

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Pauntley Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Pool Hill
Newent
Gloucestershire
GL18 1LL

Diocese: Gloucester

Local authority: Gloucestershire
Date of inspection: Tuesday 8th May 2012
Date of last inspection: 3rd December 2008
School's unique reference number: 115643
Headteacher: Gary Law
Inspector's name and number: David Shears (423)

School context

The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school, with 43 pupils on roll at the time of the inspection. A very large majority of the pupils are White British, with almost all others coming from Other White heritages. There have been six different headteachers at the school over the last three years. The current executive headteacher, who also leads another small school locally, was appointed on a permanent contract in September 2011 with a four day-a-week commitment to the school.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Pauntley Primary as a Church of England school are satisfactory

The school has been through a turbulent time due to the lack of continuity in its leadership and management. However, the new headteacher has a distinctively Christian vision for the school and has already made a good impact on restoring the morale of staff and fostering positive relationships that are restoring a close community of people who are working together for the good of all pupils.

Established strengths

- The good leadership of the new headteacher who is enabling all to work well together to improve the school, particularly in relation to its Christian foundation.
- The good level of care and support that staff give to all pupils, enabling them to thrive well in a safe environment.
- The positive relationship between the school and the local vicar, particularly in supporting collective worship.

Focus for development

- Review the vision and values of the school, ensuring that they are distinctively Christian in nature and are known, understood and lived out by the whole school community and taught across the whole curriculum.
- Extend opportunities for spiritual development through regular and clearly planned times of reflection in collective worship and RE and through the school environment, particularly outdoors.
- Ensure that school leaders and foundation governors monitor and evaluate the quality of collective worship, the impact of RE and the self-evaluation of the school as a church school, taking into account the views of pupils, staff and parents.

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

Pupils feel safe and secure in school because they know that adults around them take good care of them and treat them as individuals. Parents and carers agree, saying that the school meets the individual needs of pupils well. They feel able to come into school with any concerns knowing that they will receive support. One of the reasons that pupils say they like the school is because there are good relationships. Although there are occasional difficulties between pupils they are confident that for most of the time they are able to resolve the problems themselves while knowing that teachers will support them if needed. Pupils are making satisfactory progress in their learning; their social and moral development however is good. They are polite and courteous and have a good understanding of right and wrong. The school has rightly focused on celebrating good behaviours by creating an 'Acts of Kindness' board where pupils can write about kind deeds that they have witnessed in school. Some pupils are aware of the core values of the school, although find it hard to relate these to their Christian roots. This is because the values are relatively new and there has not been enough time to establish and promote them in lessons. There has been a good focus this year in supporting pupils' spiritual development through the inclusion of some interactive displays where pupils can write or say prayers. Pupils are beginning to engage well with these. They also have other opportunities to pray before meals and during collective worship. However, there are not enough planned opportunities through the whole curriculum, including in RE, for pupils to reflect on and respond to issues. The school has identified the need to extend opportunities for spiritual development by creating a spiritual garden in the spacious grounds.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is satisfactory

An act of worship is conducted every day and pupils are clear that this is an important part of school life. Pupils say that they particularly enjoy collective worship when they are actively involved in participating, either through discussions, answering questions or taking part at the front. This is why they especially enjoy the worship that is led by the local vicar. A candle is lit to mark the beginning of worship and pupils know that this symbolises the light of Christ. They have learned some simple liturgical responses and are able to both say and sing The Lord's Prayer. While many pupils enjoy worship through singing some say they would like a wider range of songs, including those that are more contemporary. While there are opportunities for pupils to pray pupils say that they do not often have time to reflect on what they have learnt and to contemplate how they can respond to this as individuals. The planning of the main structure in collective worship is undertaken by the vicar and this is adapted as necessary by school staff. It is very clear in terms of learning but does not give enough support to staff in identifying specific areas to use as a focus for spiritual development. A theme is chosen for the term and artefacts are added to a display to remind pupils of what they have learnt. At the end of a particular theme pupils are split into three multi-age groups to plan and deliver an act of worship that shows what they have learned. Pupils thoroughly enjoy these opportunities to lead worship. Parents and carers are invited to attend worship on Fridays where pupils are given specific awards to celebrate their work. These include the distribution of 'Pauntley Heroes' which celebrate individual pupils' good attitudes towards school work, although there are not as many awards which celebrate pupils' personal attributes such as caring for others or demonstrating generosity. Despite the church being some distance away it has been used this year to celebrate harvest and Christmas. Parents and carers are invited on these occasions as well and enjoy the experience.

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

The effective new headteacher has already had a good impact on the school by providing a listening ear and an encouraging response to all, whether they are staff, parents, pupils or governors. As a result all feel valued and respected and have complete confidence in him to lead school improvement. Consequently, the school's Christian ethos is quickly improving as, together, all embrace the future. The time is now right for the whole school community to reflect on establishing a distinctively Christian vision and set of values that is promoted,

explored and celebrated throughout the life of the school. Much of the Christian ethos has been implicit and the school recognises the need to ensure that it is more explicit so that all understand the Christian values on which the school is based. There have been new initiatives to support the school's Christian foundation such as interactive displays but there has not been enough time for these to become an established practice. Some of the issues from the previous SIAS inspection have been addressed, although others are beginning to be addressed this year. In particular, the headteacher has identified areas for improvement in RE and collective worship and these form part of the school development plan. There is currently one foundation governor, although there is the possibility of recruiting a second in the near future. Both of these people have attended a diocesan course to better understand the role of the foundation governor. There has been a renewed focus on the Christian aspects of school life this year and the time is now right for school leaders and foundation governors to carefully monitor these areas, including ascertaining the views of pupils, parents and staff, and to identify how the school's Christian distinctiveness can be improved further. There are strong links with the local vicar who gives good support to the school. While the local church supports the school well through being informed and praying for the school, there may be wider opportunities to extend pupils' understanding by linking with other churches in the area.

SIAS report May 2012 Pauntley CE (VC) Primary School, Newent GL18 1LL