

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Farway Church of England Voluntary Aided Parochial Primary School

Church Green
Farway
Colyton
EX24 6EQ

Diocese: Exeter

Local authority: Devon
Dates of inspection: March 6th 2009
Date of last inspection: November 2005
School's unique reference number: 113432
Headteacher: Mrs Angela Potter
Inspector's name and number: Angela Sumner 580

School context

Farway Church of England (Voluntary Aided) Parochial Primary School has 46 learners and is a two class village school. It serves a wide rural community. Learners' mobility rate is high. All learners are of White British origin, and 36% of learners have Special Educational Needs.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Farway CE VA Parochial Primary School as a Church of England school are good

This popular small school is held in high regard by all stakeholders. It is characterised by caring relationships within a holistic approach to learning. The distinctive Christian ethos is evident throughout and makes a good contribution to teaching and learning. Learners receive good care and support and are encouraged to fulfil their potential within an inclusive environment clearly based on explicit Christian values.

Established strengths

- Welcoming, supportive, nurturing environment based on explicit Christian values
- Strong, positive, enabling leadership by Headteacher and Governors
- Good links between, school, church and wider community
- Caring approach to all stakeholders.

Focus for development

- Develop RE assessment to include a written evidence base to inform future planning and record learners' attainment.
- Develop the role of learners in the planning of Worship.

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

Learners feel safe, valued and confident because of the good level of care and respect shown by learners to each other, and by staff to learners. Learners speak about the caring family atmosphere and express pride in their school. Staff relationships are characterised by a strong team identity and learners benefit from the high quality of relationships generally in the school. The aims and ethos of the school are based on explicit Christian values, such as compassion, respect and equality. Christian values are shared and discussed so that learners know how these values can help them in their daily lives. Christian values are evident throughout the school in practice and confidently articulated by all members of the school community. Learners show positive self esteem and enthusiastically speak of school and church. This is because learners are given good opportunities to develop their potential within a nurturing and inclusive environment showing good links between church and school.

Good effective strategies are in place to promote learners' positive self esteem, for example, Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning and Art workshops. Consequently these provide good opportunities for spiritual development. The school's documentation and displays proclaim the school's Christian character. Learners confidently describe Christian symbols displayed around the school, explaining their meaning with clarity. Learners explained the meaning of a prayer tree in the reception area that links the impact of prayer to events in their own lives. Learners speak positively of quiet areas for personal reflection in the school grounds. Consequently the whole school environment provides good opportunities for spiritual development.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Worship holds a central place in the life of the school with clear distinction made between daily collective worship and weekly assembly. Learners experience whole school and church based acts of worship. Whole school celebration of the Eucharist occurs termly in the local church. This allows for learners to experience a good variety of worship styles. The effective collective worship programme is actively and enthusiastically supported by the vicar, who leads worship once a week. The involvement of the local vicar greatly enhances the learners understanding of the Anglican tradition. All stakeholders speak positively and enthusiastically of services held in church, for example in taking part in celebrating major Christian festivals. The activities are engaging because of the high level of involvement of the whole school community. A conducive atmosphere for school worship is set by the suitable choice of music played as the learners enter the school hall. Learners speak of how the music helps them prepare for worship. Learners speak positively of worship and being able to use a lighted candle to help them focus in prayer and personal reflection during worship. Consequently this provides a good opportunity for spiritual development. Learners speak positively of the impact of worship on their own lives. For example, in one act of worship, songs and an interactive story based on overcoming obstacles were performed by learners. Learners speak of being able to think about the story and what it means for them as well as others. Learners enjoy singing, particularly evident in a song written by learners about their school. Learners behave well because staff provide good role models. Formal evaluation of worship by governors and learners is evident, with use of a learners' questionnaire an example of good practice. Learners' involvement in planning of worship is at a developmental stage.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

Religious education is good. Standards of attainment are comparable with those in the core subjects. Learners show a very positive, open attitude and clearly enjoy religious education. They speak enthusiastically of the different activities provided, for example, through work linking religious education and ICT researching the life of Buddha. Learners views are valued and respected, and learners speak highly of opportunities to think and talk about their own beliefs, as well as those of others. Consequently RE provides good opportunities for spiritual development. Some planned cross- curricular opportunities for spiritual development occur, for example, in a lesson observed linking Music and Art where learners reflected about Creation. The importance of religious education is evident throughout the school and is shown, for example, in the high quality RE displays making good links with other curriculum areas such as Literacy and Art. The quality of teaching observed is good and is underpinned by good subject knowledge. The subject leader is enthusiastic, effective and speaks of the impact of continuing professional development, for example in the implementation of the Agreed Syllabus. Learning is promoted by clear objectives shared with learners with effective use of time, resources and learning styles. Learners are actively involved and can explain their understanding clearly and confidently using appropriate religious vocabulary, for example, in one lesson where learners were explaining the symbolism of weddings. Formal assessment procedures are at a preliminary stage with a clear structure for development to include written assessment tasks.

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

The Headteacher and governors confidently articulate a clear vision based upon explicit Christian values which are at the heart of the leadership and management of the school. The well being and inclusion of every person underpins the whole school community. The vision is effectively shared with all stakeholders in many ways including newsletters, school website, questionnaires, the accessibility of the Headteacher, governors and all staff. Parents speak positively of the open and welcoming ethos of the school. They highly value the care and support shown for all learners. There are good levels of involvement in the school by the local community, for example in the range of extra curricular activities, village pantomime and pre school. Stakeholders speak very positively of the good links between pre-school and school, and this ensures that the good provision for care and learning of learners is consistent. Strong links with the church provide a range of experiences for learners, for example, the school participation in Harvest festival, Ash Wednesday and fundraising activities to provide a statue of the local church's patron saint. The school's good Christian ethos of concern for others extends beyond the school community itself and is evident in the charitable work done in the wider community, as shown in Stand up for toilets and clean water in Uganda. Governors are effective and supportive through a wide range of activities in school including governor links to curriculum areas. Self evaluation as a church school by the Headteacher and governors is good and is evident in school documentation. Governors speak of the impact and value of involvement in non pupil professional development training days for all staff, for example in attending in-service training on Church school distinctiveness. The governors are confident with the collaborative approach of the Headteacher, and all stakeholders appreciate the strong emphasis on a team approach to the school community.

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