DT6 3TB

Diocese: Salisbury

Local authority: Dorset
Dates of inspection: 19th September 2011
Date of last inspection: 5th October 2007
School's unique reference number: 113812
Headteacher: Mr Jean-Paul Draper
Inspector's name and number: Mrs Angela Sumner 580

School context

Powerstock Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School has 58 learners and is a small village school. It serves a wide rural community. Most learners are of White British origin with 1% from regular church going families. 38% of learners have Special Educational Needs. The substantive headteacher, appointed November 2010, has a 0.3 teaching commitment.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Powerstock Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School as a Church of England school are good

This popular school is held in high regard by all stakeholders. The distinctive Christian ethos is evident throughout and makes a good contribution to teaching and learning. Learners receive good care and support and are encouraged to fulfil their potential within an inclusive environment based on explicit Christian values.

Established strengths

- The welcoming, supportive nurturing environment based on explicit Christian values
- Positive and empowering leadership by Headteacher and Governors which support the Church of England foundation
- Excellent links between school, church and wider community
- The caring approach to all stakeholders underpinned by Christian values.

Focus for development

- Governors and Headteacher should secure a formal structure for monitoring and evaluation as a church school to include all stakeholders
- Develop detailed planning, monitoring and evaluation of Collective Worship to include an evidence base, and to include all stakeholders. The Collective Worship policy is due for review.

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

The aims and ethos of the school are based on explicit Christian values, such as compassion, respect and equality, and are at the centre of the school's educational aims and values expressed within the classroom charters. Christian values underpin all aspects of the school community, are lived out in practice, and explained consistently by all stakeholders.

Learners very confidently say how these values are helpful in their daily lives, for example in the way they could talk about the meaning of the Rainbow Sacred area and reflection areas. Learners talk about school and church enthusiastically and with enjoyment. This is because learners are given excellent opportunities to develop their potential within a nurturing and inclusive environment which is enhanced through the strong relationship with the church. Learners speak very positively of the School Council and the difference it makes, "every child is an individual, having an opinion and working together". Learners confidently describe Christian symbols displayed around the school, explaining their meaning with clarity and understanding. The school's documentation and school environment proclaims the school's Christian character. Established contacts between local and international communities, and developing contacts with national communities, offer further spiritual development opportunities. The school's Christian ethos of concern for others extends beyond the school itself and is evident in the charitable work done in the wider community, for example the Kite festival, Red Nose Day and provision of resources for the Gbullung school in Ghana. As a result these links between school, church and wider community support spiritual development very well.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Worship offers learners good opportunities for spiritual development and as a result they speak enthusiastically about its impact on their lives. In worship observed, a reverent atmosphere was established by use of music and stillness. Interactive interpretation of a biblical story, based on teaching about faith and promises, enabled involvement and thoughtful responses. Learners' participation and enjoyment was obvious in their enthusiastic singing. Their positive attitude to worship was helped by the inclusive worshipping role models of staff. Learners value the use of a candle to help them focus in prayer and personal reflection during worship. They speak sensitively about the support received from prayer, and one said 'God is everywhere and you can talk to him everywhere'. Prayer is an important element of the whole school life. The vicar is involved weekly in leading whole school worship and this enhances the learners' understanding of the Anglican tradition. All stakeholders speak positively and enthusiastically of services in church, for example in taking part in celebrating major Christian festivals. Therefore learners have a good understanding of the sequence of the Church's year. Worship is linked to Christian themes and Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning. Good links between worship leaders from school and church support and develop distinctive Christian worship. The issues raised in the last inspection regarding recording and evaluation of Collective Worship continue as points for development. Formal monitoring and evaluation of worship is at an early stage with limited evaluation by learners. This means that the opportunity to develop further the involvement of learners in planning, leading and evaluation has not yet been addressed. This has been identified by the school as an area for development in a review of Collective Worship.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

Religious Education (RE) is good, and is delivered through a developmental creative curriculum, with further progression of the RE curriculum identified. Standards of attainment are in line with standards in Literacy. The quality of teaching observed is good and is underpinned by good subject knowledge. Learning is promoted by clear objectives shared with learners, with effective use of resources and learning styles. Learners speak positively of opportunities to think and talk about their own beliefs, as well as those of others. Learners place high value on religious education and express its importance in helping them in their future lives. This provides clear opportunity for spiritual development. Effective cross curricular links are made where appropriate, for example in a lesson observed linking RE and Literacy, where learners were able to discuss and reflect on the impact of the Christian Bible on their lives. Learners are actively involved and can explain their understanding using appropriate religious vocabulary, for example, in one lesson where learners were able to discuss the meaning of Harvest. Some planned opportunities for spiritual development occurred, for example in a lesson observed linking History and Literacy where learners reflected on the meaning of worship. Consequently, RE provides good spiritual development

opportunities. The subject leader for religious education is enthusiastic, shows commitment and demonstrates a clear vision for further development of the subject within the school. The subject leader speaks positively of the value and impact of ongoing professional development training, for example in attending diocesan training on the Agreed Syllabus. Formal monitoring, evaluation and assessment procedures for RE are established with further development identified. The issue identified in the last inspection continues to be addressed regarding further development of assessment strategies.

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

The head teacher and governors confidently articulate a clear vision based on explicit Christian values which are at the heart of the leadership and management of the school. The vision is effectively shared with all stakeholders in many ways, such as through the ready accessibility of all staff, newsletters, and questionnaires. Effective leadership and management of the school is evident through the approach and outcomes achieved by the Headteacher and governors during times of considerable change and challenge. The appointment of the Headteacher has made impact on the confidence and wellbeing of the school community, with definite focus on school improvement through clearly identified areas for development. Parents speak very positively of the open and nurturing ethos of the school, and say school is 'friendly, helpful and family orientated' and sees each child as an individual. Excellent links between church, school, and the wider community are evident, for example in the range of events including the bi-annual village fete, Open Days and Carol singing around the village, together with celebration of church services such as Harvest and the Leaver's service. Governors are effective and supportive through a range of activities including governor links to curriculum areas. Foundation governors have a clear understanding of their role within the life of the school, and are effective in supporting the Church of England foundation. Governors speak of the impact and value of involvement in ongoing professional development training, for example in attending diocesan training for Foundation governors. Governors monitor and evaluate the school as a church school informally. The development points from the last inspection have not yet been securely addressed and continue as areas for ongoing development. The priority on school leadership and management issues, has led to self evaluation as a Church school being less developed. Consequently the Headteacher and governors have yet to secure a formal system for Church school self evaluation. This is an area for development to include all stakeholders. The embedding of a clear vision for the school and the collaborative approach taken by the headteacher and all stakeholders' means the school has good capacity to improve as a church school.

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