



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

William Gilbert Endowed Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Vicarage Lane

Duffield

Belper

Derbyshire

DE56 4EB

Diocese: Derby

Local authority: Derbyshire

Dates of inspection: 22nd May 2013

Date of last inspection: 18th June 2008

School's unique reference number 112979

Headteacher: Mrs Susan Whyld

Inspector's name and number: Mr John Clapham (775)

School Context

William Gilbert school is a larger than average sized primary school. It is one of two primary schools serving the village of Duffield and surrounding area. The school is oversubscribed and has a rising population, with 293 children currently on roll. The school population is stable with movement between schools extremely rare. The majority of children are of White British background and very few are entitled to free school meals. Children come into school at age related expectations.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of William Gilbert Endowed as a Church of England school are outstanding.

William Gilbert school is characterised by the exceptional care and nurture given to children and families. This is driven by the distinctively Christian values that are deeply embedded in the daily life of the school. Each child is embraced as a unique child of God and is given the support, challenge and opportunity to flourish and use their God given talent to His glory. The high profile of the school's Christian character has a significant impact on both the academic development and the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of each child. The school benefits from exceptionally high support from governors, the church and parish, parents and the wider community.

Established strengths

- The Christian values and ethos, and the demonstration of God's love through compassion, care and nurture, consistently encourage, nourish and challenge the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of all learners.
- The impact of collective worship in inspiring the thinking and day to day actions of the whole school community.
- The impact of religious education in developing the children spiritually, socially and emotionally and shaping the values and ethos of the school.
- The strength of leadership at all levels in evaluating, supporting, challenging and consistently living out the Christian vision of the school.

Focus for development

- Strengthen partnerships to develop children's wider global understanding and an awareness of Christianity as a multicultural world faith.
- Explore opportunities to give greater involvement to children in planning, leading and evaluating acts of worship.

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

The distinctive Christian character of William Gilbert school is deeply embedded and clearly informs the ethos, values and decisions that are made. This has a significant impact on the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the children, which is reinforced right across the curriculum. This was summed up by a governor who said, "Every single child in this school is valued in the sight of God. They are valued as individuals and enabled to flourish". This is borne out by the high levels of academic achievement, attendance, and the personal development of all learners, regardless of their ability or background. The academic attainment is exemplified in part through Average Point Scores at Easter 2013 that show children making higher than expected progress in both Maths and English in each year group throughout school. The school is establishing a link with a school in India to develop children's global awareness and children are beginning to develop their understanding of Christianity as a multicultural world faith. Recent parent and pupil questionnaires show strong support and appreciation for the quality of provision available. One parent commented that, "Since joining this school, my child now has self confidence and belief. He has blossomed because of how he is treated and celebrated for who he is". One of the school council children commented that, "We are the most important part of this school because we are the next generation. That means we have to use the skills that God has given us". The strong partnership between school and parents impacts strongly on standards and creates a real sense of community. The children work and play together well and show high levels of tolerance, respect and understanding of each other. The behaviour of learners is of the highest standard. Relationships between all members of the school community are strongly influenced by the Christian character and values of the school. A member of staff commented that, "We are a family here, and have supported children, parents and staff through difficult times. There is something intangibly special here".

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

At William Gilbert school, great value is placed on the distinctively Christian collective worship that is at the heart of the life of the whole school community. Worship is engaging and relevant and is central to the ethos and values of the school. At all three acts of worship observed, children behaved exceptionally well, contributed enthusiastically and showed tangible interest and reverence for messages made applicable to their lives. As an example, in Key Stage 1 children were asked to think about how they could show God's love at playtime, and were reminded that what they do makes a difference. Children were then observed demonstrating these qualities on the playground. References to God the Father, the person of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit were made relevant to the children and are deepening the children's understanding of God. Children relish the chance to reflect and develop a personal spirituality through a wide range of experiences. Prayer is given a high focus across all aspects of school life, with many opportunities for personal prayer and reflection. Areas for reflection are available throughout school, such as the Fruit of the Spirit tree, where children had taken opportunity to write prayers for a member of staff who was unwell. Themes, planned over a two year cycle, give the children a clear understanding of the Christian calendar and opportunity to encounter a wide range of Anglican tradition and practice. Teachers and teaching assistants fully participate in worship with the children. Local clergy, church members through 'Open the Book' and teachers are involved in leading whole school worship. Acts of worship are held in church for key Christian celebrations. These are

exceptionally well attended and much valued by children and parents. A clear structure is in place for the monitoring and evaluation of collective worship. Feedback resulting from this is valued and is impacting on the quality of provision. Discussions with pupils during the inspection exemplified the positive impact that worship is having on their thinking and day to day actions. Following recent input into the fruit of the spirit, a parent noted that “kindness permeates across the whole school”. Children have had some opportunity to plan and lead collective worship for events such as Red Nose Day and the theme ‘Beware of bullying behaviour’, which were favourably received. They are also involved with evaluating collective worship annually through the pupil questionnaire. The school is now giving careful consideration to ways for the children to contribute more widely to the planning and evaluation of collective worship throughout the year.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding.

Religious education (RE) has a high profile within the school curriculum. Pupils are excited and challenged, and are proud of their achievements in this area. It is given full status as a core subject, with high levels of attainment and progress, as evidenced across both Key Stages. The use of assessment and feedback are highly effective in informing ‘next steps’ in teaching and learning. Teachers are reflective in evaluating the effectiveness of their RE teaching, and creative in using a wide range of strategies to inspire and engage children in high quality learning. During the inspection, RE was observed in every classroom. Teachers throughout the school used questioning skilfully and insightfully to gauge children’s understanding and encourage them to think more deeply. Lessons observed were active and creative and used music, art, drama, stilling, guided visualisation and poetry. Children were able to apply their knowledge and skills in RE to their own personal reflections. When looking through RE books with children, it was clear that they regularly see the relevance to their own lives and have many opportunities to develop their own spirituality. The RE curriculum is rich and varied and meets statutory requirements, with the teaching of Christianity given prominence. It is adapted flexibly to meet the needs of each cohort, with a wide range of learning styles catered for, and content covered in weekly lessons or blocks as needed. Opportunities and partnerships are currently being developed to give children a wider understanding of Christianity as a multicultural world faith. The subject leader is highly effective in supporting and challenging staff to constantly improve their practice. The dissemination of her recent training in enquiry led learning in RE is supporting staff in empowering children with the skills to question, analyse, evaluate and reflect. This has a marked impact on the quality of learning, and the depth of understanding, not just of the subject matter but of themselves. During a lesson, one child commented “RE helps me to explore and express my ideas and beliefs about who God is and who I am”.

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

The head teacher, staff and governors share a clearly articulated vision where distinctively Christian values impact on the attitudes, aspirations and achievements of the whole school community. Exemplary relationships across all ages show the key role that Christian values play within school. Strong partnerships exist between school and church, enriching the lives of both. Joint events are exceptionally well attended, and parishioners offer practical support to the work of the school. The school is also characterised by a close working relationship with parents, the wider community and the diocese. Everyone feels valued and all model the school ethos. This is particularly noticeable in the way that the school works with its pupils with special educational needs, meeting their needs with striking effect and fully involving them in the life of the school. Governors freely give time, encouragement and support in all aspects of school life. They take an active role in supporting the head teacher and senior leaders in school self-evaluation and strategic planning. This includes observations of lessons and collective worship, learning walks, evaluation of SMSC across the curriculum and meetings between governors and subject leaders. RE is clearly identified in the School Development Plan, and is given the same rigour in terms of monitoring and evaluation as other core subjects. This cycle of school improvement has a marked impact on standards and provision throughout the school. The school has rigorous tracking procedures in place that feed into pupil progress interviews, ensuring that all children achieve to the best of their God given ability. Through this, all children clearly understand the next steps needed for them to move on in their learning. This is applied to all core subjects including RE. The leadership of RE and collective worship is given a high priority, which has led to highly effective practice in both areas. Governor attendance at staff meetings and training ensures arrangements for religious education and collective worship meet statutory requirements. The previous inspection identified the need to make the Christian foundation explicit through the school prospectus, which has been fully addressed. The professional development of all staff and governors is planned strategically, building up a strong team well placed to take the school on to its next stage of development. Particular emphasis is placed on succession planning, where staff are nurtured to fulfil their full potential.

SIAMS report May 2013

William Gilbert Endowed CE (VA) Primary School–Duffield DE65 4EB