



Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools
Under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

DIOCESE OF LEICESTER

LEICESTERSHIRE EDUCATION AUTHORITY

Thurlaston Church of England Primary School
Desford Road
Thurlaston
Leicestershire
LE9 7TE

Inspection Dates: 11th June 2010

Section 48 Inspector: Paul Stone



SIAS Report Form

Name and address of school:	Thurlaston Church of England Primary School Desford Road, Thurlaston, Leicestershire LE9 7TE
Type of school	Primary
Status:	Aided
Diocese:	Leicester
LA:	Leicestershire
Dates of inspection:	11 th June 2010
Date of last inspection:	26 th and 27 th September 2006
School's Unique Ref. No:	120201
Name of Head teacher;	Gavin Beetham
Inspector's name (with N.S. No):	Paul Stone
Context	
<p>The school is a small village primary school organised into four teaching groups. The overall figures of children with SEN are below the national average and attainment between cohorts varies. Most children are from a white British background. The school and parish are without an incumbent but the chair of governors is involved closely with a Christian Church.</p>	
Summary Judgment	
The distinctiveness and effectiveness of this school as a Church of England school is satisfactory.	
<p>Thurlaston Church of England Primary School has many effective features. Christian values and beliefs permeate everything that takes place. The relationship between staff and children and children and their peers is outstanding. The school has created an excellent local community that provides effective mutual support. There is an atmosphere of welcome, trust, care and belonging that encourages and allows children to progress in their learning.</p>	
Established strengths	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Effectiveness in promoting pupils spiritual, moral, and social development• The strong partnership with all local church communities evidences the Christian ethos embedded into all areas of school life• Well behaved, confident, articulate pupils who enjoy being at school.• Relationships between children and adults as well as staff with parents provide a real support for each other.	
Focus for development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop the use and range of robust self evaluation systems of RE and the school Christian ethos to support further improvements of the school's character.• Develop children's understanding of a wider community both nationally and internationally and how a Christian ethos can support partnerships.• Utilise existing spaces within the school environment to create a peace garden and reflective areas.	

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

Children are confident and happy with their school because their teachers are “very supportive, if we have a problem they help us”. Children particularly enjoy the lessons teachers deliver and the wide range of things they learn. The learning environment is welcoming and the children say it’s a friendly place. There are opportunities to develop some spiritual areas to encourage children to be reflective. Children feel that they are enabled to contribute to decision-making in the school through the school council. They also speak highly of their confidence in peer mediation, which they feel is effective in resolving issues. The Christian values in the school, based on the ‘values for life’, are clearly evident in relationships. Adults and learners treat each other with mutual respect and this care is acknowledged by parents. One mother described the genuine support she received from all staff including the headteacher. Parents feel very much supported and included by the school and feel they would like to be more involved through opportunities to celebrate together as well as hearing more about the good work the school does. Learners know and understand the significance of the school’s Christian character and can articulate what this means to them and others. There is an emphasis on prayer which is seen across the school, in both Key Stage 1 and 2 classrooms, where learners have written prayers for use before lunch and at the end of the day. Learners are very proud of these and can explain how they use them as a support. Parents also appreciate how the children’s use of prayer in school is used at home; highlighting the high level of impact the use of prayer has for children. Parents celebrate the church school status and the school now needs to celebrate this more overtly through the use of Christian symbols and celebration of the good work they do.

The impact of collective worship on the school is good.

Collective worship occupies a place of central importance in the daily life of the school and makes a significant contribution to children’s spiritual development. Children describe it as a time when ‘we can thank God and to remember other people’. They learn about Bible stories, religious traditions, and Christian values using the diocesan themes. Children feel teachers work hard to make collective worship interesting and useful. There is a planned service in the parish church once a term, led by the headteacher, strengthening the church/parish partnership. Collective worship is regularly led by Christian visitors from the locality. The act of worship observed on the day of the inspection was well prepared with very good visual aids and with opportunities for children to be actively involved. Children of all ages came into the hall respectfully, knowing that this was a special time in the school day. They use the time of quiet reflection sensibly to think about the meaning of the Bible story to which they had listened intently. Worship is based on Christian values and these continue to be promoted throughout the school each week, giving pupils time to consider what the chosen value actually means in their everyday lives. Parents appreciate invitations to celebrations for Harvest, Christmas and Easter which are held in church. Worship is evaluated by pupils; the school needs to develop this further as part of the self evaluation process using this to develop the impact of collective worship. The altar table used in the hall and the reflective display encourage children to reflect on the key messages for the week.

The effectiveness of religious education is satisfactory

RE is given a significant importance in the school curriculum. The school has developed a form of assessment for RE at the end of each unit of work and this is used to judge the standards of each class. Teachers plan their lessons carefully but too little opportunities are made available for children to reflect about the learning intentions. The lesson observed showed that RE is well taught. When reviewing the quality of children’s work it showed that there are inconsistencies between classes. The marking and feedback of children’s work can be superficial for some children. Children make expected progress on the whole, reaching standards that are in line with expectations. Pupils have a good knowledge of bible stories and some Anglican traditions. Pupils say that they enjoy RE and they are able to learn about Jesus, “learning about the bible helps us lead our lives”. They learn about other religions and links between Christianity and other areas. There are opportunities to make this more overt for children and families. The well used resources make a significant contribution in helping children learn more about religions.” RE is well led by an experienced, knowledgeable and respected subject leader who is bringing about steady improvement. She has been well supported by diocesan officers.

The leadership and management of the school, as a church school is satisfactory.

The clear Christian vision is fully understood by the whole school community. This was developed with all stakeholders and has created a cohesive community where the school's Christian ethos is highly valued. An effective process of self evaluation is under development and this needs to become more regular and rigorous in approach. This will support the school to develop more effectively and ensure all stakeholders are involved in the development of its Christian ethos. Parents believe that the school's Christian values influence the way their children behave. They appreciate that the school is a very caring and welcoming place and that support for their needs as well as those of their children is given a prominent role. The partnership between the church, school and local community is very strong. Although the school is without a parish priest they continue to work very effectively together with the Headteacher leading celebration worship in the church. There is a strong link with the other Christian denomination in the village and the school makes good use of these partnerships. The governors and staff ensure that the school is at the heart of the village. Foundation governors work with the school to self evaluate collective worship and RE but this need to be a more regular occurrence. The school is now beginning to develop wider links both nationally and internationally. This will be an important part of the children's development and understanding of wider communities.