



## Judgement Recording Form (NSJRF)

*This form is to be attached to the main SIAS report and returned to the diocese in which the school is situated and to the National Society.*

Name of school: Blue Coat Church of England Primary School  
 Address of School: Symn Lane  
 Wotton-under-Edge, Gloucestershire, GL12 7BD  
 School URN: 115734  
 Date of inspection: July 7<sup>th</sup> 2009  
 NS Inspector's Number: 201  
 Type of Church school: VA  
 Number of pupils: 319  
 Phase of education: Primary

**Has Diocesan Quality Assurance been obtained for this report?** Yes

**Rating 1-4**

<b>How distinctive and effective is the school as a Church school?</b>	<b>1</b>
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How well does the school, through its distinctive Christian character, meet the needs of all learners?	<b>1</b>
What is the impact of collective worship on the school community?	<b>1</b>
How effective is the religious education?	<b>1</b>
How effective are the leadership and management of the school, as a church school?	<b>1</b>

The school meets the statutory requirement for collective acts of worship	<b>Yes</b>
The school meets the statutory requirement for religious education *	<b>Yes</b>

\* Voluntary Aided Schools

(delete appropriate word)



## *Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report*

<p><b>Blue Coat Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School</b> Symn Lane, Wotton-under-Edge, Gloucestershire, GL12 7BD <b>Diocese of Gloucester</b> LA: Gloucestershire <b>Date of inspection:</b> July 7th 2009 Date of last inspection: May 23rd 2006 School's URN: 115734</p> <p><b>Name of Headteacher:</b> Mrs Joanna Woolley Inspector: Mr Andrew Rickett, NS 201</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>School Context</b></p> <p>Blue Coat CE Primary School is larger than the average primary school with 319 children on roll. The majority of children are drawn from the local area and come from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds. The majority of children are of a white British heritage. The number of children with learning difficulties or disabilities is below the national average. The headteacher has been in post since May 2009.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Summary Judgement</b></p> <p>The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Blue Coat CE VA as a church school are outstanding. Its Christian ethos is a great strength and is clearly apparent in the way in which children and adults live out their lives together as part of the school community. An environment has been created in which all children feel valued and are encouraged to reach their potential.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Established strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The high profile of collective worship and religious education in the life of the school.</li><li>• The opportunities for children to reflect.</li><li>• The quality of relationships between all members of the school community.</li></ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Focus for development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify the core Christian values that underpin the school's ethos.</li><li>• Develop systems to monitor the impact of the core values on the learning and personal development of the children.</li><li>• Gather evidence to show the impact of the opportunities that children are given to develop their spiritual awareness.</li></ul>

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

One of the special qualities that makes Blue Coat Primary an outstanding church school is the emphasis given to the development of the children's spiritual awareness. There are excellent opportunities to do this both through collective worship and as a part of the whole curriculum particularly in religious education. In addition, the school makes very good use of the outside environment to encourage children to engage with the natural world. Relationships between all members of the school community are based on Christian values of love, trust and forgiveness. The school is therefore a community where children feel comfortable to express their views on belief and faith and know that their opinions will be listened to by others. This was demonstrated as children discussed the nature of God and the difference He can make to our lives. Children speak openly, knowing that their views will be treated with respect. One child said that, 'God gives things we really need like love and generosity'. Children feel both safe and secure in a school where bullying is not an issue. Attitudes towards learning are very good because children know that their work is valued and that adults will treat them fairly. The school's care for children is, furthermore, evident in the quality of teaching and learning and the strong curriculum which is both creative and challenging.

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

When asked what makes their school a church school, children responded "worshipping God". Collective worship is known as worship and children realize that this is different from assembly. These two examples show the way that collective worship holds a central place in the life of the school. Acts of worship are very special times at this school because the community comes together in fellowship to share the values that they have in common. Collective worship is outstanding because there is a clear focus on the school gathering together to worship, celebrate and learn. The impact of this is evident when talking to the children. They are very enthusiastic about worship and enjoy the many opportunities to be involved and the exciting way in which it is delivered. This was seen during the inspection when a 'Blue Coat has Talent' theme captured the children's attention but also had a very clear message that the children understood. Worship themes have been carefully chosen so that they appeal to the children and deliver a message which reaches the children at an appropriate level. Children were able to recall themes from some weeks ago and still explain how they are relevant to them today. Prayer and reflection are an important part of worship. Children have an excellent understanding of prayer and talk about how it can bring comfort or give strength to those in need. The school provides good opportunities to involve children in acts of worship. A worship group has been formed where children very effectively help to prepare and lead acts of worship. There is a good range of visitors who deliver collective worship and ensure that children experience a wide range of worship styles. Major Christian festivals are celebrated in the local parish church and this helps children to understand their importance in the Christian faith.

**The impact of the religious education is outstanding**

Standards in RE are excellent. Evidence from work seen during the inspection confirms that children make very good progress, attain levels which are comparable to other core subjects and well above national expectations, and their achievement is outstanding. The overall quality of teaching observed was also outstanding and

this was borne out in the monitoring of lessons carried out by the RE Coordinator. Teachers plan their lessons very thoroughly and ensure that there is a very good balance between the children's knowledge and in providing opportunities for them to explore what they have learnt. For example, in one lesson observed children were very animated when discussing reasons why God might be represented in various ways in the Bible. The teacher was able to take this opportunity to explore the children's ideas with them at a deeper level. It is this quality that makes RE outstanding. RE is not seen as just another academic subject; it lies at the heart of the curriculum and indeed is a crucial way through which the school expresses its Christian character. The children's knowledge and understanding is excellent and they are able to use this to support their arguments when expressing their views. The level of questioning used by the teachers challenges the children and they respond very well. This was seen in a lesson with younger children where, because the teacher made her expectations clear, children knew that they had to give more carefully considered reasons for their answers. The use of a wide range of exciting learning strategies makes lessons engaging for the children. They particularly enjoy learning through drama and art. Their attitudes towards RE are very positive as a result. Assessment of children's work is accurate and reliable because of the careful moderation of levels. Current assessment procedures are in line with foundation subjects and the RE Coordinator is already taking action to implement a system that will more closely follow core subjects.

#### **The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school are outstanding**

Although the headteacher has only been at the school for a few weeks, she has a very clear understanding of the way that the school's ethos ties in with its Christian character. She shares the school's joint commitment to reflect continually on how this can be taken further forward and has already identified areas for development. Because she has the full support and commitment of staff and governors, the school has an excellent capacity to continue to develop its Christian character. The RE Coordinator is a key member of staff in this process. She is exemplary in her role both as RE subject leader and Worship Coordinator. In particular, her understanding of the place of RE and worship as being at the very heart of school life means that they are not separate from the Christian ethos but an integral expression of it. The leaders and managers have identified how this can be strengthened even further by identifying a set of core Christian values through which the school lives its ethos. Governors are fully involved in this process and have the commitment and passion to ensure that they are an integral part of this development. In particular they are keen to establish an ethos group that will oversee these developments. Links with the local church communities are strong. There is a committed team who regularly deliver 'Open the Book' acts of worship which are enjoyed by the children. The vicar is a familiar figure in the life of the school and is keen to explore ways in which the church and school communities can continue to grow in fellowship. As well as their support for charitable work overseas, the school's involvement with the local community and their links with a school in a culturally diverse community in the UK, mean that children have an excellent understanding of other cultures. Parents speak very highly of the school and regard it as a place where their own values are reinforced. They appreciate that the school staff and governors have the welfare of their children as their first priority at all times.