



## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### Great and Little Shelford Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Church Street  
Great Shelford  
Cambridge  
CB22 5EL

**Diocese: Ely**

Local authority: Cambridgeshire  
Date of inspection: 22 March 2010  
Date of last inspection: September 2007  
School's unique reference number: 110831  
Headteacher: Alison Evans  
Inspector's name and number: Simon Windmill 182

#### School context

This school is of average size. Most pupils are from White British families, with some pupils from other ethnic backgrounds. Most pupils' attainment on entry is higher than average. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is above average. There is a playschool and Afterschool club on site and a school run Breakfast Club in the local church.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Great and Little Shelford CEVA Primary School as a Church of England school are good

The school's Christian ethos is based on gospel values, and is firmly rooted in the school's life and work. This has a strong positive influence on pupils' values and attitudes. This is evident in the school's supportive and caring relationships, which give the school its family atmosphere. Collective worship lies at the heart of the school.

#### Established strengths

- The school's Christian ethos, which supports the school in all aspects of its work
- The caring relationships between staff, governors and pupils
- The strong links with the school's three local churches
- The high level of involvement between the school and its wider community

#### Focus for development

- Develop pupils' ability to take more responsibility for their learning
- Increase pupil involvement in planning and leading collective worship
- Evaluate the impact of collective worship on pupils
- Embed the new RE syllabus and develop its assessment processes

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

The headteacher, staff and governors see the school's Christian ethos as the driving force behind the school's success. Its Christian values, which are reflected in the welcoming and inclusive atmosphere, are fundamental in maintaining high levels of care and support for pupils and staff.

An effective and articulate School Council gives pupils a say in setting the rules. Pupils see the rules as being fair, and therefore keep to them. As a result, behaviour is good and pupils get on well with each other. The teaching and support staff provide good role models for pupils, who respond well to taking responsibility for their actions and behaviour.

Pupils say they feel valued and safe. They know that they can ask teachers for help if they need it, and are not afraid to approach staff if they have any problems at school. One pupil said, 'I feel safe in school because I know the adults and the other children always look after us, and each other.' These good relationships reassure pupils that they will be supported, which helps them to develop self-confidence and independence.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They understand the difference between right and wrong. The school provides pupils with opportunities for quiet reflection, so they can take 'time out' if necessary. Pupils are aware that many children are less fortunate than themselves, so they respond generously to charitable appeals.

The school runs a breakfast club for pupils who have to arrive early to school.

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

Collective worship is seen as central to the life of the school. It is soundly based on Christian values, and always includes prayer, singing and teaching. A candle is lit at the start of worship, and a cross provides another visual focus for pupils.

Pupils say they enjoy and value collective worship. A small team of older pupils help with setting up the room, and some pupils play the music for the songs. All staff lead worship, helped by the local clergy from both the Anglican churches and the Free church.

Pupils have some opportunities to write their own prayers for worship, and would welcome more involvement, such as planning and leading their own worship. The GenR8 worship team leads worship termly, and there is a lunchtime Bible Club run by the assembly team.

Pupils have a good understanding of the styles and purposes of prayer, like saying thank you or sorry, or asking for help, healing, or forgiveness. One pupil said, 'I know I can always pray if I'm worried about anything,' and another said, 'I prayed when my mum was ill, and she soon got better.' On Fridays parents are invited to an extended worship time, which allows parents to join in with celebrating pupils' successes in their work and achievements.

Worship is planned in themes which reflect the school's Christian values, and celebrate the main Church festivals, such as Christmas, Easter and Harvest, and also include a special service for Candlemas, Ascension Day and a Leavers' service. These services are held in one of the two Anglican churches available to the school.

### **The impact of religious education is good**

Religious education (RE) is regarded as an important part of the curriculum. The school has been working with the Diocese on changing to a new RE scheme, and is in the process of implementing it. The units of work are largely in place, and the RE co-ordinator is 'fine tuning' it. The school is now in a position to develop the assessment of pupils' work under the new scheme.

Pupils enjoy RE, and their progress in it is comparable with progress across the curriculum. Lessons are well planned, and provide a wide range of activities to support pupils' learning. These include research, discussion, drama, individual and group work to stimulate learning.

Pupils are encouraged to make connections between their knowledge of RE and how it can impact on their lives. They understand the difference between 'learning from' and 'learning about' religion. They learn about Christianity, and three other major faiths. Whenever possible RE is linked with other curriculum areas, for example pupils were making friendship bracelets in the different colours which represent the Church year.

Pupils speak openly and confidently about their learning in RE. For example a younger child said, 'Jesus is better than Batman or Spiderman because Jesus is real', and an older pupil said, 'The crucifixion made me feel sad because Jesus died, but the resurrection made me happy because Jesus came back to life'.

Standards of teaching and learning in RE are high, and pupils' work shows good progression over time. The school's cross-curricular approach enhances pupils' spiritual and moral development.

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

The headteacher brings good leadership to the school, and is well supported by the staff and governors. They promote a distinctive and active Christian vision for the school, with Christian values at its centre. Governor meetings always begin and end with prayer. The schools' Christian vision is clearly set out in the school brochure, and is referred to in all recruitment documentation. The vision statement is discussed with all prospective parents.

Foundation governors form the majority on the governing body, and play an active role alongside other governors. However they do not yet play a part in the evaluation of the impact of collective worship. Foundation governors are also active in their local churches, which enhances the links between church and school.

A staff well-being programme ensures that staff workloads are manageable, which helps staff feel valued and involved in the school's development. The team works very well together, giving mutual support, and enjoying the support of governors. The Bishop's visitor also makes a good contribution to the school. The local churches give the school prayer support, and the PTA actively supports the school in many ways, especially fundraising.

Relationships between the school and its wider community are good – for example Great Shelford parish council funded an art installation for the school. Parent surveys show a high level of approval for the school. The school often contributes to community events, such as the Shelford Feast, the village pantomime, choral events and exhibitions. Village newsletters also contribute to community links with the school.