

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Riverview, Church of England (VA), Primary School

Riverview Road
West Ewell
KT19 0JP

Diocese of Guildford

Local authority: Surrey
Date of inspection: 31 March 2011
Date of last inspection: 17 June 2008
School's unique reference number: 131072
Headteacher: Mrs S Potter
Inspector's name and number: Dr Glyn Willoughby (NSI 637)

School context

Riverview Church of England Primary and Nursery School, with 239 pupils, serves the local community. Governors also manage the adjoining Children's Centre. Pupils come from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds, with a majority of white British heritage. The proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with national averages. The proportion eligible for free school meals is above the national average.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Riverview (Aided) Primary as a Church of England school are outstanding

The school is a caring and inclusive community that lives out its Mission Statement that 'Riverview exists to cherish, challenge and inspire children and adults within a Christian community.' Within this supportive environment, based upon a clear framework of Christian values, pupils are enabled to develop their self-confidence and grow into caring and considerate young people.

Established strengths

- The clear Christian vision of the school's leaders and governors.
- The passion and commitment of the staff in nurturing the well-being and spiritual growth of all pupils.
- The effectiveness of worship in the life of the school.
- The lively and thriving partnership with the local church and community.

Focus for development

- To ensure that assessment is an integral part of all RE lessons, particularly in respect of Attainment Target 2, learning from religion.

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

The strong Christian ethos that underpins the work of the school provides an inclusive, safe and enabling environment which places each pupil at 'the centre' and nurtures every member of the school community. Staff are extremely caring and show a deep concern for pupils and each other. As a result, relationships throughout the school are excellent and considerably enhance the mutual support and empathy between pupils. Parents and pupils regard the school as 'happy and welcoming' and staff are 'kind and approachable'. The vicar states that emphasis is placed on 'the care of each child as an individual' and parents recognise the way the school enables them to thrive academically and socially as a result of being happy and feeling secure. Great care is taken to nurture close partnerships between home and school. The impact of this relationship, combined with the caring attitude of staff, is that pupils feel valued, enjoy school, and develop their self confidence.

The spiritual progression and development of pupils through the school is outstanding. The sheer delight on the face of a Foundation Stage pupil as he realised he was flying his paper kite and the discussion as Year 5 pupils explored their feelings on hearing a piece of music

provided clear evidence of the substantial spiritual growth as they move through the school. The creative curriculum, including acts of worship and the involvement of outside groups such as 'Churches Together', encourages pupils to think deeply about moral and spiritual matters, and provides opportunities to express and develop their personal values and to reassess those values in the light of experiences. They express views and perceptions which reflect an awareness of different faiths and gain a rich experience of a range of art, music and culture which widens their life experience. Parents speak of how their children enjoy talking about their feelings and 'think about the impact of their actions on the feelings of others'.

Serving on the school council, school charity collections, celebrations of different religious festivals and a range of visits and links, enables them to gain a greater understanding of their role in the wider community as well as an appreciation of other faiths.

Behaviour around the school is excellent and is the result of the school's clear aims, policies and rules based upon Christian values. Any conflict is speedily resolved and pupils appreciate the positive way in which staff take time to support them to understand the need for various rules. They are also involved in developing their own rules within class groups.

Spiritual development is enhanced considerably by the internal and external school environment. This provides the opportunity to explore the arts and other cultures as well as become involved in a range of environmental projects such as gardening club.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Worship is central to the life of the school and inspires the thinking and actions of the school community. The school's aims and values are reinforced through the linked assembly, RE, PHSE, citizenship, emotional literacy and circle time themes. The collective worship programme is planned carefully and places emphasis on the school as a learning community and of each individual's part in that community. Pupils enjoy worship, understand the purpose of this time and feel it is relevant to all aspects of their lives. As one pupil said: 'There is a meaning behind it which helps us through the day'.

In the worship observed the headteacher, with the active participation of a number of pupils, skilfully explored the meaning of Easter through the use of Bible stories. Pupils listened attentively and participated with enthusiasm as they considered the answer to the question of 'why we have to be strong'. They watched with rapt attention as others provided practical demonstrations of strength, through a gymnastic demonstration, and temptation, with a pupil trying hard not to eat an Easter egg he had been given. These practical illustrations, combined with the highly effective use of humour and fun, enabled them to gain a clearer understanding of how Jesus was strong enough to be able to forgive when He gave His life on the cross. The excellent behaviour throughout worship, combined with a positive approach to reading prayers and listening courteously when others were speaking, demonstrated the familiar structure of the worship time.

The vicar regularly leads worship and, together with the very strong links with the church, makes a difference to how pupils benefit from worship. They often visit the parish church in order to celebrate Christian festivals and this, combined with the school-based worship, develops their understanding of Anglican traditions and practice. The vicar, governors, school council and staff are all involved in continual evaluation of the worship and adaptations are made as appropriate.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

Pupils achieve well in Religious Education (RE) and their progress is in line with other core subjects. End of key stage results show that pupils attain in line with national averages in Key Stage 1 and broadly in line at the end of Key Stage 2. Progress in Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 is very good and in Key Stage 2 progress accelerates at the end of the stage.

Use of assessment data is very good and enables staff to gain a clear understanding of pupils' capabilities and plan accordingly to meet their needs. This was an area for development identified in the last inspection report. The school plans to build on the good progress made since then by ensuring that development work continues on assessing and recording in RE. The focus will be on developing the monitoring and recording of progress, particularly in respect of Attainment Target (AT) 2, learning from religion.

The quality of teaching observed was very good and at times outstanding. Under the guidance of the RE coordinator appointed since the last inspection, staff have a clear understanding of how well pupils are progressing and shape tasks accordingly. This enhances their effectiveness in motivating and engaging pupils in their learning and enjoyment of the subject.

In the lessons observed, careful planning enabled pupils to explore ideas and express spirituality through creativity including music, drama, art and poetry. In addition, opportunities were given for reflection and thinking time. Pupils in Year 2 demonstrated their enthusiasm for the subject in an active lesson on the significance of Maundy Thursday for Christians. They showed an understanding of Christian faith as they discussed a painting of Jesus Washing Peter's Feet and showed compassionate appreciation of other pupils who were presented with Maundy 'money' for helpful deeds at a ceremony in the hall. The headteacher, acting as the queen, provided a sense of occasion that enhanced the learning environment and enabled pupils to learn extremely well as a result.

Pupils in a very good Year 5 lesson pupils expressed ideas with confidence and clarity as they considered the emotions linked with different examples of Easter music. In pairs and through class discussion, skilful facilitation by staff enabled them to explore openly, and think through in considerable depth, the emotions evoked by the music and to listen with respect to the views of others. The skills developed in RE provide excellent grounding for spiritual and moral development in other subjects.

The school values and encourages the contributions that pupils from other faiths make to RE teaching and parents are welcomed into school to share their faith and culture. In addition, visits are made to synagogue, mosque, church and the cathedral.

The school meets the statutory requirement for religious education.

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

The headteacher and governors lead a highly effective team focused upon ensuring Christian values and spirituality permeate all aspects of school life for the benefit of the pupils in their care. Together with the vicar, who is also the vice-chair of governors, they have played a significant role in continuing to develop the highly successful partnership with the ecumenical church. Building on the strong position at the last inspection, this confirms the commitment of the senior leadership to continuously improve the effectiveness of the school as a church school. 'A lively and thriving partnership' is how the vicar describes the link between church and school. As a result, a number of initiatives, such as 'Messy Church', events and services enable the school and church to provide support together and develop positive relationships with children and their families.

Governors are extremely supportive of the senior leadership team and all staff and ensure emotional care and spiritual support is provided when necessary. They appreciate the importance of the focus of the 'whole team' in continuing to maintain the secure and caring environment that is so important for the pupils. They also have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and develop their knowledge by involvement in training with the Diocese. A self-evaluation process enables effective monitoring of the school as a church school.

Since the last inspection a Children's Centre has been opened to provide for the needs of the local community. The appointment of a family support worker demonstrates the school's care and concern in providing support for children and families.

As well as the partnership with the Diocese and the local church, there are an extensive range of links between school, church and the wider community. The school has very effective relationships with the local police as well as a range of support agencies and services.

Parents are very supportive of the school and appreciate the outstanding personal care provided for their children. They also comment on the caring, warm and supportive environment and describe the 'exceptional ethos' and 'the wonderfully encouraging staff who are so kind and helpful.'