



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Hanging Heaton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Junior and Infant School

High Street
Hanging Heaton
Batley
West Yorkshire
WF 17 6DW

Diocese: Wakefield

Local authority: Kirklees
Dates of inspection: 10th September 2008
Date of last inspection: 6th December 2004
School's unique reference number: 107709
Headteacher: Mrs. Lindsay Gallagher
Inspector's name and number: Mrs. L. Alvy NS 170

School context

Hanging Heaton is a small primary school that serves a village community in the old woollen district of West Yorkshire. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and /or disabilities is broadly average with a very small number with statements of special educational need. The school has achieved the Investors in People and the Healthy Choice Gold Award. The school eagerly awaits the appointment of a new incumbent to its local church in order to re-establish the strong links it previously enjoyed and benefited from.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Hanging Heaton Voluntary Controlled Junior and Infant School as a Church of England school are satisfactory.

The new Headteacher has a very clear Christian vision for the school. Encompassing the strengths of the Christian ethos that supported the school through recent troubled times the staff and governors, through effective strategic planning, are now poised to celebrate and further develop the distinctiveness and effectiveness of this popular church school.

Established strengths

- Good pastoral care, guidance and support for children at the Christian heart of the school.
- A dedicated hardworking staff inspiring strong relationships and respect for all.
- Confident, happy and enthusiastic children eager to take responsibility and care for others.
- The effective promotion of children's spiritual and emotional well-being.

Focus for development

- Develop monitoring and evaluation through foundation governor/governor links with staff responsible for RE, PHSCE and Collective Worship.
- Strengthen links with parents/carers to develop understanding and support for the Christian work of the school.
- Embrace closer links with the church, community and people of other faiths to enrich the ethos of the school.

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

Meeting and talking to the children at Hanging Heaton school is a joy and immediately gives an excellent impression of children's caring and thoughtful attitudes towards each other. Parents and visitor's remark about the happy atmosphere in the school and this can be attributed to the very good role model provided by the Headteacher and staff. In discussion, children talk equally confidently about their school work and achievements or their understanding of being part of a church school community. They understand the significance of the school badge and eagerly recount the past celebration of festivals such as Christingle and Easter in the local church. Children feel happy and secure using words such as safe, fun, exciting and enjoyable to describe their opinion of daily life in the school. Children's behaviour is good. Opportunities such as the School Council, playground buddies and charity fund raising instil in them a strong sense of moral and social responsibility clearly giving them many opportunities to develop into caring and thoughtful young adults. 'It's alright, I've got Santa and God', said one young child when discussing friendship. Asked, 'How did you know what to write in a recipe for friendship?' an older child replied seriously, 'Some of us learn from church and some from the school'. Occasions such as this provide cogent examples of the school's success in supporting children's spiritual growth. There remains no doubt that a strong Christian ethos is at the heart of the school's care for its children and their needs are successfully met as a result.

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

Children show respect and prayerfulness as carefully chosen music leads them into their daily act of collective worship. Recognition of the importance of quiet reverence and the distinction between worship and assembly make the purpose of the former clear to everyone present. The use of gentle humour, a balance of story, song and quiet prayer and reflection effectively support the spiritual development of the learners. Children listen sensibly and provide effective role models for the youngest among them who happily answer questions and take part. Children are comfortable with worship shown through their thoughtful prayers and insightful comments. Children recall with enthusiasm worship and visits to the church. Whilst recent difficulties have made this involvement problematic the church clearly remains important to the children enriching their worship experiences. Recent revision of policy and planning is increasing the impact of Collective Worship and re-affirming its purpose in the life of the school. Through accurate self-evaluation the school now has a clearer picture of the developments needed to increase its quality and impact although these are presently at an embryonic stage.

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

The very good leadership of the newly appointed headteacher has been instrumental in breathing new life into the school. The prominence of the new vision statement clearly identifies the school as part of the church family building on the successful preservation of its Christian foundation through a turbulent time. Dedicated staff have worked hard to maintain this and displays and work in school reflect this. The 'Connecting Classrooms' project, the re-introduction of church links and the appointment of a Community Link teacher all serve to increase the vision of the school's wider Christian purpose and growth. The Headteacher's personal vision for the school is empowering staff and governors to develop their respective roles in improving the Christian character of the school. Some work has been completed on the evaluation of aspects of Collective Worship for instance. But governors and in particular foundation governors have yet to develop a strategic overview of the church school in order to identify progress and alongside parents, church and the community support the development of its spiritual growth within a wider Christian family.

