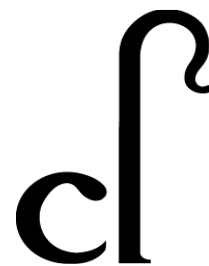


National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Gosforth Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Wasdale Road,
Gosforth
Seascale
Cumbria
CA20 1AZ



Diocese: Carlisle

Local authority: Cumbria
Dates of inspection: 8th March 2013
Date of last inspection: 26th February 2008
School's unique reference number: 112294
Headteacher: Mr John Corran
Inspector's name & number: Mrs Ruth Wall National Society No. 548

Diocese of Carlisle
Growing Disciples

School context

Gosforth Church of England Primary School is a smaller than average school situated in a village on the western edge of the Lake District. The school draws its children from a wide catchment area. The children are of white British ethnicity. The number of children with special needs is in line with the national average. There was recently an acting headteacher for four months during the absence of the headteacher.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Gosforth as a Church of England school are good

Christian teachings form the basis of the strong moral code which is evident in the school. Relationships are excellent and children achieve well in this caring family atmosphere. Good links with the church have been maintained during an interregnum. Church and school are committed to working and worshipping together.

Established strengths

- The dedication and commitment of staff and governors to providing an inclusive education based on Christian values.
- The impact on children of positive and affirming relationships between members of the school community.
- The strong links with the local churches and the community.

Focus for development

- Involve all members of the school community in a review of the school's mission statement.
- Include children, staff, governors and parents in the process of evaluating the school as a church school.
- Provide training for governors regarding their role in a church school.

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

The Christian ethos of the school supports the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all the children very well. A teacher explained that children are taught how to act and respond to others through reference to the Christian values and that these values are also referred to in the curriculum. One child commented that, 'This is how Jesus would want us to behave.' A group of children spoke positively about their school which, they agreed wholeheartedly, was a safe and happy place in which to be. A parent said, 'There is an overwhelming sense of family here.' Children's achievements within and outside school are celebrated each week with the whole school community. Children are self-confident because they benefit from opportunities provided for them to take responsibility. They make a positive

contribution to the wider community in different ways, showing care and respect for others through charity fundraising. The school choir regularly use their skills to enrich the lives of others in the community. A coordinator for a Fair-trade group thanked the school for 'All you did to make the Big Brew Tea Party such a success in raising money for some of the world's poorest countries.' The school's environment contributes to spiritual development. Displays include older children's entries for the 'Spirited Art' competition where children have expressed their thoughts about God through art. All children have contributed to a display in the hall which states 'We are all God's children, part of one big happy family.' Religious education (RE) supports the Christian ethos of the school very well through a broad and rich curriculum. A group of children said they particularly enjoy learning about faiths and traditions different to their own. Visits to a Buddhist centre have helped to develop their understanding of other faiths.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship plays a significant role in the life of the school. It is respected and enjoyed by all staff and children. As a result of a pupils' questionnaire, which identified children's ideas on making worship more relevant and enjoyable, all children are now regularly involved in planning and leading worship. On the day of inspection the whole school community, including parents and governors, enjoyed the Mothers' Day service, expertly led by Class 4 children. This involved children reading their own prose and poems and leading the school in prayer and song. Of particular note was the maturity with which older children took the lead in celebrating a child's birthday and in presenting the weekly achievement and behaviour awards to children throughout the school. Prayer is an important aspect of school life, not only in collective worship, but also in class at various times during the school day. Children also write and say their own prayers. Children are familiar with the Lord's Prayer and a parent commented that her child had brought home prayers learnt at school. Christian themes introduced in worship each week are developed and applied in class. At the end of the week children reflect on the theme and share together what they have learnt. Evaluation of collective worship is effective and involves staff and children. The whole school attends St Mary's Church to celebrate the main Christian festivals. There was a particularly enthusiastic response to the Remembrance Day service held in church. This was led by Class 3 children and involved church members and village community groups, including the British Legion. Children were proud to represent the Beavers, Cubs, Brownies and Guides in full uniform. A member of the Mothers' Union said it was 'Absolutely terrific!' The chair of governors explained, 'In today's world it is important that children are involved with the community in this time of reflection and thanksgiving.' Preparations have now begun for the Easter musical production of 'Jerusalem Joy' led by a parent and member of St Mary's Church. She has taken time to discuss the meaning of the song lyrics with the children with the result that children understand the meaning and significance of the Easter story.

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

There is a Christian vision for the leadership of the school as a church school. This is developing as the leadership team and governors monitor and evaluate the school's Christian distinctiveness. School development plans show that they have taken significant steps to successfully address some issues raised at the previous inspection. Christian values are now explicit in the school although these are not articulated in the school's revised mission statement. Parents have not been included in self-evaluation of the school's Christian distinctiveness and, as this was an area for development in the last inspection, it should now be addressed as a matter of urgency. The school has benefitted from diocesan training in leadership and management of the school as a church school. The temporary leadership of the acting headteacher has had a positive impact in raising the profile of the school's church school status. She has been successful in driving through school development initiatives, particularly in collective worship and religious education where issues raised at the last inspection have been addressed. The school governors work hard and are very supportive. They acknowledge the need for more focused training to enable them to fully understand their role. The supportive partnership with St Mary's Parish Church, other local churches and the community is mutually beneficial. The weekly lunches made by the school for the community are very popular. One lady who was a past pupil of the school enjoys chatting to present day pupils and sharing her memories. Church members pray for the school and lead

an after-school Bible club which is contributing significantly to the spiritual development of the children. Children are particularly enthusiastic about their role in school decision making through the school council. They feel comfortable in expressing their views and are confident that their suggestions are valued and taken seriously. Support from parents is very good and all events and services are well attended.

SIAS report March 2013 Gosforth Church of England Primary School, Cumbria CA20 1AZ