



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

Diocese of Bath & Wells



Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools

Report

School:	Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School South Street, Taunton TA1 3AF
Status:	Voluntary Aided
Diocese:	Bath & Wells
Local Authority:	Somerset County Council
Date of Inspection:	7th September 2007
Date of last Inspection:	25th February and 1st March 2002
School's unique reference no:	123848
Name of Headteacher:	Nigel Bright
Chair of Governors:	The Revd. Julian Laurence
Inspector's name & NS no:	Muriel Griffiths NS268

School Context

Holy Trinity Church of England School has 293 pupils on roll, and is situated close to the centre of the County town of Taunton. The majority of pupils live close to the school. The school was established in 1846 and the original buildings date from 1911. An extensive re-modelling and re-building programme was completed in 1990 and the school was extended in 2003. There is a purpose built Local Authority Hearing Resource Centre, known as the Cleary Centre, for hearing impaired pupils, who are included as an integral part of the school.

Summary Judgement

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Holy Trinity Church School as a Church of England school are good. It has some outstanding features.

Established Strengths

- The school provides an effective Christian learning environment for all pupils where each individual is valued.
- Children's behaviour is excellent and they show caring support for each other.
- The headteacher, staff and governors work well together to promote a shared Christian vision.

Focus for development

- Explore with the school and the wider community, the school's current and future role, given its Christian foundation.
- Further develop the role of the foundation governors in evaluating and considering what should be distinctive about a school with a church foundation.
- Give pupils opportunities to comment on and evaluate acts of collective worship so that the staff can discover its impact on learners and so create opportunities for them to plan and participate in the daily act of worship.

The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is outstanding in the way it meets the needs of all learners

The school's distinctive Christian character contributes very well to meeting the needs of all learners in the school. Pupils flourish as individuals, feeling valued, special and supported in their learning. Christian values are evident in the everyday life of the school. Pupils feel valued and talk confidently about their work and the activities that are provided for them. They are proud of their school. All children are secure in the knowledge that they matter as individuals and the school provides very well for their different needs, abilities and interests. Children feel safe and confident in school and good relationships are promoted between all age groups. The school makes very good provision for children's personal development and also their spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. As a result, pupils' behaviour is excellent. Very good relationships throughout the school support the good learning that takes place. Issues are dealt with promptly and sensitively. Children learn the values of love, care and respect for each other through the strong Christian ethos. Pupils are confident in sharing their views as they know what they say will be valued. This was evident in a lesson observed during the inspection when younger children were discussing a well chosen story that their teacher had read to them to introduce the idea that everyone is 'special'. There are good reward systems in place with many opportunities for celebration. Many opportunities are taken to help children to think of those less fortunate than themselves, for example, 'Bring and Buy' stalls for 'shelter boxes', seeds for Africa and G8 (Send a

Child to School). The school's Christian foundation is evident, with a cross on the outside wall. Displays around the school show what had been learned in RE lessons, such as one showing a range of sacred writings from major world religions. An attractive stained glass window marking the 160 years since the school's foundation with ten panels showing different aspects of the school, designed by pupils further emphasises the school's church foundation.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship has an important place in the life of the school. Pupils learn about Bible stories, religious traditions and Christian values through a carefully planned programme. Worship is consistently and recognisably Christian and develops children's understanding of the Anglican tradition and also provides opportunities to explore moral issues. This makes worship more relevant to the everyday lives of the children. The school holds services in the parish church at key times in the Christian year and the Leavers' Service is also held there. Older children experience a termly celebration of the Eucharist which generates a sense of 'belonging'. Pupils talk enthusiastically about acts of worship that they especially remember. They enjoy the weekly act of worship led by Father Julian, the Parish Priest, and also appreciate visits from members of other local Christian churches. Children have been able to form good relationships with these visitors and this has increased their experience of the Christian church and those who belong to it. In an act of worship observed during the inspection, the theme was 'New Beginnings' and pupils were very involved in the different elements. For example, they responded to the headteacher's greeting, 'The peace of the Lord be with you' with 'and also with you' and enthusiastically joined in the song 'Jubilate Deo'. After listening to the parable from the Bible about the man who gave gifts to his three servants, there was an appropriate time of reflection for children to consider their own gifts. When classes occasionally plan and lead worship themselves, pupils especially enjoy these opportunities.

The effectiveness of the Religious Education is good

Religious Education follows the locally agreed syllabus, and contributes to the social, spiritual and moral and cultural development of pupils and the school's overall ethos. It is recognised as an important subject in school. Achievement and standards of attainment at least match those of other core subjects. Pupils achieve well in RE (religious education) because of well planned lessons and good teaching. The school ensures the provision of appropriate staffing, curriculum time and learning resources. Teachers' planning is thorough and meets the needs of the mixed aged classes appropriately. Pupils have a positive attitude to the subject and work with obvious interest and enjoyment. They are beginning to develop a good understanding and respect for other faiths and appropriate links are made with other curriculum areas. Two lessons observed during the inspection were of a good standard. Teachers had good relationships with pupils, even at this very early stage in the term and the caring ethos meant that pupils were confident in sharing personal feelings. The subject leader has attended appropriate training and has been able to support her colleagues in a number of ways, such as with lesson planning and organisation and provision of resources.

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

The recently appointed headteacher is an effective leader and together with staff and governors ensures that the distinctive character of the school is maintained and developed. The subject leader for RE is effective and enthusiastic and has ensured that all teachers are confident with the RE syllabus. There are mutually supportive links between the school, the church and the local community. For example, Leavers' Bibles are donated each year by the Parochial Church Council, who also provided lunch at the interviews for the new headteacher during the last academic year. Children from school enjoy singing in the church choir and once a year, an enjoyable evening of music and story telling, called 'Home Brewed' takes place involving the wider church family, after which proceeds are split between church and schools. The church provides both practical and prayerful support for the school. Church members help in school and the school communicates its news and activities in the Church Magazine. The school's church foundation is explicit in all documentation. Father Julian provides much valued pastoral support for the school and foundation governors are keen to be involved in developing the school's Christian ethos further. There are high expectations of pupils' behaviour and care and respect for one another and adults provide good role models. The commitment to live according to Christian values strongly underpins the school ethos. Children have a 'voice' about school matters through the School Council and there are also opportunities for parents to give their views through the use of questionnaires. Parents believe that the distinctive Christian ethos has a positive effect on pupils. There is a very evident sense of 'family' in the school because of the commitment of the headteacher, staff, governors and children.

This inspection was carried out on behalf of the Diocese of Bath & Wells in whose area the school is set, in accordance with Section 48 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection framework used is that established by The National Society of the Church of England for the denominational inspection of church schools for all dioceses in England and Wales.

Your comments or complaints should be addressed to the Education Department, The Diocese of Bath & Wells, The Old Deanery, Wells, Somerset BA5 2UG. Further information about inspection of church schools can be obtained from the National Society's website at www.natsoc.org.uk.