

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Shocklach Oviatt Voluntary Controlled Church of England Primary School

Shocklach
Malpas
SY14 7BN

Diocese: Chester

Local authority: Cheshire West and Chester

Dates of inspection: 22nd May 2014

Date of last inspection: 11th June 2009

School's unique reference number: 111283

Headteacher: Jane Hopkins

Inspector's name and number: Christine J Buckley 525

School context

Shocklach Oviatt is a much smaller than average primary school with 47 pupils, all white British, taught in three classes. There have been four headteachers in the last five years. The present headteacher was seconded to work in the school on a part-time basis in 2012 and has been full time headteacher for just over a year.

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

- Collective worship is central to the life of the school and enables all members of the school community to worship together.
- Religious Education (RE) supports the Christian ethos and spiritual development of the children.
- Strong links between the local church and the school are beneficial for the whole community.

Areas to improve

- To continue to raise standards so that every child is making at least good progress.
- More explicit application of Christian teaching to everyday life, across the whole curriculum, so that children can more readily make the links.
- To implement a strategic and regular form of church school self-evaluation.

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

The attainment of the academic performance of children is a significant priority for this Christian school. During the past year the school has put systems and support in place to

accelerate the progress of all learners. This has resulted in some year groups making accelerated progress and others, good progress. A recent questionnaire completed by parents commented that the teaching in the school had greatly improved over the past year. The Christian ethos supports this raising of standards by treating each individual as special and created in God's image. The new mission statement, drawn up by involvement from all stakeholders, refers to God's creation and each person in the school community a part of it and the new song developed from the mission statement encourages the children to be 'the best that they can be'. Christian values are a firm foundation for relationships and activities in the school though the connection between Christian teaching and the application to their lives is not always clearly understood. Relationships in the school between all members are respectful, supportive and caring. One parent spoke of the concern shown to her children and family after a family bereavement. Children demonstrate their care and concern for others through a variety of fund raising initiatives which include money raised for guide dogs and a welly walk that raised money for Farm Africa. A Year 5 child explained that they followed the example of Jesus in helping others. In a similar way the children care for their environment as stewards of God's world and the school held a coffee morning to support Fairtrade fortnight. The school's Christian character, environment and RE support the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Spiritual development is aided by areas of reflection. These were introduced since the last inspection to enable the children to articulate their faith and are used effectively, especially by the older children. In one classroom the children write their own prayers and hang them on a prayer tree and a display in their classroom invites them to write a Christian value that is important to them. Visitors to the school inform the children about global issues and through assemblies, the work of Christian Aid and other organisations are made known. RE is taught well so that the children are excited and engaged with their learning. The children said that they love the creativity, freedom to express themselves, and question, as well as being challenged by the teaching. They said that learning, about other faiths, helps them to respect and understand others who may have a different faith.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship is central to the life of the school and has a positive impact upon the behaviour and spirituality of the children. Collective worship had been a constant throughout recent difficulties. The children are engaged throughout worship and sing enthusiastically; contribute to questions asked about the content and reflect upon their own lives during the quiet time given. Children spoke about worship helping them to prepare for the day ahead and of asking God to help them. They spoke of living out the Christian values and of helping others in school, the local community and the wider world. Children related the need to have good relationships and forgive others, to their understanding gained during worship times. Collective worship is distinctively Christian focused on the person of Jesus and through worship children are developing an understanding of the Trinity. They demonstrated good biblical knowledge which was confirmed when talking to parents and grandparents. A call to worship and closing prayers are used so that the children have some experience of Anglican liturgy. Children are invited to share in corporate prayers or lead in spontaneous prayers and they talked of how this helps them to know how to pray in the future. Some children spoke of praying at home especially at bedtime even though their families may not pray. Some of the set prayers used during the day at school including the Lord's prayer are used by children at other times. In each classroom there are opportunities for the children to write their own prayers and in the Key Stage 2 classroom, the children may choose to use one of these at the end of the day. The older children also have a different prayer leader each week who leads prayer at the end of the day and together with a younger child, evaluate the collective worship. Collective worship is well planned and delivered and some evaluation takes place. There is now a theme for each week which is communicated to parents and this was welcomed by them as they knew what was happening in school worship and could complement this at home. Children know and experience the major Christian festivals, some of which are celebrated in the local church. This worship is supported by parents who often decorate the church as well

as attending the worship and finding spiritual strength from their involvement. Children have some involvement in planning parts of worship and they are keen to have more opportunities.

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

Shocklach Oviatt is known as a church school and all the parents, in a recent questionnaire, say that the school leadership actively promotes the school as a church school. The recently appointed headteacher has taken prompt action to improve the school and has gained the confidence of all stakeholders. This has enabled her to work with the staff, governors and parents in the improvement of the school. All stakeholders have recently worked together to formulate a new Godly mission statement. This gives ownership of the mission statement to the children, parents, staff and school leaders. However, the statement does not refer to the distinctively Christian foundation and the link between the life and teaching of Jesus to the Christian values is not made explicit. Responsibility and accountability for standards have been taken by the governors who regularly discuss progress and attainment with the staff and have been involved in action planning that has resulted in some accelerated progress. One of the governor's sub-groups is 'Community, Well-being and Communications' and parents think that since the head teacher's appointment communication re academic achievement has improved and that there is a greater Christian distinctiveness. The church and school have good links and work with the local community to enhance the life for all. Through this the children and community have a positive view of the Christian church. One example is the service for Rogation, which was held in a field at the side of the school, for the blessing of the animals and the time of the service was arranged so that it would not coincide with other village events. The vicar is in school often and leads worship, works with the children and has sessions on 'well-being' for the staff. RE and Collective Worship are priorities in the school led by the headteacher and supported by a Key Stage 2 member of staff. The leaders of the school are determined to continue to improve the school. Governors and staff have undertaken professional development from the diocese, and local authority. Some self-evaluation of the school as a church school is undertaken, to which parents are invited, but it is neither systematic nor regular. Parents are very supportive of the headteacher, governors and vicar as leaders of the school.

SIAMS report May 2014 Shocklach Oviatt C of E Primary School SY14 7BN