

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Woodseaves Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Dickey's Lane
Woodseaves
Stafford
ST20 0LB

Diocese: Lichfield

Local authority: Staffordshire
Date of inspection: 18 July 2011
Date of last inspection: 21st June 2008.
School's unique reference number: 124300
Headteacher: Mr Gary Whitehall
Inspector's name and number: Mrs Lizzie McWhirter MA 244

School context

Woodseaves Primary serves the village of Woodseaves and nearby villages. Pupils are almost all from a White British background. Currently there are 105 pupils on roll. The school is the recipient of many national awards including the International School Award and the new Living The Olympic and Paralympic Values Award.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Woodseaves as a Church of England school are good

This is a good church school where pupils are given experiences to support their Christian pilgrimage. Pupils trust their teachers and value their friends. It is a place where everyone is welcomed and encouraged to achieve their best. One of the hallmarks of this school is the high achievement of pupils, which is very effective.

Established strengths

- The strong sense of community which exists
- The close links between church and school, supporting pupils' spiritual development
- The positive attitudes of the pupils, especially seen in collective worship and religious education [RE]

Focus for development

- Involve pupils and governors in the evaluation of collective worship
- Embed the evaluation of the church school ethos with the whole school community

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

Woodseaves is an inclusive, caring community which is much loved by its pupils and much appreciated by its parent body. Pupils are treated as individuals and are confident and happy. Pupils respect the teachers and value their friends, saying that '*friends make me happy because they are kind and friendly*'. Parents speak of pupils as '*aspiring most to look after the little children in a loving environment*' where family values are at the heart of this school. They also want to '*work hard in everything we do*' and achieve '*excellence in everything*'. Opportunities are provided for pupils to reflect and this has a positive impact on behaviour. As one pupil said, '*we respect everything as if it's our Bible.*' School fundraising enables pupils to experience the Christian values of service and gratitude. The school is seen to value the widest range of academic, musical and sporting achievement, so that attitudes to learning are good. This was especially seen in Year 6's production of 'Treasure Island'. Pupils leaving the school reflected on treasures in their life experiences. RE contributes to pupils' spiritual development. Pupils say '*RE is fun*' and enjoy '*understanding different religions and what they do in life*'. As a result, pupils speak knowledgeably about Christian and Jewish symbolism, learning about other faiths and cultures, and their spiritual, moral, social and

cultural development is good. Reflection areas in classrooms as well as displays around the school contribute towards pupils' good spiritual development. Pupils are keen to be involved in the planning and development of reflection areas, saying, *'we could do with a space in school where we could be quiet'* and *'we want to try and make the conservation area better'*.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship enjoys a special place at the heart of Woodseaves school. The special relationship which exists between church and school is exemplified in the quality of worship integral to the worshipping life of this school. Pupils say that *'the clergy talk about God and Jesus in a fun way'* and parents speak of the *'memorable worship'* led by clergy *'with children buzzing afterwards'*. This popular school has grown in numbers so that the local parish church can no longer accommodate everyone. Pupils help to lead worship at major Christian festivals. Visits to Lichfield Cathedral help pupils understand they are part of a larger, worshipping diocesan family. This, together with worship led by The Anglican clergy enriches pupils' understanding of Anglican traditions. The value of prayer making a difference in everyday life is seen through Year 3/4's use of The Prayer Bag when pupils take this bag home and write prayers together with their families. As one pupil said, *'You let God know you are by His side and He is by your side'*. Pupils enjoy worship outdoors which they find *'more peaceful when you pray when you hear birds sing and hear the leaves whistling'*. They are keen to contribute their own thoughts and reflections. Pupils welcome the use of reflection journals to capture their thoughts on collective worship to be shared with governors. In turn, governors recognise the need to evaluate worship, including pupils' views. In these ways, the profile of worship is being raised, supporting pupils' spiritual development.

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

Much has been achieved by the headteacher, who, together with staff and governors, share a developing vision for the whole school community. There is a good partnership between the school and the church team ministry which parents support and value in this rural community. A very good example of community links is seen in the link between school and pre-school which meets in the Methodist chapel. Parents find staff approachable and especially speak of the headteacher *'who knows everyday how each child is feeling'*. Pupils are clear that Woodseaves is a church school and are equipped with the tools for prayer and worship. Foundation governors seek to make a difference through their active involvement, and are open to new ways of taking the school forward, especially in their monitoring role. Governors acknowledge there is work to be done. Whilst areas from the previous inspection have been addressed; governors have rightly identified that, as part of the full governing body's regular and ongoing role, its primary aim is enabling the school to develop its distinctive Christian character. The focus on church school ethos is seeing a renewed impetus with vision and energy to accomplish this with support from the clergy, taking everyone on board. This includes seeking parental as well as pupils' views via the school council. Parents and pupils alike feel they are listened to and their views valued. There are plans for the school to feature in the parish magazine and pupils' work is displayed in the nearest parish church so that church/school links are seen and valued. The school values support from the diocese so that the school's Church of England foundation can be upheld by all.