

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Archbishop Runcie Church of England (VA) First School

Christon Road
Gosforth
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE3 1US

Diocese Newcastle

Local authority: Newcastle

Dates of inspection: 23rd February 2012

Date of last inspection: June 2007

School's unique reference number: 108495

Headteacher: Mrs Julie Robson

Inspector's name and number: Carole Snelling 519

School context

Archbishop Runcie First School has 197 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are of white British origin. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is below average. The uptake of free school meals is low. Teaching is good or outstanding and pupils achieve at and beyond expected levels. The school is supported by Saint Nicholas and All Saints parishes and through ecumenical work. Archbishop Runcie is highly regarded by parents and is oversubscribed.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Archbishop Runcie as a Church of England school are outstanding

The Christian ethos is explicit throughout the school, and is evident in displays of work and the caring relationships. The school is warm and welcoming. Children are polite, friendly and proud of their school. Attainment is excellent. Parents trust the school and speak enthusiastically of the "wise and caring" Headteacher. The school is committed to excellent partnerships with parents, faith groups, local schools and parishes. Muslim and Christian parents actively select the school because they know that the school values the importance of faith in daily life.

Established strengths

- The nurturing and caring ethos of the school firmly based in explicit Christian love and values which allows children and adults to flourish.
- The enthusiastic and inspirational leadership of the Headteacher and her team resulting in an exciting curriculum, high standards of attainment and the delivery of their vision of a Christian school.
- The well informed and active governing body which works with children and staff to challenge and support the Christian distinctiveness of the school.

Focus for development

- Bring to fruition the areas listed for action in the development plan.
- Involve all stakeholders in the enhancement of an outside area for recreation and reflection.

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

The Head, staff and Foundation Governors are outstanding at modelling Christian values for the school community. Children are responding to and benefiting from this, showing care and concern for each other. Children are confident and talk enthusiastically of their enjoyment of the opportunities offered to them. A culture of praise and reward exists throughout the school. Outstanding provision meets the needs of all learners. This is an inclusive school where pupils feel valued, special, safe, happy and secure. The School Council is involved in evaluation and planning for the future. Good and outstanding teaching results in pupils achieving at and beyond expected levels. A parent spoke of the "joyful experience of being made to feel part of the school community, the parents' prayer group and of the listening Headteacher." A strong team ethos allows the school community to live up to its claim that "Each one of us is unique, special and loved by God and through his love we try to be the best we can be." Children know that "treating each other as they would like to be treated" is

rooted in Jesus' teaching. Stewardship is evident in the care of the environment and in charitable fundraising named "Our duty and our Joy". Interactive display reflects Biblical teachings; shared values and quiet corners for prayer and reflection make major contributions to the spiritual development of children and adults. Extra curricular activities develop and celebrate a range of talents. Children are invited to attend the "All Stars" sessions run by a group of parents which nurtures the Christian faith.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship is central to school life. It is led by a variety of people and provides outstanding opportunities for spiritual development. Worship involves responses from pupils and staff, leading to shared values and aspirations and inspiring those involved to act out what they have heard and to live out the values promoted. It impacts on the rest of the day. Themes follow the Anglican year and are discussed in Religious Education. Everyone attends worship which is joyful, uplifting and affirming. Pupils participate by writing prayers, reading, singing and reflecting. Very good evaluation by all stakeholders, results in ongoing improvement. Pupils say that they would like more opportunities for drama in worship and they enjoy Mondays when the vicar leads worship. Pupils understand the meaning of Lent and recalled the Bible story of the "Temptations of Christ". Prayer plays an important part in the day; children are familiar with different Anglican prayers. Festivals are celebrated in church and school. The Eucharist service involves pupils in intercessions, reading and liturgy, consequently families enjoy attending. A thanksgiving Eucharist, following OFSTED, gave an opportunity for school, church and community to reflect together on what it means to be an outstanding school with a Christian ethos. The school is compliant in holding a daily act of collective worship.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

The Diocesan Scheme is used and adapted to suit the needs of learners and follows a two year rolling programme. Religious Education (RE) is included in topic themes and taught discretely. RE teaches about Christianity, the Anglican tradition and other world faiths including Judaism and Islam reflecting the local community. All staff teach RE, which is currently coordinated by the Headteacher and a Foundation Governor. Standards in RE match those of other subjects. Self, peer and teacher assessment is carried out half termly in KS1 and KS2. Pupils know their next steps for improvement. Teaching is good and some is outstanding, affording excellent opportunities for Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development. SMSC and reflection opportunities are clearly mapped in planning. A variety of teaching and learning styles promote pupil engagement. Children experience a sense of awe and wonder and opportunities to empathise in lessons. Differentiation is by input and outcome. Pupils ask questions and explore answers, openly expressing their beliefs; they enjoy and are enthusiastic about RE.

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

The inspirational leadership of the Headteacher and her team has created an outstanding school. The drive to ensure that all are valued, nurtured and cared for is emboldened by Christian love and living out the values of forgiveness and reconciliation. The Head and Foundation Governors have a strong vision reflected in the mission statement, school aims, recruitment of staff procedures and in information provided for prospective parents. The Christian ethos is made explicit by the Head at induction meetings for new parents. Planning in RE and worship highlights the opportunities for spiritual development. Robust monitoring and evaluation continue to drive up standards for pupils. This is a happy and caring school where children have fun, enjoy their learning and staff feel valued. Links with local churches and ecumenical working are excellent allowing all families and faiths to be included. Governors take their role seriously and have held the school to account resulting in a strong Christian ethos. Self evaluation is accurate; there is no complacency and the School Development Plan details the ways in which RE and collective worship are to be enhanced. All speak of the care and dynamic support given by the local vicar, who assists with the coordination of RE. Staff and governors are engaged in continuing professional development. Succession planning is established as is developmental work to support colleagues in other schools. Links with the Diocese and church schools are very good. As a parent said "God is exalted here and children are able to relate Christian teachings to their daily life"