

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Wanstead Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School,

Church Path, Wanstead London E11 2SS

Diocese: Chelmsford

Local authority: Redbridge

Dates of inspection: 24th February 2012

Date of last inspection: 25th March 2009

School's unique reference number: 102841

Headteacher: Mr. Peter Lewis

Inspector's name: Iain Gunn 727

School context

Wanstead Church School is an average-sized primary school, with one class per year group. Pupils come predominantly from a White British background. While the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above average, most speak English as their first language. The Early Years Foundation Stage provision includes a Nursery where children attend on a part-time basis. The proportion of pupils identified as disabled or having special educational needs is below the national average, as is the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Wanstead Church School as a Church of England school are outstanding. From the moment that you walk into Wanstead Church School its distinctive Christian character is clear. The school is based around strong Christian values. These permeate throughout the school and influence policy, practice, behaviour and the visual environment. The school has very strong links with the local church and community.

Established strengths

- The Christian Learning environment that is evident throughout the school.
- The clear Christian vision held by the leadership in the school
- The extremely strong links with the local church.
- The pupils enjoyment of RE teaching

Focus for development

- For the governors and head teacher to have a clear monitoring schedule for collective worship.

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

Wanstead Church School is at the heart of the local Christian community and the head teacher commented that the Christian ethos is valued above everything else. The mission statement of the school talks of working in partnership with school, church and home. There was much evidence to support this with joint social events, church services, and regular visits by local clergy. The children feel safe, well cared for and listened to and this is regularly checked with pupil surveys. One parent commented that her child had said she feels equally safe at home, church and school. They have a great number of people that they can turn to if they are having problems, these include other pupils, staff, at all levels and the local rector. The pupils valued the friendliness of the school but also spoke of how important forgiveness is to the school. The school collects money for a number of charities both in this country and abroad. There are particularly strong links with Uganda and members of staff have visited. This work impacts on pupils as they are able to link their fundraising with the school's values. One pupil said, 'two of our values are love and compassion when we organise cake sales for charities we show these.' The parents feel part of the school and enjoy being able to come into the school at regular intervals. They commented on the caring behaviour of the children and that there is a real family feel to the school. The pupils at the school feel listened to and the school ensures this through regular planned opportunities.

The values in the school are prominently displayed in the hall; the children could name them and also gave examples of how they influence their behaviour. One pupil said that the display in his class reminds him to use self control with his behaviour. The pupil's spiritual development is greatly enhanced through the curriculum. Pupils had produced some very moving poems after visiting the Somme as part of the school journey. There are also areas where the children can go and reflect such as the prayer corners in each classroom. A pupil said, 'we write prayers at home about things that are worrying us and then we can take them to the corners - this helps me'

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Very well planned and resourced acts of worship have a place of major importance, and appropriately reflect the Christian foundation of the school. The pupils, staff and parents all recognise the importance of worship at the heart of their school and the impact it has. There is a clearly planned schedule for the worship that involves all staff and local clergy both in planning and delivery.. The worship is Anglican in nature which results in pupils of all ages having a deep understanding of the traditions. The pupils were able to explain the key features of a Eucharistic service and recite a number of prayers. The worship has a direct impact on the pupil's actions. One pupil said, 'we had an assembly about how God's word tells us to help others so I organised fund raising and raised enough money to buy a well for an African village.' The pupils are fully engaged throughout the worship and speak positively about it, saying that they enjoy it, particularly when they get to act; as well as enjoying singing. The pupils play a prominent part in the worship both in school and in church services, leading prayers, drama and performing readings. Eucharist services are a strong feature of the school. The local rector comes in before the services to work with the children to maximise their involvement and their understanding of aspects of the Anglican tradition. Parents feel that these services strengthen the links between the church and the community.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

The standards in RE are at least in line with core subjects, and in some year groups above. In the lessons observed the teaching was at least good and many outstanding features were observed. The use of ICT to increase the pace of learning was a very strong feature of lessons as was the use of assessment for learning techniques. The pupils were very positive about RE lessons. This is a subject they enjoy. The children particularly like RE when it is incorporated in a cross curricular way. The teaching of RE is further enhanced by the local clergy who give up time to teach Godly Play sessions. These are particularly effective not only in making learning fun but also in relating stories to real life situations. There is a clear and robust assessment schedule in place that covers all strands of the RE curriculum and these are used by the teachers, not only to level pupils' work but to plan future work. The marking in the books is thorough, includes next steps and shows two way communication between the teachers and the pupils. The planning is clear and ensures full coverage of the curriculum. There is a good balance between Christian teaching and the teaching of other faiths. The pupils were able to articulate clearly how this learning helps them in their everyday lives. One pupil commented 'We can better relate to people, understand them and understand why people do different things so we all get along'. The RE taught in the school, and the carefully chosen visits, have an extremely positive impact on the cultural development of the children.

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

School leaders and Governors have a very clear vision of how distinctive Christian values are central to every aspect of school life. The issues from the last inspection have been addressed with assessment for learning now clearly present in all lessons observed. The school has invested in a variety of resources for RE and there was much evidence of their use and impact on learning. Pupils, parents and governors speak very highly of the leadership in the school. The subject leader for RE, although relatively new to the role, has already had a positive impact and is very committed, ensuring robust self evaluation drives the subject forward. This is complimented by a strong Governing body who are fully involved in the strategic planning and evaluation in the school. They regularly visit the school. There is a clear development plan in place and this is used effectively to further drive up standards through targeted support and whole school training. The school is aware that succession plans need to be implemented quickly as the head teacher is moving on. The governors are clear about the qualities the new head must have and have put measures in place so that they have time to find exactly the right person. The Governors are well briefed on RE through written and verbal reports. The school uses external support well to enhance the development of learning in the school. There is a strong relationship with the parents, community as well as extremely close relationship with the local church. One parent commented that the church community just felt like an extension of the school. The strong links were evident in the fact that the deputy head was recruited from an advert in the parish magazine.