

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### **Pattishall Voluntary Controlled Primary School**

School Road  
Pattishall  
Towcester  
Northamptonshire NN12 8NE

#### **Diocese: Peterborough**

Local authority: Northamptonshire  
Date of inspection: June 19<sup>th</sup> 2012  
Date of last inspection: November 17<sup>th</sup> 2008  
School's unique reference number: 121985  
Headteacher: Brian Curtis  
Inspector's name and number: Hilary Spenceley 370

#### **School context**

This small school is in a large village with pupils coming from the village and surrounding area. Most pupils are White British and a few from other ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below average, as is the proportion eligible for free school meals.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Pattishall Voluntary Controlled Church of England Primary School as a Church of England school are satisfactory**

This is a happy, caring school with a tradition of Christian principles implicitly evident in daily life. Pupils feel secure and valued and relationships are strong. With the need for emphasis on the improvement of KS2 standards, school leaders' and governors' attention has, over the past year, been diverted from addressing issues surrounding development as a church school resulting in less than expected progress.

#### **Established strengths**

- The quality of relationships and commitment of adults to supporting pupils
- Pupils' confidence in feeling safe and valued

#### **Focus for development**

- Assign within the leadership and governance structures formal systems for monitoring the school's development as a church school, evaluate the findings and use them to inform future progress.
- Promote more clearly the link between Christian values and their influence on pupils' behaviour and relationships.
- Set up a regular process for gathering views on the effectiveness and future development of collective worship and religious education from parents, pupils and the wider school community.
- Place displays and symbols throughout the school as visible prompts to enhance the environment's contribution to pupils' spiritual development.

#### **The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is satisfactory at meeting the needs of all learners**

This is a friendly school where everyone works harmoniously together. Christian values of love, care and respect form the basis of the school's Christian vision and are clearly identified in policies and documentation. Some pupils can relate positive behaviour to aspects of Christian teaching, but for most the links are not explicit enough. Pupils feel safe and valued; they like coming to school and see it as an inclusive community in which all receive appropriate support to make progress. Religious education (RE) makes an effective contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It is taught by a

specialist Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA), whose lessons pupils enjoy, because of the many different teaching methods she uses. They say that they remember what they have learnt and find that RE helps them to “understand and care more about people”. The link with a Kenyan school is a satisfactory start to addressing the point raised in the previous report asking the school to increase pupils’ multi-cultural development. Pupils have a good understanding of the principles of charitable giving and are active in raising money for a range of causes. Pupils are confident in adults’ ability to assist them if any problems occur and those who work with the children are very committed to their roles, some having devotedly served the school for many years. Parents appreciate this “friendly, caring” school and some spoke of conversations at home initiated by their children wanting to pursue something they had heard about in RE or assembly. The school environment makes a limited contribution to pupils’ spiritual development. There are few displays or symbols promoting the school’s Christian character or vision.

**The impact of collective worship on the school community is satisfactory**

Pupils enjoy worship in school-based assemblies and in the local churches of Holy Cross and St Luke’s, where they celebrate festivals of the Christian year. They welcome the occasional opportunities given to them to participate in leading worship. Pupils appreciate the wide variety of visitors who lead worship remarking that this helps to make assemblies “interesting and fun”. During the worship observed most pupils listened attentively and joined in with singing the songs. The recently appointed Church of England priest is already actively involved in the school; this, together with the close links with the Methodist Church, contributes greatly to the effectiveness of worship. Pupils are familiar with some aspects of Anglican tradition and practice through assemblies and visits to church. They regularly say the Lord’s Prayer and are comfortable with prayer both in assemblies and the regular Grace before lunch. The addition of symbols such as a candle, Bible or cross as focal points in the hall would enhance the environment for collective worship. Planning is done mainly by the headteacher, who also leads worship. There has been little progress made in relation to the previous inspection point about the encouraging of other staff to assist in leading assemblies. Staff readily oversee pupils’ contribution to school services in church; these occasions bring the school and wider community together and are seen by all as happy times to share in celebrating festivals of the church year. The governors hold Listening Teas when they survey pupils’ views on the school. A recent survey covered aspects of being a church school and shows that pupils think assemblies are important and help them “understand about people’s feelings”.

**The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school is satisfactory**

The headteacher and governors have a committed vision for the development of the school as a church school. They recognise that the main focus of the last year has been on raising standards in core subjects, and whilst the development of the school as a church school has by no means been forgotten, there has not been the same rigour and attention devoted to this aspect. The previous report asked the school to engage governors, parents and the Parochial Church Council in the process of improving the school’s distinctiveness as a church school, including raising the quality of worship. Some progress has been made towards addressing these issues, but systems to ensure regular reviewing and reporting are not yet established. RE is taught using the locally agreed syllabus; tracking and assessment is not yet in place, but lesson observation by the co-ordinator shows that teaching is good. The school’s self-evaluation is generous and lacks attention to the specifics of the inspection framework. The school is an integral part of local life and valued for its role within the community. Links with the local churches are good. Parents appreciate the approachability of staff and the care shown to their children. They feel that the school communicates well with them, particularly in connection with academic matters, but not as effectively in relation to the school’s Christian character and church school status.

