



## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

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

High Street  
Babraham  
Cambridge  
CB22 3AG

#### **Diocese: Ely**

Local authority: Cambridgeshire  
Date of inspection: 20 March 2009  
Date of last inspection: May 2006  
School's unique reference number: 110780  
Headteacher: Suzanne Berry  
Inspector's name and number: Simon Windmill 182

#### **School context**

Babraham is much smaller than average primary school, but the number on roll is rising. Most pupils come from the surrounding areas of Sawston, Haverhill and Cambridge and are from White British backgrounds, although the school often has pupils of other backgrounds because their parents are seconded to nearby research institutions. The number of pupils with disabilities or learning difficulties is about average. The school has a number of awards, such as Healthy Schools and International Schools status.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Babraham as a Church of England school are good**

The school's Christian ethos and values are embedded in school life and have a strong positive influence on pupils' values and attitudes. As a result, supportive and caring relationships give the school a family atmosphere which is evident to all. Collective worship lies at the centre of the school's life and work.

#### **Established strengths**

- The Christian values, which are evident throughout the school
- The family atmosphere, in which all pupils and adults are known, valued and supported
- The high quality of collective worship

#### **Focus for development**

- Induct the incoming vicar and seek his input into further developing pupils' spiritual growth
- Continue to develop the governors' roles in evaluating the impact of collective worship on pupils
- Develop areas for quiet reflection in the school grounds

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

The headteacher, staff and governors see the school's Christian ethos as vital to school life. Care and support for pupils and staff is outstanding, and demonstrates Christian values. This is seen in the welcoming, inclusive and friendly family atmosphere, where pupils feel valued and safe.

Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. This is because they have a say in what the rules should be, through class discussions and an effective School Council, so they know and obey them, and say they are fair. As a result, pupils get on very well with each other, and with the staff, who provide excellent role models.

Pupils know that they can approach staff with any problems they have, and that the staff will help them. These relationships greatly support pupils in developing self-confidence and independence. They say they like school, and enjoy their lessons – one said, "I can't wait to get to school every morning!"

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. They have a clear understanding of right and wrong. A new vicar has been appointed, so pupils and staff are looking forward to his arrival. The Bishop's Visitor and a church warden both expect him to help develop pupils' spiritual awareness and growth, in accordance with the school's development plan which also includes providing areas for quiet reflection in the playground.

Pupils' awareness and concern for the needs of others is encouraged, and they willingly help to raise money for a number of charities, such as the Shoebox appeal, Christian Aid and Children in Need.

**The impact of collective worship is good**

The head, staff, governors and pupils see collective worship as a vital and central part of school life, and it is soundly based on Christian values. Pupils say they enjoy worship, because they learn about Christianity, how to tell right from wrong, and how to behave well.

Pupils value their opportunities to take part in collective worship, by singing, acting, operating the overhead projector, and setting up the 'focus' table with a cross, candle and flowers to mark worship as an important part of the day.

They have a very good understanding of the purposes of prayer, such as saying thank you, saying sorry, asking for help, and seeking healing or forgiveness. They enjoy sharing their own prayers during worship, and would welcome even more opportunities to do so. Prayers are said in the hall at lunchtime and at the end of the day.

Worship is very well planned around themes that reflect the main festivals of the Church year, such as Christmas, Easter and Harvest, and some special services are held in the church. The staff, visiting clergy and other ministers all contribute by leading worship. Pupils also say they greatly enjoy collective worship led by GenR8, a lively contemporary Christian group which visit schools periodically.

The school records and monitors collective worship, and has begun to evaluate its impact on pupils. The school is aware of a need to involve governors more this.

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

The headteacher gives outstanding leadership to the school, and is well supported by the staff and governors. She has a clear vision for the school that reflects Christian values such as inclusivity and nurture, which has a significant and positive impact on the school.

Staff and governors make great contributions to the life of the school, and have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. As a result, pupils feel that they are highly valued and special, and this contributes to their self-esteem and well being.

The staff feel valued and involved in the school's development. They work exceptionally well together as a team, and provide mutual support for each other. This contributes greatly to the happy and supportive atmosphere of the school. Relationships with parents are very good – they highly appreciate the level of support and care their children receive. One parent said, "The school has always been very supportive, encouraging my children in every way."

Links with the local church and community are good. For example, the PCC will fund a trip for pupils to a school's event in Ely Cathedral in the Autumn term. Parents give great support to the school and are appreciative of its links with the church. Pupils' work is sometimes displayed in the church, which is also used as a resource for religious education, such as learning about baptism and other Christian sacraments, with clergy support.

Recommendations from the previous inspection were: to involve all stakeholders in monitoring and evaluating the school's Christian foundation, and to differentiate between collective worship and assemblies. These have been implemented.

The school's self evaluation accurately provides a sound basis for future developments.