

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### **Ravensworth Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School**

Ravensworth  
Richmond  
North Yorkshire  
DL11 7ET

#### **Diocese: Ripon and Leeds**

Local authority: North Yorkshire  
Dates of inspection: 24<sup>th</sup> May 2010  
Date of last inspection: 27<sup>th</sup> March 2007  
School's unique reference number: 121511  
Headteacher: Mrs Hilary Alcock  
Inspector's name and number: Mrs Lynne Gillions 662

#### **School context**

Ravensworth Church of England School is in a rural setting and serves the local villages. It has recently experienced falling rolls and now has 68 pupils. The number of pupils with special educational needs and those receiving free school meals are below the national average. All pupils are white British. The headteacher was appointed in September 2007.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Ravensworth as a Church of England school are satisfactory**

Ravensworth School has a culture of caring for the pupils within a family atmosphere and this view is shared by all stakeholders. The ethos of the school is underpinned by Christian values which permeate all aspects of school life. Everyone speaks of the good support received from the church which enhances the school ethos. The school still has no established procedures for evaluating its effectiveness as a church school though other development areas from the last inspection have been addressed.

#### **Established strengths**

- A caring, family atmosphere underpinned by Christian values and rooted in the local community
- Links with specific, committed people from the local church
- Children's individual needs are known throughout the whole school community

#### **Focus for development**

- Put in place a robust system of monitoring and evaluating its effectiveness as a church school which takes into account the views of all stakeholders and which feeds into the school development cycle in order to secure improvement as a church school.
- Establish positive links with the wider community and promote cultural development
- Involve pupils more in planning, participating in and evaluating collective worship.

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

There is a shared vision throughout the whole school community based on Christian values which are articulated by all stakeholders and in the School Prospectus. Children are happy and well cared for and this is supported by the views of parents. The family atmosphere is cited as a strength of the school by all stakeholders. Children speak of their security, the lack of bullying, their capacity to sort out their own problems and their awareness that staff are always there to help them when needed. Children are treated as individuals, 'We know them and we notice them'. This means that anyone who needs support, whether it be in the school or in the playground, will be noticed and attended to promptly. A Suggestion Box and a Worry Box act as a means of communication and the Pupil Council take their role seriously. Their suggestions, such as improvements at lunch time, have been acted upon. There is a spirit of

generosity in the school and pupils have helped raise funds or resources for a range of charities including toothbrushes for Peru, books for Tanzania, money for Haiti and also for bird feeders in the school grounds. There are also links with a school in India where booklets have been exchanged and funds have been raised for toys. Initial contact has been made with a school in Brixton in order to help develop the children's understanding of other British cultures. Behaviour in school is generally good and leaders speak of the importance of forgiveness and restoration as significant elements of their approach when managing inappropriate behaviour. There are good links with the church and all stakeholders speak of the support given by key individuals who help enrich the Christian ethos and offer pastoral support to the whole school community. Bibles are presented to pupils when they leave the school. The school environment makes a significant contribution to the spiritual development of learners. There is evidence of Christian signs and symbols, particularly in the shared areas. Each classroom also has a cross and a series of prayers which are used daily. Children enjoy choosing and reading the prayer for the day. The school has some understanding of its development needs but would benefit from a formal system of monitoring and evaluation which would accurately identify strengths and areas for improvement as a church school. Leaders recognise this and have the capacity to put in place appropriate measures.

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

There is a daily act of worship which is led by staff and visitors. The vicar regularly leads the Friday worship and this is appreciated by all stakeholders. Other members of the church also sometimes lead worship and make a significant contribution to the spiritual growth of the school community. Planning for collective worship is done by the headteacher and is largely based around SEAL (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning) materials linked to Bible stories. Although this offers a set structure, it also restricts other creative ideas being used such as holding an outdoor act of worship in the beautiful surroundings. It would be helpful to involve more people in the planning process so that the responsibility is shared. In an act of worship where the theme was 'Taking Advice' one child was pleased to be asked to help at the front and some children were responsible for the music. As part of the prayers, the children recited the School Creed which is displayed on the special table in the hall. It would be beneficial to involve children more in planning, participating and evaluating collective worship. Families support a special Easter service where children walk up to the church and also a Christingle service and children do take bigger roles in these celebrations. However, opportunities for classes and groups of children to lead worship are under-developed. Worship is seen as an important part of school life and prayers are said in classrooms at different points in the school day. Although there is some informal discussion amongst staff and governors there is no systematic evaluation of the quality and impact of collective worship.

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

Leaders in the school have a shared vision based on Christian values and they are keen to promote 'a sense of belonging' and give the pupils 'foundations for life'. These values influence most aspects of school life. Governors know the school well and are both supportive and challenging. A system of monitoring visits is in place but this does not include monitoring the effectiveness of the school as a church school. Similarly, leaders have some understanding of the school's development needs but would benefit from further training in moving the school forward as a church school. The headteacher is keen to foster the Christian ethos of the school and promote a culture of love and forgiveness and this is reflected throughout the school where children speak of good relationships between all age groups. Parents too are very supportive of the school and happy with the experience that their children receive. There is beneficial support between the school and partners in the local church particularly when preparing for the Easter and Christmas celebrations. There is some contact with other Christian communities and those of other faiths though these could be more developed. There is a commitment from leaders to bring about further improvement and a recognition that more rigorous monitoring and evaluation will give them a clearer picture of strengths and priorities for action.