



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Fordham Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Isleham Road
Fordham
Ely
CB7 5NL

Diocese: Ely

Local authority: Cambridgeshire

Date of inspection: 17 May 2010

Date of last inspection: 31 January 2007

School's unique reference number: 110788

Headteacher: Mr Kevin Bullock

Inspector's name and number: Mrs Betty Barratt 203

School context

Fordham Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School is similar in size to most primary schools. The school serves the village of Fordham and other nearby villages. The very large majority of learners are from families of White British heritage, and the percentage with learning difficulties is below average. The school is close to the parish church.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Fordham Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding

The school's intrinsic Christian ethos inspires excellent relationships, positive values and attitudes to teaching and learning. Learners are well cared for in a happy, relaxed and secure environment which nurtures self-esteem and respect for others. Behaviour is outstanding. The staff are excellent role models. They are dedicated to promoting learners' well-being, and promoting the character of the school as a Church of England school.

Established strengths

- The deep commitment of the headteacher, staff and governors to promoting the distinctive Christian ethos of the school.
- Learners are happy, confident and eager to be involved in learning and taking responsibility
- The outstanding relationships within the school and with the local community
- The strong links with the parish church

Focus for development

- Design and establish procedures for monitoring and evaluating the impact of the school's Christian vision involving governors, parents and learners.

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

Learners thrive in the strong Christian ethos which permeates the school. They enjoy coming to school, and learn confidently in a warm, secure and welcoming environment. All are equally valued with their achievements celebrated in weekly assemblies. The strong focus on care and respect, and excellent relationships and behaviour, result in happy and confident young people who relish responsibility. Learners are very proud of being members of the school council, speaking enthusiastically about gardening and their ideas for growing vegetables for harvest, and responsibilities as eco warriors. They relish opportunities in clubs including sport, music and the Nature Pals club run by the local church. Learners are also very excited by their many activities supporting charities especially their work with Aid to Hospitals Worldwide. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strongly supported. Their faith is enriched by prayer which accompanies their planning for the care for others and the environment, and by their singing of praise in the community, church and the cathedral. Spiritual development is fostered by religious education and the Christian ethos of the school as a whole. Creative displays, quiet areas in and out of the school promote thought and reflection. Learners value the chat room where they can seek help, and the friendship bench in the courtyard where they enjoy each other's company. The cross, candle, the Lord's Prayer and the school prayer in the hall, together with the Pentecost and other vibrant displays are clear reminders of the school's Christian character.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

The school's deep commitment to collective worship as central to its life, has a profound impact on learners' and adults' spiritual growth. All respond positively in leading and participating in worship. Acts of worship are held each day, and much importance is given to prayer. Children contribute their thoughts to be used in prayer during worship, by placing them in the school prayer box, and they reflect in prayer at the end of the day. Worship is led by the headteacher, staff, and a number of visitors who include the rector and clergy from different denominations who bring different approaches to worship. Themes reflect Christian values, festivals and other events in the Christian calendar with regular services held in the nearby parish church. These include harvest, Christmas and Easter services which are well attended by parents and the community. Learners enjoy worship. In the worship seen during the inspection, learners entered and left reverently, eagerly answered questions, joined lustily in singing, and listened attentively to the headteacher's riveting presentation about Pentecost. Worship is enhanced by the clear focus of a worship table and special surroundings in the hall. Staff appreciate the calm, opportunities to reflect quietly each day. Worship makes an important contribution to learners' understanding of Anglican faith and liturgy. They feel happy in the familiar surroundings of the church, using responses and prayers such as the Grace, and understand the pattern and liturgical colours of the church calendar, and the role of the rector and other clergy.

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

The headteacher, staff and governors are deeply committed to the achievement of the school's distinctive Christian character and work as a Church of England school. Staff feel highly valued and are excellent role models. Christian values underpin the school's mission statement and aims, and have a profound impact on the school's life. Pride in the school's status as a Church of England school is clearly reflected at the school's entrance and in all documents. The school's Christian ethos and character are made clear to all parents and those joining the staff. The Foundation Governors visit the school frequently and play an important role in encouraging the school community to realise the impact of their Christian vision. The close partnership between the school the rector and parish church significantly enriches its distinctive Christian character. The school's self-evaluation of its progress in achieving its Christian vision is accurate and involves the staff. Governors are kept informed about the school's self-evaluation, but are not part of the evaluation procedure. Parents and learners are regularly consulted about the effectiveness of many aspects of the school's life, but not formally about the impact of the school's character as a Christian school. The school's excellent links with the local community promote productive partnerships with the church, nearby schools and all aspects of the community through taking part in many activities. The

close links with the diocese enrich children learning about Anglican practice during their visits to Ely cathedral, and teachers' commitment to the Christian values of the school are deepened at diocesan meetings.

SIAS May 2010 Fordham Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School,
Fordham, Ely CB7 5NL