

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Eastnor Parochial Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Eastnor,
Ledbury,
Herefordshire
HR8 1RA

Diocese: Hereford

Local authority: Herefordshire

Dates of inspection: 21st, March 2013

Date of last inspection: 25th, June 2008

School's unique reference number: 116805

Headteacher: Miss Susan Lowry

Inspector's name and number: Susan Blackburn 756

School context

Eastnor is a small school with 88 pupils on roll. The school is in close proximity to the local church which is used on a regular basis as there is currently a very small hall space. The school has developed strong links with the clergy and local parishioners.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Eastnor Parochial C of E Controlled Primary school as a Church of England school are outstanding.

Eastnor is an outstanding church school. The school has a positive Christian ethos where every child is cared for. The children are well looked after by a dedicated team of staff and relationships are outstanding. Links with the clergy are excellent. The governors are keen to develop their role and are actively involved in the life of the school.

Established strengths

- Dedicated and talented team of staff committed to the well being of everyone in the school.
- Clear Christian ethos which underpins the life of the school.
- Outstanding visionary leadership of the headteacher, firmly rooted in Christian values
- Thoughtful, respectful children who gain confidence and guidance from all the school provides.

Focus for development

- Make explicit arrangements for the foundation governors to evaluate both the school as a church school and the collective worship.
- Ensure the school's vision statement is clearly promoted in all school documentation, not just the prospectus.

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

Christian values are clearly reflected in an ethos of respect, care, love and understanding. The school promotes Christian links in all they do and their vision for the school is to 'Create an ethos based on a strong sense of Christian values'. Pupils have an excellent understanding of what it means to belong to a church school and one pupil described their school as, 'Loving, caring and kind'. Their behaviour is outstanding and they are happy, engaged and demonstrate a high level of respect for one another and all adults in school. For example, during break time and lunch time older pupils show commendable care and consideration for younger ones, playing with them and sharing meal times. A variety of after school clubs provide continued opportunities for children to develop skills and grow in confidence. Strong links with the local church, used on a weekly basis for 'Open the Book' assemblies and also for Christian festivals throughout the year, are viewed with enthusiasm by pupils. Parents value the care and consideration displayed by all staff towards all pupils. They commented on the warmth and quality of the pastoral care within the school. One

parent used the analogy of the Christian values being 'like a stick of rock running through the school' and that Christmas was not just 'tinsel'. Relationships within the school are excellent and the staff provides very good role models of Christian values. Pupils were very clear about the environment which displayed their school as a Christian school and how important it is to learn about other faiths so you can understand people and know what they believe. Religious Education (RE) is taught creatively and each classroom has vibrant displays depicting stories from the Bible. Parents commented favourably about the impact that Philosophy for Children (P4C) lessons had on pupils thinking, giving them confidence to ask 'big questions' in a safe environment. During a lesson seen during the inspection children were responding thoughtfully to decisions on choosing the right path. One pupil commented, 'God loves each of us equally'. The school environment had opportunities for quiet reflection which pupils valued. The outdoor environment including an area for 'forest schools' where pupils explore and have opportunities to learn outdoors, and an area for growing vegetables is well used. Pupils are actively encouraged to raise money for charity and there is a section on the school website dedicated to charitable work. .

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding.

Pupils were spellbound as they listened and participated in the 'Open the Book' assembly which was brought to life by local parishioners during the inspection. Pupils responded to the call to worship, sang with enthusiasm and commented that they enjoyed having their turn to take part in these weekly services in the local church. The headteacher played the piano and led a small choir who provided a poignant start to the assembly. Collective worship is organised in half termly themes and pupils are increasingly involved in the planning and participation in daily acts of worship. One pupil's comment, that they celebrated time to reflect during worship to 'enable you to have a working mind for the rest of the day', shows the very positive impact of collective worship on spiritual development. Another similar response was "Good acts of worship are where you put God to the front of your mind and concentrate only on him." Parents are also appreciative of those opportunities where they can join school worship during Christian festivals such as Harvest and Christmas. Pupils have been encouraged to share their mature reflections, on the impact of Lent for example, on the school's virtual learning environment (VLE) .The recently revised collective worship policy incorporates the Christian views of the leadership team. This addresses one of the areas for development from the previous inspection.

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

The headteacher provides outstanding leadership firmly rooted in care, respect and understanding. The Christian ethos and vision are clearly displayed on the school website and the school vision statement, 'Inspire and achieve', is displayed in school and in the prospectus. Setting an annual target for developing an area of the school's Christian vision was a previous focus for development and evidence of this is reflected on the school website and in key documentation The headteacher has worked hard to build excellent links with the church over the past few years, addressing one of the development points from the previous inspection. School matters are regularly brought to the attention of the Parochial Church Council. The school is now at the heart of the village and the newly created church website is to have links to the school. The vicar regularly visits the school and provides informal monitoring and evaluation of the school as a church school. Currently there is no specific arrangement for foundation governors formally to take on a similar monitoring role. Whilst pupils are encouraged to evaluate collective worship on the VLE, there is no arrangement in place to enable foundation governors to monitor and evaluate the impact of collective worship. The governors are involved with development planning and a focus for next year's plan is to develop aspects of worship. The school council meet on a weekly basis and feel they are listened to and their ideas valued. The governors together with the headteacher demonstrated their forward thinking and planning for a sustainable leadership for the school.