

**Dundry Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School**

Dundry Lane,  
Dundry,  
Bristol  
BS41 8JE

**Diocese: Bath and Wells**

Local authority: North Somerset

Date of inspection: 9<sup>th</sup> January 2013

Date of last inspection: 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2009

School's unique reference number: 109189

Headteacher: Rhiannon Price

Inspector's name and number: Carolyn Banfield - 610

**School context**

Dundry Church of England School has 69 pupils currently on roll. The vast majority of these pupils are of White British heritage and come from the surrounding Bristol area with forty per cent coming from the village itself. The number of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is below the national average whilst the proportion of children with special educational needs or disability is in line with the national average. The school has achieved the Healthy Schools, Activemark and Silver Eco Schools awards.

**The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Dundry CE (VC) Primary School as a Church of England school are satisfactory**

This is an improving school which has made significant progress since the last inspection and has capacity to improve further as a church school. The focus given to the development of Christian values is having a positive impact and is making a real difference to the community of Dundry School. The school is now well placed to build on the very firm foundation it has successfully established.

**Established strengths**

- The school's calm and secure learning environment where staff ensure that the pupils have as broad a learning experience as possible
- The ethos of care, kindness and respect which is demonstrated and felt by all members of the school community and willingly shared
- The leadership of the headteacher who ensures that the Christian character of the school has an impact on the learning and personal development of each child
- Collective Worship, which effectively underpins the Christian values which determine the ethos of the school

**Focus for development**

- Involve the whole school community in an exploration of Christian distinctiveness, to ensure that all those involved in the life of the school understand and share the same vision and can fully articulate it
- Through the School Development Plan, continue to embed a clearly focused plan for the future development needs of the school as a church school
- Provide greater opportunity for pupils to take their learning to the next stage through a process of higher order questioning, so that responses demonstrate the depth of understanding taking place

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

The school's Christian character is evident in its care for all learners. Warm respectful relationships between staff and pupils allow children to express their feelings, pray together and appreciate the wealth of different talents between their peers. The focus given to establishing a set of Christian values and principles has helped to draw this community together, provide it with direction, set the tone for its interactions, and has influenced the ethos it now enjoys. Pupils are able to talk about values such as courage and perseverance and some are able to describe how they apply them in their daily lives. The school has worked hard to address behaviour issues and has made very good progress in creating an atmosphere of calm and purposefulness. Pupils are well supported to make positive choices and they speak very highly of the mechanisms in place, for example, the Behaviour Improvement Programme (BIP) to aid individual development further. Pupils genuinely want to contribute to their school community and this is actively and regularly demonstrated through the clubs (e.g. Urban Dance Divas) which they run and the responsibilities (e.g. Play Leaders) they willingly perform. Pupils have a high regard for the environment which has been successfully promoted through the acquisition of the Silver Eco Schools award. Through the range of faiths studied in RE, pupils are developing an appreciation and respect for different cultures and have acquired a reasonable knowledge of some of the beliefs and practices of Islam, Judaism and Hinduism as well as Christianity. A visit to a Mosque was described by many as an important learning opportunity and the input of personnel from Support Against Racists Incidents (SARI) on the day of the inspection, demonstrates the schools commitment to providing education in diversity and ethnic awareness. Experiences allow pupils to respond to broader and worldwide issues from a more informed perspective and this has had an impact on their ability and willingness to pray for people from around the world. The school supports a range of charities and pupils often take ownership of the fundraising process. Reflection is encouraged through identified indoor and outdoor spaces as well as prayer boards. Opportunities for spiritual development are taken as they occur in the curriculum and are supported well by visits to places such as Folly Farm and through activities using a Forest School approach. However, if spiritual development were more specifically planned for, the effectiveness of the growing provision for reflection on values and attitudes to learning would become more embedded and would more readily permeate all aspects of school life. The school is well aware of opportunities where children can explore their views further but more needs to be done to help children express their thoughts at a deeper level through careful questioning and encouragement. This has been identified as an area for development across the curriculum and the school is therefore well placed to take this forward.

### **The impact of collective worship on the school community is good**

Collective worship is a relevant and prominent part of school life where pupils are consistently affirmed and supported. It plays an important role in contributing to pupil's spiritual development. Pupils see worship as an opportunity for them to come together and understand this to be a key part of what it means to be a church school. They recognise that the values being shared help them to consider and monitor their own behaviour and attitudes as well as those of their peers. Collective worship is well organised and planned and because this is carried out by the school and church together, continuity is assured and the deepening of pupil understanding is managed well. The implementation of Values for Life material provides a clear framework. A number of visitors, including the local vicar and Diocesan Youth Worker, lead worship on one day each week, providing pupils with a variety of styles and enriching experiences. Pupils are attentive and receptive to the messages being presented and this is particularly so when high levels of participation is encouraged through the use of props and role play. They like to praise through singing and this is used very effectively to enhance the quality of the worship taking place. Some simple liturgy is used to signal the start of collective worship and pupils offer an emphatic response. There is a table displaying a number of Christian symbols, but its location does not maximise the potential it has for a worship focus. However, the stories shared during worship are left on the table and can be accessed by the children throughout the day, adding to their developing understanding. The church is used well to celebrate the major Christian festivals such as Harvest, Christmas and Easter allowing pupils to become familiar with some aspects of Anglican worship and liturgy. However, they are less familiar with church traditions such as

seasonal colours which accompany the church calendar. Prayer has a growing place in school life and pupils say that they like being able to write their own. In this way, pupils are effectively demonstrating an ability to empathise and this is particularly apparent when considering the impact of natural disasters on the lives of others. Pupils know that prayer is a time to talk with God and the inclusive spirit which pervades ensure that the time and space allocated for reflection meets the needs of learners of all faiths and of none. As one child described it, "I use the time to be quiet and to think about the message in the story rather than to pray as I haven't quite made up my mind about God."

### **The leadership and management of the school as a church school is satisfactory**

The areas identified for development at the last inspection have been addressed well and there have been substantial improvements as a result; most notably in the area of collective worship. The school has experienced a period of significant challenge and difficulty during the intervening years but has remained true to its Christian foundation and there is much for the school to celebrate. Support from the Diocese has been accessed and particularly welcomed at times when the school community has been affected by bereavement. The school is very capably led and managed by a headteacher who has a secure and developing understanding of Christian distinctiveness and the importance of this being at the heart of what drives the school. She actively shares her vision and models the values identified for focus. Governors and clergy support the headteacher and staff well and provide good pastoral care. The links with the church are strong and productive and have become an integral part of the Christian life of the school and village community. The headteacher's contribution to the parish magazine ensures that everyone is kept informed of what is going on at school level. The development of some glebe land is an exciting joint project which has the potential to support the spiritual development of pupils in a very tangible way. Parents recognise the benefits of a small school and the family atmosphere it maintains. They value the school's care of and provision for their children but are concerned by the inconsistencies created through mixed year groups and key stages. They are comfortable in approaching staff should they have a worry, knowing that they will be listened to and helped. Much time, money and energy has been given to improving the fabric of the school building which has had a positive impact on those who teach and learn there. A symbol reflecting the school's Christian foundation would provide a visual means of proclaiming the school's distinctive character, thus delivering a powerful message to those who visit as well as those who belong there. The headteacher and vicar have already carried out some monitoring activities. The governing body as a whole now have a responsibility to explore in more depth the nature of its Christian distinctiveness and to evaluate the impact of the values promoted on the pupils, their families and the community beyond.

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