



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Cherry Hinton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Infant School

High Street
Cherry Hinton
Cambridge
CB1 9HH

Diocese: Ely

Local authority: Cambridgeshire
Date of inspection: 13 January 2011
Date of last inspection: March 2008
School's unique reference number: 110801
Headteacher: Alison Beardon
Inspector's name and number: Simon Windmill 182

School context

This average sized infant school is enlarging into an all-through primary school. It has excellent links with the nearby churches and its wider community. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is just below average, of pupils from minority ethnic groups is higher than most schools, and of pupils with English as an additional language is just over twice the norm.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Cherry Hinton as a Church of England school are outstanding

This school is firmly rooted in its Christian ethos. Its life and work is based on the teachings of the gospel. This provides a strong positive influence on pupils' values and attitudes, and as a result, caring relationships enable a happy family atmosphere to flourish. Collective worship and prayer are central to the school's success, and permeate throughout the school and its community.

Established strengths

- The quality and impact of collective worship and of the school's Christian ethos on pupils
- Pupils' excellent behaviour
- The reciprocal involvement between the school and its wider community

Focus for development

The school is expanding into a Primary school, so all developments are linked with these coming changes:

- Developing the school's overall vision
- Planning for forthcoming changes
- Building the new, wider curriculum

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

The head is an inspirational teacher, whose leadership is outstanding. She is instrumental in maintaining the school's Christian ethos, in which the school is firmly rooted and which permeates throughout the school. Relationships between staff, pupils and governors are outstanding. The school caters for a wide range of ethnicities – about twice the national average – but all pupils are given the opportunities they need to thrive. Pupils greatly enjoy all aspects school life, and say they feel valued and safe.

Behaviour is excellent. It is maintained through an effective behaviour policy, and pupils know how to regulate their own behaviour. They know and respect the rules, but they very rarely need to be enforced. Pupils with learning or emotional difficulties are exceptionally well supported by the staff.

The curriculum is very broad, well balanced, and exceptionally well taught, so pupils have excellent learning opportunities. They are able to explore the links between subjects, to reflect on the school's Christian values, and also to explore how these impact positively on all pupils. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is exceptional for the pupils' ages.

Pupils use the phrase "People we are thankful for" to encourage gratitude for acts of kindness. As a result, pupils demonstrate a great deal of empathy with those less fortunate than themselves, for example in their generosity in supporting fundraising for the victims of the Haiti earthquake.

Many staff and all Foundation governors are regular communicant members of the church, which helps to sustain the school's Christian ethos.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Worship is exceptionally well planned and delivered. The Christian gospel is central, and is presented to pupils in exciting and stimulating ways. Pupils enjoy collective worship, seeing it as a vital part of the day. They eagerly take part in worship, and records of previous worship show that it is of a consistently high quality, and is very effective in instilling Christian values. SEAL materials have been recently introduced to further enhance worship.

The school's key Christian values are Christian love, forgiveness and reconciliation, generosity and thankfulness, equality and inclusiveness, and courage. These are amply demonstrated in all aspects of the school's work.

Pupils readily write or say their own prayers, and have an awareness of a very wide range of purposes and styles of prayer for their age. They have many opportunities to take part in planning and leading worship, and would welcome even more.

All staff contribute to leading worship, and the high proportion of Christian staff and governors with support from members of the wider community makes for very strong links with the three local churches - Anglican, Baptist and Presbyterian. Pupils are encouraged to take time for quiet reflection, not only in collective worship, but also in other lessons. The church is used for the main Christian festivals.

Pupils are taught some of the traditional Anglican greetings, which they enjoy. This also enhances the links between church and school. They are learning the Lord's prayer, and are beginning to understand its importance and significance.

The impact of collective worship is recorded, monitored and evaluated, and pupils' enthusiasm for it indicates its very positive impact on pupils.

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

The headteacher and staff are fully committed to sustaining the school's Christian foundation. Under the outstanding leadership of the headteacher and governors, the school sustains and develops its distinctive Christian character very effectively. The vicar and chair of governors are also very supportive of the school.

The school's Christian vision is regularly reviewed by the head, senior leadership team and governors, and is monitored and promoted throughout the school. Parents are made aware of the school's Christian foundation, and great care is taken to ensure that all pupils are treated fairly and sensitively, regardless of their backgrounds and circumstances.

The headteacher and the local vicar have worked tirelessly and collaboratively over a long period of time to strengthen the links between school and church. This continues to maintain an effective and productive partnership. It also spills over into excellent relationships with the wider community. The vicar also provides pastoral care and support for the school and its community.

The school's strong Christian ethos is central to the life of the school. Its Christian aims and vision are agreed, understood and shared by staff and governors. Pupils, too, are aware of the school's values, and enjoy the caring, happy and safe environment in which they learn.

Fostering pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is vital to the school. Staff and governors monitor and evaluate the impact of this on pupils.