

Chesham Bois Church of England Voluntary Controlled Combined School

Bois Lane
Chesham Bois
Amersham
HP6 6DE

Diocese of Oxford

Buckinghamshire LEA
SIAS inspection: 5 Dec 2005
Previous S23 inspection: 6-8 March 2000
URN: 110425
Headteacher: Michael Brigden
SIAS Inspector NS: Gloria Ringrose

Summary Judgement

Chesham Bois C.E. Combined is a good school where the distinctiveness and effectiveness of its Christian / Anglican tradition is much in evidence.

Established strengths

- Enthusiastic Leadership combined with a supportive governing body and shared focus with staff setting good examples of respect for each other and the children.
- Excellent links with St Leonard's Church and especially the Youth Workers.
- Confident, well mannered, happy children who enjoy their learning environment.
- An 'open door' policy which encourages positive dialogue between home and school.

Focus for development

As in the previous inspection, to consider the further involvement of staff in whole school worship to enhance the importance of worship and its impact on the community.

How well does the school, through its distinctive Christian character, meet the needs of all learners?

The school, through its distinctive Christian character, makes a good effort to meet the needs of all its learners, reinforcing the school's commitment to the uniqueness of the individual. From talking with children, parents, governors and those involved with Leadership and Management and from observation of children and staff at work and around the school, it is evident that pupils are valued as individuals with appropriate recognition and praise being given for their achievements, both in curricular and extra curricular activities. Effective use of teaching and non-teaching staff supporting small groups enables children, for example, not only to develop their computer skills and to produce work of which they can be proud, as was observed in an RE lesson, but also to successfully access the curriculum. The school has accurately identified and is addressing the need to extend the more able as was evident from talking with parents and children. Learners from all groups feel valued and special as is evident from the communications between the Headteacher and the children in school and in the playground. Whatever their religious faith, the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. An emphasis on healthy eating and care of the environment also plays a part in the encouragement of spiritual development as children consider the impact of their actions on future generations. Relationships within the school community are exemplary with the Headteacher and staff setting the example with their high standard of Christian care and respect for each other and the children.

What is the impact of Collective Worship on the school community?

The impact of Collective Worship on the school community is good with effective consultation and planning undertaken by both the school and the local church. Worship plays an important part in the life of the school with themes chosen that for example reflect awe and wonder from the natural world using the planting of the newly acquired Woodland Area. During the inspection, the focus for the children as they quietly entered the hall was an overhead picture of the Annunciation but this was removed when the worship element was complete, thus distinguishing between Worship and Assembly. From talking with the children, they are very aware of the importance and effect of prayer times which take place in their individual classrooms as well as during Collective Worship. They enjoy writing and reading their own prayers, singing and taking part individually in the act of collective worship. Children stated that they tried to put into practice in the classroom and playground, the lessons they learned for example about respect and kindness towards others. A variety of leaders through whole school and Infant/Junior assemblies, ensure the children experience a range of differing styles of Worship. These, combined with visitors to the school to celebrate special events such as Remembrance Day, also ensure that all learners and staff are given the opportunity to derive inspiration, spiritual growth and affirmation from worship. Although teaching staff, especially in a small school, need time to discuss and plan with their teaching assistants and helpers, it would enhance the importance of worship and its impact on the whole school community if more could attend Collective Worship. The children are developing a clear understanding of Anglican faith and practice through Collective Worship led by the Youth Workers of St Leonard's and by visits to the church. Parents are made aware, in the school prospectus, of their right to withdraw their child from Collective Worship and RE.

How effective are the leadership and management of the school as a church school?

The enthusiasm of the Headteacher and the quality of leadership contribute significantly to the success of this church school. Its Christian purpose is clearly stated in the mission statement with the Church Youth Worker and Chairman of Governors especially, supporting and advising the Headteacher on Church and Christian matters. Effective planning for RE complies with the current syllabus and is supported with a range of resources, ensuring that children have the opportunity to develop their understanding of Christianity and other world faiths. Teaching and non teaching staff feel supported and appreciated and there is a high level of respect between all members of the school community. Parents appreciate the 'open door' policy and the fact that the Headteacher and staff are accessible. They feel secure in the knowledge that their children are valued and respected as individuals and, that they have the opportunity to make their views known through questionnaires and meetings. A parents' prayer group also supports the school. The links with the local church are excellent and the school participates in community events such as for example the local carnival where their float on the theme of 'The Bible' won first prize.

SIAS DECEMBER 2005 Chesham Bois CE VC Combined School, Buckinghamshire, HP6 6DE