



**St Mary's CE Primary School,
Clymping**

Diocese of Chichester

Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools

Inspection Report



Date of inspection:	5-6 November 2009
Name of inspector:	Penelope Sharman
NS inspector's number:	474
School address:	Brookpit Lane Clymping Littlehampton BN17 5QU
Unique reference number:	126024
Status:	Voluntary Aided
Number on roll:	102
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
LA:	West Sussex
Name of chair of governors:	Paul Griffiths
Name of headteacher:	Janet Llewelyn
Date of previous inspection:	September 2006

The inspection of denominational education and collective worship in the school was carried out in accordance with Section 48 of the Education Act 2005.

Description of the school

St Mary's CE Primary School is a small rural school. A small percentage of children come from the village of Clymping; the majority travel in from surrounding villages and Littlehampton. Major building works have recently been completed. The school has been awarded 'Healthy Schools' status, 'Silver Eco' status and an 'Active School Award'.

Summary judgement

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Mary's CE Primary School, Clymping as a Church of England school are good.

Together with the support of the local church community, the school demonstrates an understanding of and witness to the essence of the Christian faith. Pupils are confident, caring and very keen to learn. The school provides them with an environment in which they can question without fear, investigate with keenness, share their school life in kindness with others and grow in the knowledge of Christian values. The leadership of the headteacher, supported by staff and governors who share these values, ensures that there is no doubt that the school is a Church of England school.

Grade: 2

Established strengths

- The ethos of the school based on Christian values
- The very strong links with the local church and community
- The Christian family atmosphere where all are cared for
- The excellent Religious Education (RE) teaching

Focus for development

- Improve the present monitoring and evaluation of Collective Worship
- Develop further the multicultural dimension of the curriculum

The school meets the statutory requirement for Collective Worship	Yes
The school meets the statutory requirement for Religious Education	Yes

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

The outstanding Christian character of the school is pivotal to the development of all its pupils. The strong leadership of the head, supported by the staff, governors and local church enables all pupils to feel safe, secure and loved. The school environment, created by all, leaves one in no doubt about its Christian foundation. For example, when asked what the crown meant on a child's sweatshirt school logo, he said 'it's because God is king'. A focus in each of the classrooms dedicated to an aspect of Christianity, as well as the plaques in the entrance hall and displays throughout the school, surround the pupils with aspects of the Christian faith therefore developing their spirituality and understanding of what it means to be a Christian.

All, including parents, speak of the strong 'family' ethos of the school which is borne out by the caring relationships throughout. An example of this is when a member of staff died, a special service was held in school at which all pupils were given the opportunity to talk about her.

Pupils are proud of their school and appreciate the reward systems which encourage them to do their best both with relationships and academic work. One pupil was particularly commended for her kind and gentle attitude towards another pupil at the end of assembly.

The school supports a child in Nepal and receives regular news of her and her school. It also has a link with a school in Sierra Leone thus enabling pupils to have some understanding of life in other cultures. The school has made use of the local Health and Wellbeing summer school when needed.

The school garden is a source of spiritual development for the pupils as they have the opportunity to grow, cook and eat vegetables for special occasions and the wind turbine helps them to understand the importance of conservation of energy.

The needs of others are recognised by the pupils in that the school council has organised fundraising for such events as 'Children in Need' and 'Red Nose Day'.

Grade: 1

The impact of Collective Worship on the school community is good.

Worship is carefully planned by the head on a weekly 'theme' based in general on following the Christian calendar. Guest speakers are regularly invited to lead worship, which helps pupils to understand that many people have faith in God both within and outside their own community. Throughout each week the themed assemblies enable pupils to build effectively on their knowledge of the Bible and Christianity. All pupils enjoy the special time when the whole school worships together. They are attentive, open and keen to answer questions. Time is given by the leaders for quiet reflection leading into prayer. Pupils respond well and appreciate the sense of worshipping together, one pupil stating 'I like the whole school being together in assembly'.

Class assemblies enable the leaders to focus more directly on the needs and understanding of a particular age group and are now monitored by the head. This is an improvement since the last inspection. A clear change of pace and atmosphere at the start of worship, when a candle is lit, enables pupils to appreciate this special time in the school day. Pupils enjoy taking part, for example, by solving the problem of getting a sick friend through a roof (Mark 2 v4), thus helping them to both understand the story and issues of teamwork.

Celebration assemblies take place regularly to which parents and governors are invited. These are greatly appreciated and enjoyed by all and again, enhance the 'family' atmosphere in the school as well as celebrating achievement and good behaviour.

Termly written reports are carried out by the head with some indications for ways to improve. These need to be more detailed in order to impact more fully on the worship.

Grade: 2

The effectiveness of Religious Education is outstanding.

Religious Education plays a central role in the life of the school, and its importance is recognised by the governors and teachers as well as the headteacher. The RE curriculum is based on the Diocesan Agreed Syllabus and co-ordinated by the head. Following the recommendation in the previous SIAS report, the school has developed and maintained the tracking system, thus enabling teachers to assess achievement and attainment in RE. Standards and achievement are very good.

The lesson planning seen was very detailed and related both to the Bible and the effect the stories can have on humanity. For example, in a Y3,4 class the theme was relationships with God. When asked what a pupil had learned at the end of the lesson, the reply was 'I learned not to be selfish'. Role play is used frequently as a means to explore issues such as 'good and bad feelings'. The impact on the pupils is far reaching. In a Y5,6 class pupils were introduced to the two 'great commandments' using three bible references then given a difficult social situation to resolve. The pupils were posed with very challenging questions by the teacher which led to an excellent quality of understanding by the end of the lesson. In a Y2/3 class when the story was 'The Lost Sheep' a pupil was able to relate the message in the story to when he lost his pet rabbit. 'Freeflow', a system for developing pupils' ideas within a topic, is also used in the teaching of RE to very good effect, thus giving them ownership of their learning within a given theme. 'Teachers turn work into fun', stated one pupil.

Throughout the school the development of knowledge of the Bible and the Christian way of life is clearly seen and contributes greatly to the spiritual and moral development of all. The curriculum includes study of other major world religions which gives pupils an understanding of other faiths.

Grade: 1

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

The head, together with the staff and governors, has developed a strong vision for the school which can be seen in action throughout, for example in the school website, the school environment created and the ways in which all interact with one another.

The head challenges the staff by encouraging them to question their reasons for teaching in a certain way, encouraging them to ask 'why are we doing that?' This provides a carefully thought out basis for teaching and learning and leads to a deeper understanding of pupils' needs, academic, social and spiritual.

All, including pupils, take part in the development planning for school improvement including its Christian character, thus enabling all to feel part of the community and to agree where areas need to be improved.

Governors are frequent visitors, share in the evaluations necessary and are supportive in the life of the school. The rector and foundation governors act as strong links between the school and the local church community, a recent development being that church members now help out in the school with such activities as reading. Governors also facilitate school visits to church, thus enabling practical issues to be dealt with easily. Governors are kept aware of Diocesan support available to them; however, foundation governors lack clarity about the process of monitoring and evaluating specific areas of school life, for example 'worship' and its impact on pupils. The reasons for monitoring and evaluating need to be clear to all.

Parents are kept well informed and an 'open door' policy enables them to approach the head when necessary. Parents and pupils know that difficulties will be dealt with promptly and sensitively. Termly parent forums are held where opinions can be voiced on school matters. Parents also share in the school improvement plan, one result of which was that the school received offers of help.

Grade: 2