

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Grade-Ruan Church of England VC Primary School

Ruan Minor
Helston
Cornwall
TR12 7JN

Diocese: Truro

Local authority: Cornwall
Dates of inspection: 12th February 2010
Date of last inspection: 28th November 2006
School's unique reference number: 111989
Acting Headteacher: Tom Harman
Inspector's name and number: David Nebesnuick 556

School context

The school is a smaller than average rural primary school with 63 pupils. The majority come from the village of Ruan Minor with others from neighbouring villages. The main part of the school is Victorian with a new hall and kitchen added in 2005. There are two temporary classrooms. The school recently celebrated its 150 year anniversary. The school is adjacent to the parish church, which is visited very regularly for services.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Grade-Ruan as a Church of England school are good

At the heart of the school are clear Christian values giving the school its distinctive ethos. It is this ethos that is so strongly supported by the parents. Good learning takes place in a warm and caring family atmosphere. Learners, parents and staff interviewed about the school commented particularly on the strength of the relationships found both within the school community and the wider village community.

Established strengths

- The strong mutual support between the school, parish church and village community.
- The central place of collective worship in the school that inspires the day-to-day actions of the learners.
- The overall caring family ethos that values each learner and enables him/her to flourish as an individual.
- The excellent relationships that are the outcome of the strong Christian ethos.

Focus for development

- To ensure that all stakeholders including parents contribute to regular and systematic evaluation of the impact of the school's Christian values and collective worship.

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

Strong Christian values are the foundation on which the life of the school is built. They succeed in creating a happy and safe environment for all learners. The pupils referred to "a good atmosphere, where the teachers really care for you". Overall they are sensitive to each other's needs. A very good example of this Christian care was the impressive and rapid response made by the school to the Haiti earthquake. Learners are respectful and friendly and as a result, relationships in the school are outstanding. In the observed lessons, the learners showed good levels of understanding and judgement about other faiths. They

worked with considerable enthusiasm, enjoying in particular the role-play and story telling elements. Displays of signs and symbols have improved since the last inspection and the school environment effectively encourages and supports the learners' spiritual development. There are now good areas for reflection throughout the school. One young pupil when asked about the significance of the candle in the hall immediately replied, "it represents Jesus who is the light of the world". Parents are very supportive of the school's ethos because they believe it actively supports and develops their children's learning. They like the very strong sense of community and the close links with the church. They welcome the regular services in the church because they contribute to their children's unique experience at Grade-Ruan. One parent said, "the school is now better than ever." The Christian core values produce an atmosphere in which pupils are keen to learn and in which they flourish. The respect of learners for each other and for learners by the staff is seen as a major element that makes the school so distinctive.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship is seen as an extremely important part of the school's life. Very good use is made of the church's proximity; a fortnightly service is held there for all children. Observation of this worship indicates that they take part enthusiastically, sing the hymns with gusto and act with appropriate reverence. Prayers are led with confidence and good reflection. The learners are comfortable with and understand the Anglican faith and practice. The vicar, who is Chair of the Governors, has a very good relationship with the learners. They like and respect him. There is a strong sense of the learners identifying with the local Christian community. In discussion they clearly understand the place and purpose of worship in the school. Worship has been effectively developed following the last inspection. Thorough planning is now in place based on the 'values for life programme' providing an initial structure that has yet to be formally evaluated. *The* leadership recognises that this is necessary. Religious Education makes a good contribution to the religious life of the school and class prayers are said at the beginning and end of each day. There is a strong inclusive feel to worship. All members of the school community take part and it is an integral element in the shaping of the learners' spiritual development.

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

The acting headteacher works effectively with the supportive and well-informed governing body. Since the last inspection, good progress has been made in developing the Christian ethos of the school. Parents understand the importance of the Christian contribution to the education of their children and they support the Christian ethos of the school, however they are yet not fully involved in the regular evaluation of the impact of the school's core values. This limits their overall impact in the school. The governing body has a strong vision based firmly on Christian values. These values are at the heart of all aspects of the school and inform its development. The governors' vision is communicated through the school's mission and ethos statement but chiefly through the attitudes and relationships of the learners both within school and the wider community. The learners recognise this with comments such as, "God is a good friend" and "I like the school because there is a good feeling here". Parents comment that the school values every child and that this starts with a leadership that is warm and caring. Staff and governors use opportunities whenever appropriate to take part in personal and professional development including those provided by the Diocese. This positively supports the school in its spiritual growth. There is a very strong relationship with the parish church that is primarily due to the vicar's strong input and support. Parents enthusiastically support recent developments and believe that the school's implicit Christian values provide a good basis for their children's future success.

