

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Newbrough Church of England Middle School

Diocese: Newcastle

Local authority: Northumberland

Dates of inspection: 26th April 2010

Date of last inspection: 21st May 2007

School's unique reference number: 122298

Headteacher: Miss Kathleen Halliday

Inspector's name and number: Mrs Jane Ackroyd 221

School context

Newbrough Church of England First School is a small rural school with 69 children, aged between 4 and 9. All the children are of white British origin with an average socio-economic background. There are an average number of children with special needs. The school is a member of West Tyne federation of five church schools. The Headteacher has been in post for eighteen months. A recently developed outdoor play space has improved facilities enormously but the dining area remains across the road from the rest of the school. The school holds Artsmark Silver, Activemark, Healthy Schools and Basic Skills Mark.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Newbrough Church of England First School as a Church of England school is good.

Love of God and love of one another is at the heart of this school. Stakeholders are proud of the Christian ethos and strive to make it a success. The school prospectus makes it clear that being a church school is integral. Children are well known, valued and nourished as individuals. This is a lively and happy learning community where children make good progress and are enriched in their spiritual, moral and social development alongside their academic work. Interactive displays and use of symbols greatly enhance the learning environment. Learners speak warmly and enthusiastically about their school. Relationships at all levels are excellent and everyone within the community knows how to access help and is confident any necessary changes will be made. The Creative Curriculum enhances learning and enables individuals to shine. The Christian ethos, underpins all that it does. Care, kindness and moral values are engendered in an atmosphere of fun and enthusiasm.

Established strengths

- An environment where the strengths of each individual are nurtured and valued.
- Governors and staff are strongly supportive of the Christian ethos.
- The relationship with the local village and parish communities.
- The quality of RE teaching and the impact that this has across the curriculum.

Focus for development

- To widen the range of people who deliver worship.
- To continue to increase the opportunities for developing children for life in multi cultural Britain.
- To develop links with the world wide church.

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

The school encourages high self esteem for all pupils, giving them the confidence to become effective learners. Pupils understand that Christian values underpin the work of the school. Community links are very strong, for example at Harvest the community were delighted to eat the soup made by the children. Members of the community help with a number of activities such as Gardening Club. The children raise money for a range of charities including Seeds for Africa. However links with communities beyond the local one are few and need development. Year Three have recently introduced a buddy system to enhance the playground experience of younger children and encourage forgiveness. Links with the local church and the involvement of the vicar, the Methodist Minister and the congregations assists understanding of the relevance of Christian values. There are

opportunities for reflection provided in the new outdoor play area and through various displays. The school provides a positive learning environment "X skips along each morning" said one parent, another commented on the level of support given to all children "particularly my youngest who struggles." Two members of staff came forward for confirmation last year. The Christian character of the school is lived out by children and staff.

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

A daily act of worship is held, with good attendance by staff. The pattern for worship arose from a child's suggestion with Monday's at the start of the day and other days at the end. Children are respectful and responsive; they enjoy singing, reading and acting. Worship is planned by the Headteacher with some collaboration with other staff and governors and is evaluated informally and formally. The Prayer Wall and Prayer Box provide opportunities for less formal prayer and pupil input. A prayer "pool" is a recent introduction. Annual Christian Festivals are celebrated in church; a number of parents attend these services and feedback is supportive. An increasing number of children attend the monthly Children's Church. Children talk confidently about their beliefs and happily write and share their own prayers. One display by Y3/4 exemplifies how the hymns they sing make them think "I like 'All the Nations of the Earth' because it shows that every Christian, however old and however different can praise the Lord for the wonderful things he has done."

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

Pupils enjoy RE which is led by an experienced specialist. Work is well planned using the Diocesan syllabus, in order to learn about and from the subject. A wide range of teaching methods are employed including Thinking Skills and Godly Play. Children make good and even exceptional progress in relation to attainment in core subjects. By KS2 children are reflective thinkers, very respectful of each others views. Resources are high quality. Despite a lack of children/parents of different faith the RE teaching is planned to address this, developing an understanding of different faiths and assisting in community cohesion. The membership of the West Tyne Church Schools Federation enables children to access a wide range of events. The recent visit to a Mosque and the University for part of Islam Awareness week impacted strongly on learners, they greatly appreciated being able to talk to people about their beliefs and traditions. Children are enthusiastic about the subject often sharing their learning with their families. One child stated "I especially look forward to RE." Another said "We do loads of activities." A number of excellent displays including ones from Godly Play enable children to express their thoughts and feelings through a range of mediums. The school benefits from the expertise of the highly committed RE Coordinator who works across seven schools.

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

The school places a high emphasis on care for the individual and aims to work closely with all stakeholders developing the vision of confident children able to live their lives in the light of Christian teaching. Leadership and management have a clear vision of where they need to develop as a Church school based on a good understanding of the community and their place within it. Potential leaders for the future are identified and supported. The head-teacher and staff work well together and are very caring of the children, each other and adults associated with the school. They effectively model Christian values. The Governing Body is active and interested in the life of the school. The school council is proud to represent their peers and are confident that their opinions are listened to; they are particularly proud of the outdoor play areas and the Buddy system which they have been very involved in.