

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Grange View CE VC First School

Widdrington
Morpeth
NE61 5LZ

Diocese: Newcastle

Local authority: Northumberland

Dates of inspection: 18th October 2010

Date of last inspection: N/A

School's unique reference number: 135634

Headteacher: Miss Mary Rothwell

Inspector's name and number: Miss Lesley Richardson 394

School context

Grange View is a small First School of 100 pupils set in a rural area in Widdrington Station which is an expanding former mining village close to the Northumbrian coastline. The school changed status to Church of England Voluntary Controlled in 2008; this is the first denominational inspection. The number of children eligible for FSM is above average as is the number of those with Special Educational Needs.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Grange View First School as a Church of England school are good with outstanding features.

Grange View fully deserves the Ofsted 2010 statement, "the school has embraced its new status with commitment and a sense of pride." The school promises and delivers a 'ministry of welcome' –parents and carers being fully engaged through attendance at school functions, worship, the parents' forum and school workshops. The ethos of the school is underpinned by Christian values of honesty, openness, friendliness, trust and respect, with children at the heart of the school community. As a governor stated "the way the school handles situations speaks of 'resurrection' – look for the positive in dire situations."

Established strengths

- Strong Christian leadership from headteacher, staff and governors.
- Ensuring all learners, both adults and children, flourish as individuals.
- Excellent relationships with whole school community and partners including church, PCC, Health Centre, neighbouring schools.
- Good world view/global perspective through partnership working with schools in Kenya and Ghana.
- Pupils behaviour, independence, sensitivity and respect for the environment and each other.

Focus for development

- Complete development of outdoor meditation and reflection area.
- Broaden use of appropriate visitors to lead Collective Worship and discuss with governors the place of the Eucharist Service in school life.
- Induct new governors in use of the Toolkit as an integral part of monitoring and evaluation.

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

The school self-evaluation involving governors and staff is robust and shows knowledge of strengths and how to further improve. There is a pertinent and effective action plan in place. The school aim is to 'SPARKLE' every day - be Smart, Polite and Positive, Approachable, Responsible, Kind, Listen and Learn and Eager, Enthusiastic and Exciting. This is embedded in the school and reflected by adults and children in their everyday behaviour, attitude and relationships, their care of the school environment and treatment of all within the school. Adults and children know that their actions can impact on others and actively choose positive behaviour: "children understand the values and can always carry values through life." The

concept of forgiveness and reconciliation is central to behaviour management. Pupil behaviour is outstanding. They show care and sensitivity to each other and their sense of community is bolstered by involvement with the locality and global links with schools in Kenya and Ghana. The strong school partnership with the Parochial Council allowed children to suggest changes to the village plan and therefore have a say in the local community: "The school is the heart of the village." "The whole community comes together for the school." This is reflected in school involvement with the Health Centre - children designed the front of the Health newsletter, involvement with the Lantern Parade, Banner Parade, Sing Inn, DURBAR, and Growing Minds Award. The vicar is an important and valued member of the school contributing to Collective Worship and providing sessions on meditation resulting in improved concentration and stillness. Visits to the church provide opportunities for the children to explore their thoughts and feelings. Services are shared with parents, community and congregation. Work is displayed regularly in St John's Church; families visit to view the work and the congregation derive great delight from "children's phrasing and ideas." The group of devoted church volunteers provide enormous support including The Messy Wednesday Club attended by parents and children, workshops on Maundy Thursday, listening to children read, leading church visits and being living role models. Opportunities for spiritual development are provided in lessons, including reflection time at beginning of lesson, and throughout the school. Children and adults meditate in the outdoor areas; "there are logs to sit on and look at nature God's world." Further outdoor areas for meditation are under construction. Christian values are signposted on displays throughout the school and quotes around school encourage children to understand and affirm who they are in life.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good.

Collective Worship is of high importance in the school. It is included in the school development plan and INSET, is a core part of the school day and is totally inclusive. It is well planned on a 3 year cycle by staff and vicar with children adding ideas. The themes are based on the Christian year and include moral themes, Saints Days, SEAL, world and environmental issues and core Christian values. Anglican responses are used including appropriate Collects, as are symbols including the cross, candle - "we light candle 'cos Jesus is the light of the world" - and music. Pupils are actively involved through leading prayers, role play, discussion in pairs and individual response. Follow-up activities include discussing values and 'wondering questions' at lunch time and allowing individual responses to be recorded on post-it notes which are then displayed in the hall. Impact on pupils would be further enhanced by involving them in planning and leading Collective Worship. At the beginning of worship on 'Our World', thoughts and prayers from the prayer box were shared. Children were encouraged through role play to consider thoughts and feelings of Chilean miners trapped underground and how they reacted when rescued. Responses included: "believed that eventually someone would come" "had hope." Children sang enthusiastically and responded reflectively to prayers. Every Friday parents are invited to Collective Worship and the Song of Blessing is included. A child stated: "We have two welcomes in our school. One is, The Lord be with you, and we have our welcome promise." This is a special promise written by the whole school to welcome new members of the school community. Prayer is an important part of school life and children are aware of when to use prayer. Children pray their own prayers and often write their own prayers which are displayed in the classrooms. The Reflection Book includes children's thoughts and reflections on wondering questions from all Acts of Collective Worship. Children also respond through showing eco awareness and in their positive behaviour and sensitivity to each other. There is a space on the staffroom wall for staff to add names and situations they wish others to think and pray about this is valued by all staff. Governors meetings always begin in prayer.

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

The Mission Statement was agreed after discussion with governors, staff and parents. Built on Christian values, it is clearly understood and modelled by all in the school. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and ensures everyone is included in all aspects of school life. The governors are supportive, monitor school regularly and are beginning to question decisions. This strong governing body is becoming more confident, is keen to train, and to improve the effectiveness of providing challenge. Governors have a voice in the school with everyone able to question and express opinions. The Forest School activities provide opportunities for reflection and enquiry about the natural world. Children are

encouraged to make connections between creation and their place in the world. Their responsibility is reflected in charity work such as Haiti Appeal, Samaritan's Purse Shoebox Appeal, NSPCC and their eco awareness. In their role as Buddies, children make subtle decisions re situations they can handle or need to ask for adult help for: "we help those hurt, and sort out name calling if they don't know they're being called. If the person hears, we need to tell the teacher to help them." Awareness of business enterprise has been proved by raising money for the residential visit which also led to questions of fairness and being inclusive. The School Council express a feeling of being aware of their responsibilities and how to initiate change. There is a positive attitude from the children and they apply their learning to their everyday lives. Teachers and support staff all have leadership roles resulting in increased confidence. Staff development is an important part of school life and staff feel appreciated and valued. This reflects the importance placed on achievement for all within Grange View School.

SIAS report October 18th 2010 Grange View CE VC First School, Widdrington, Morpeth
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