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| Name and address of school Crawfords CEVC Green Lane Haughley Stowmarket Suffolk IP14 3QZ Type of school First Status Voluntary Controlled Diocese St Edmundsbury & Ipswich LA Suffolk | Date of inspection 4 February 2008 Date of last inspection June 2003 School's unique reference number 124733 Name of Headteacher Clare Farrant Name of Inspector Simon Windmill NS number 182 |
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Context

Crawfords is a smaller than average school. It has well established links with the local parish church. Almost all the pupils are from white British backgrounds, and the number of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is below average. There have been a lot of staff changes over the last 18 months, including a new Headteacher, and most of the teachers are temporary. Classes have been re-arranged this term. The school may become a primary school under the local authority's reorganisation scheme.

Summary Judgement

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

The school's Christian ethos is evident within the school. It is shown in the caring and supportive relationships between pupils and staff. Pupils' personal development and behaviour are good, and they enjoy learning within a stimulating and safe atmosphere.

Established strengths

- The Christian ethos and atmosphere of care and support, which makes pupils feel valued, special and safe within the excellent relationships throughout the school
- The links with the local church and level of pastoral care provided
- The visual impact of symbols and displays of work, reflecting the school's Christian ethos

Focus for development

- Review the system for recording, monitoring and evaluation of Collective Worship
- Revise the school's statement of aims
- Make more opportunities for pupils to be play a bigger part in Collective Worship

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

Care and support for pupils and staff is very good. Pupils of all abilities are able to flourish in their learning and personal development. The school's Christian ethos is also good, being soundly based on Christian values, which have a very positive influence on the life of the school. For example, one of the Foundation governors described the school as 'a place of prayer'.

Relationships within the school are very good, and are seen in the school's warm, welcoming, inclusive and friendly atmosphere. Pupils say they enjoy school and feel safe and secure. They enjoy the praise they get for their achievements, and enjoy celebrating this with each other.

Pupils learn from the good role models of staff and other adults, who help them to develop self-confidence and independence. Behaviour is good. Pupils have a say in making the rules, so they understand and respect them, and know the consequences if rules are broken.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They have a clear understanding of right and wrong, and a strong awareness and concern for the needs of others. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development policy has just been reviewed and is being implemented. The 'Church Link' drama club is very popular with pupils, and also contributes to their spiritual and moral development. The school plans to further increase opportunities for spiritual growth by creating a quiet area for reflection in the playground.

The School Council gives pupils a say in running the school, which they value highly. They are encouraged to develop healthy lifestyles through diet and exercise, and the school is working towards the Healthy Schools programme award. Pupils are also very aware of the need to look after the environment, for example by recycling as much as possible.

The Christian identity of the school is evident in many ways, the most striking being a wonderful plaque made from clay tiles by pupils, depicting Noah's Ark. The School Prayer is displayed in the entrance hall, and the Lord's Prayer and a cross are displayed in the hall.

The school has identified a need to revise its Statement of Aims, with a view to making the school's Christian values more overt. Multicultural education is an important part of the curriculum – pupils enjoyed a recent African drumming project – and the school plans to increase pupils' opportunities to learn about and understand other cultures.

The impact of Collective Worship on the school community is good.

Daily Collective Worship is good. All pupils attend, and worship has a very positive impact on school life, reflected in the good relationships within the school. It is soundly based on the Christian gospel, and always includes singing, teaching, and time for prayer and reflection. Staff lead most acts of worship, along with the local vicar. All staff attend Collective Worship.

Collective Worship is well planned, with a theme for each week reflecting the Church year. Visual signs such as a candle mark Collective Worship as a special part of the school day. The church is used for the main Christian festivals such as Palm Sunday, Easter, Harvest and Christmas, with a service at the end of the school year for pupils who are leaving the school. Once a month the parents and the wider community are welcomed to Collective Worship in the church, and refreshments are provided afterwards.

Pupils enjoy worship, especially when they have a part to play in it. They value the opportunities for quiet reflection, and can relate what they experience in worship to their everyday life in school and at home. They can talk about stories from the Bible, and relate them to their own lives - for example the parable of the Good Samaritan. They enjoy contributing to worship, and say they would like even more opportunities to take part in different ways, for example by acting out stories, playing music, or helping to plan or lead worship.

Pupils have a very good understanding of the range of purposes and styles of prayer, such as praise, giving thanks, saying sorry, and asking for help, forgiveness and healing. They would like even more opportunities to write their own prayers to use during Collective Worship. They know the Lord's Prayer, which is sometimes said during worship, and grace is said at lunchtime, often led by pupils.

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

The Vicar and Foundation governors give very good support to the school. Foundation governors meet regularly with the Headteacher to discuss matters relating the school's Church school status. Staff and governors make good use of training opportunities provided by the Diocese, for example in implementing the new RE curriculum.

The Headteacher is seen by staff and governors as a very effective leader of the school community, and staff feel valued and well cared for by her. The school's performance management process contributes to this, along with the school's well-being programme.

Parents speak very highly of the family atmosphere generated through the school's caring relationships, and are very happy with their school. They feel well informed about the school's activities. The views of parents, staff and pupils are sought through surveys and the School Council, almost all of which are very positive.

The school is held in high regard by its wider community, and links between them are good. The Church Link drama club enhances these connections by taking part in such events as the Christingle service, Christmas concerts for the community, and fund-raising for charities such as Farm Africa, Red Nose Day and Unicef. The school plans to improve its contribution to the parish magazine by providing clearer information about the life of the school.

The school has identified a need to review the recording, monitoring and evaluating Collective Worship in order to monitor and enhance the impact of worship on pupils.

Issues identified in the previous inspection have been addressed effectively, and the school's self evaluation is accurate, providing a secure base for future development.