



## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### **Crowlees Church of England (VC) Junior and Infant School**

Springfield Park  
Parker Lane  
Mirfield  
WF14 9PD

#### **Diocese of Wakefield**

Local authority: Kirklees MDC  
Date of inspection: 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2007  
Date of last inspection: November 2002  
School's unique reference number: 107725  
Head teacher: Mr David Hardcastle  
Inspector's name and number: Mr R D Masterton 483

#### **School context**

Crowlees Church of England Junior and Infant school is a larger than average primary school with approximately 420 children. It serves the mixed community in the West Yorkshire town of Mirfield. About 11% of the children are from ethnic minorities. The school is located about half a mile from the large parish church of St Mary's. The school parish will shortly merge with two others..

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Crowlees Junior and Infant School as a Church of England school are outstanding**

Crowlees CE Junior and Infant School offers an excellent standard of education. Children not only leave with high levels of achievement, they are caring, concerned and responsible members of their community and have been inspired by the Christian teaching and ethos of their school. Their attitude and commitment forms an important self-sustaining example for younger members of the school community.

#### **Established strengths**

- The outstanding work of the head teacher and the way that very high standards in leadership and management at every level underpin the Christian ethos and work of the school.
- The use of review and self evaluation throughout the school as a means to improve provision.
- The importance of collective worship in the daily work and purpose of the school

#### **Focus for development**

- Develop the learning opportunities afforded by the forthcoming changes to the parish structure in the districts served by the school.

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

The school aims at Crowlees are 'for children to feel safe, secure and happy within a caring ethos and climate of mutual trust, ... to be treated as individuals, to be challenged and encouraged ... and to have no fear of failure'. In all these areas the school succeeds. Children are valued and they feel valued. Their personal and intellectual development are of an exceptionally high standard and children grow into caring thoughtful individuals whose own qualities become a significant strength of the school. The way that children work and their relationships towards one another form an environment that positively reinforces each individual's personal development. The relationships between all members of the school community inspire trust, learning, happiness and success. This quality experience for children is greatly valued by parents and the community. At school children greatly enjoy working in classrooms that are rich in stimulus for all areas of the curriculum including promotion of their spiritual awareness, their understanding of other faiths and cultures and their social and moral development. A very special feature of the school is the way that the grounds are used not simply for study in science but to give children a knowledge and affinity with nature and the world in which they live.

Children clearly enjoy coming to school and freely express this view. They especially value the time spent by staff to know them all as individuals and give support when it is needed. A Christian ethos of care permeates the way children think and grow and the way they are treated. They respond to the needs of others; their peers and to those in need beyond the school. Children learn to express their wishes for change through the School Council but go further, fully recognising their own responsibility to serve the community to which they belong. They know that this behaviour stems from the fact that they are responding to the special dimension of their learning in their church school.

**The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding**

Collective worship has the highest profile in the work of the school. The whole school worships together three times each week. It is a tribute to the excellent behaviour of children that this can be undertaken so successfully in the small space available. On the other days collective worship is organised separately for the two Key Stages of the school. The worship is carefully planned and the memorable contributions from visiting clergy are well integrated into children's experience. A wide range of resources are used. Children and staff all take part and contribute extensively. It is fully inclusive. The school has found ways to welcome children from families of all faiths to join in for almost every aspect of the school worship together. The local church is used as much as is feasible given its distance from the school but this does allow parents to join in more easily than is possible for school based events. On such special occasions the large church overflows. Children visit the church many other times during their career in school.

Children's response to collective worship is outstanding and this is shown by their behaviour, their reverence for what goes on and the inspiration that it gives them to help others – either in school or beyond – and is seen in their response to charities or taking part in events organised by the church. The planned worship gives children a very good awareness of the Anglican calendar and of the beliefs that Christians hold. Collective worship provides a stimulus for the whole school community and is the means by which everyone is invited to reflect on the Christian message and what it inspires. Children's response is also seen through the prayers that they write and their informed and thoughtful awareness of the needs of others less fortunate than themselves.

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

The head teacher of Crowlees School provides outstanding leadership. Over a period of years his inspirational interpretation of the Christian mission of the school matched by that of the foundation governors has become deeply ingrained into all aspects of school work. Leadership and

management at every level, is highly effective. Monitoring, critical self review and a continual striving to both maintain and improve standards underpins the way everyone works and this has cemented the Christian ethos and vision into the way the school is run. There is a strong bond between the work of the local church and the school with church activities in holiday and festival periods designed to complement the school programme of religious education and collective worship. The net result is that Crowlees is a school with great strength and resilience to cope with difficulties, to solve problems and to face up to change. Governors and school staff welcome, value and respect the views of all members of the community, particularly children and their parents. Letters to parents, questionnaires and the work of the School Council are all used to review the work of the school and to inform development. Crowlees school offers a model for the way that inspired leadership and management can secure consistent excellence at every level.

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