



**St John the Baptist CE Primary
School, Findon**

Diocese of Chichester

Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools

Inspection Report



Date of inspection:	13 February 2013
Name of inspector:	Connie Hughes
NS inspector's number:	765
School address:	School Lane Findon West Sussex BN14 0TR
Unique reference number:	126027
Status:	Voluntary Aided
Number on roll:	142
Age range of pupils:	4-11
LA:	West Sussex
Name of chair of governors:	John Roche
Name of headteacher:	Richard Yelland
Date of previous inspection:	June 2009

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 John the Baptist Church of England (Aided) Primary School is a small rural school in the village of Findon. Established in the 1830's the school has been on its current site since 1872. There have been structural changes, the latest in 2009 to support a growing school population. Five classes each contain two age groups. The majority of children come from the village and represent a range of socio-economic backgrounds.

Summary judgement

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St John the Baptist CE Primary School, Findon as a Church of England school are good.

There has been good progress in all areas of the development of St. John's, Findon as a Church school since the last inspection. This is an inclusive school where Christian values, modelled by the school team and supported by the physical and symbolic environment underpin the ethos of the school. Adults and children relate well to each other in an atmosphere of mutual respect, support and friendship.

Grade: 2

Established strengths

- Christian values reflected in the strong relationships between all members of the school community.
- Pastoral care and support for the children and their families is outstanding.
- Collective Worship and Religious Education experiences encourage and challenge children's' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development.
- The committed leadership of the headteacher actively supported by the governors Pastoral Committee.

Focus for development

- Develop current assessment of RE so that it accurately affects current attainment and informs future progress.
- Involve children more in planning and participating in school-based daily acts of collective worship.
- Develop the distinctiveness of the classroom reflection areas to ensure all children have the opportunity to meaningfully engage and reflect on the explicit Christian focus or faith theme.

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 good at meeting the needs of all its learners.

The headteacher, supported by teachers and governors are committed to ensuring the children have 'inspirational education within a Christian environment'. Within the current curriculum, the children enjoy meaningful experiences that support their Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development (SMSC). Through participation in a skills and enquiry-based curriculum, entitled "Open Futures", the children are engaged in growing their own food, cooking it, filming and linking, through Philosophy for Children (P4C), their learning experiences. Observing effective group work, including discrete Religious Education (RE) and cookery lessons, children displayed independence, personal responsibility and positive relationships in abundance. The children learn moral values which are the basis of Christian life through for example, RE, school worship and charitable outreach. The School Council proudly shared the importance of a sense of fairness by shaking hands with teams from other schools when taking part in competitive events; 'whoever wins or loses it's always a kind and polite thing to do'. The school environment reflects its Christian foundation through Anglican symbols and artistic displays; a child described the school badge as 'we remember Jesus' crucifixion and the sun says He is the light of the world'. The whole school community celebrated the opening of the children's spiritual garden by the Bishop of Horsham; designed, constructed and used by the children for peaceful reflection. The classroom reflective areas are limited in their space, lacking interactive and engaging stimulus; they should enable children to understand, reflect and confidently voice their understanding of the schools Christian distinctiveness. The most recent questionnaire sent out by governors to parents in 2012 consistently viewed the school as having a 'family atmosphere ... where children can experience Christian values and traditions with a great team of teachers who inspire their pupils to learn'.

Grade: 2

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

A written record of the daily acts of Collective Worship (CW), compiled by the headteacher and rector provides structured themes to support the schools SMSC development. Worship is central to the school day, with staff, visitors and the rector, all taking an active role in securing children's knowledge and understanding of Christian values and biblical teaching. Religious artefacts including a unique wooden altar, a crucifix, candles, music and prayer are all familiar practices for children to engage in worship. They participate in services to celebrate Anglican festivals within the school and parish church. All children look forward to visiting Chichester Cathedral through a planned curriculum experience of comparing and contrasting their parish church with the "Mother" church. Year 6 children enthusiastically participate in the Diocesan Annual Leaver's Service in Chichester every year. The observed school worship had a clear focus on the lead up to Easter as the most important part of the Christian year. The headteacher asked the children to reflect over the period of Lent 'the big question – did Jesus come back to life'. Engaging children's attention by burning a palm cross, within a safe environment, enabled the children to experience the symbolism and significance of Ash Wednesday within the Easter theme. Utilising interactive technology all children could watch an animation of Jesus being tempted in the desert, contributing to learner participation and spiritual reflection. Children shared a range of previous stimulating and thought provoking worship, including the use of yeast to see how 'Jesus can rise up and fill our lives'. Planned periodic monitoring and evaluation records of CW by the Pastoral Committee and in discussion with the School Council, it is evident the children wish to be more actively involved in daily acts of worship.

Grade: 2

The impact of Religious Education is good.

RE has been a focus for whole school improvement with pertinent professional development extending staff subject knowledge and the delivery of effective teaching and learning. Annual moderation of Key Stage 1 and 2 children's work, utilising the "I can" assessment format, helps staff to have a secure understanding of what children have learnt about religion and what they learn from this study. Assessment would be more effective if all children's achievement and progress was maximised through differentiated lesson planning, peer assessment strategies and senior leadership termly monitoring. School leaders graded RE lesson observations as good overall and the school's own current data indicates that standards are broadly in line with national expectations. Evaluations of the breadth of RE learning outcomes need establishing in teacher's weekly plans. The portfolio of evidence is a valuable resource of a range of RE themes, Anglican traditions, biblical teaching and SMSC experience. It does need to contain more examples of current children's age related attainment. Creative classroom and whole school displays reflect a range of teaching and learning experiences for the children; one child stated, 'RE through art helps us to show our emotions'. Children in the Reception class attentively studied a range of colourful photographs to help them express their feelings about God's wonderful world; 'I want to say thank you for beautiful things'. During the inspection lesson observations, children worked collaboratively to extend knowledge and consolidate cross-curricular skills; Year 2 quietly discussed their responsibilities when compiling their own group storybooks of Noah. The children in Year 6 were confidently engaged in relating stages in their own life to similarities and differences in the lives of Christians, Muslims and Jews.

Grade: 2

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

In the words of the School Council the school vision is, 'we help each other to do our best with Jesus at our side and God nearby as we enjoy school life'. Governors recognise that through the spiritual leadership of the headteacher the school is 'a place where all members are positively concerned about helping each other'. There are well-established close links with the church of St John the Baptist, notwithstanding being geographically difficult to access due to the school having to cross a major road to participate in collective worship services. Parents and carers overwhelmingly agree that 'the school nurtures every child with their individual differences' and 'everyone is unique – all in a positive way'. With the Chichester Diocese school's support team, the school staff focussed professional development has enhanced the school's Christian distinctiveness, including preparing the deputy headteacher for future church school leadership. Through the established role of the Pastoral Committee, utilising the diocesan self-evaluation toolkit, and the governor's annual questionnaire to parents, the school effectively monitors and evaluates the on-going development and impact of CW, RE, SMSC policies and practice on sustaining and making explicit its Christian distinctiveness. Good communication between the Parochial Church Council (PCC) through the rector and a foundation governor enables the parishioners to know about special events, the spiritual life of the school and the impact of their financial support. The school is, 'at the heart of the village community', with families, neighbours and local businesses significantly supporting daily activities and special events, including an annual "The Summer Revels" fete organised by the Parent Teacher Association. One of a number of older village volunteers includes a gardener who created a wooden Celtic cross to stand within the trees that embrace the developing spiritual garden. The rector observes the children respectfully enjoying the peaceful atmosphere of the spiritual garden from his back garden.

Grade: 2