



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Great Wilbraham Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Church Street
Great Wilbraham
Cambridge
CB21 5JQ

Diocese: Ely

Local authority: Cambridgeshire
Dates of inspection: 22 September 2009
Date of last inspection: May 2006
School's unique reference number: 110789
Headteacher: Miss Naomi Chapman
Acting Head during inspection: Mrs Helen Darrell
Inspector's name and number: Betty Barratt 203

School context

Great Wilbraham Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School serves three villages near Cambridge. It is smaller than most primary schools. The majority of learners are White British with English as their first language, and the number entitled to free school meals is low. The percentage with learning difficulties is above average with a high proportion having statements of special educational needs. The school is close to the parish church.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Great Wilbraham 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 deeply committed attitudes to teaching and learning. Learners are well cared for in a happy, relaxed and secure environment. They respond well to the high expectations for their behaviour, and for their care and respect for one another. The staff are excellent role models and dedicated to promoting learners' well-being.

Established strengths

- The deep commitment of the acting headteacher, staff and foundation governors to promoting the distinctive Christian character of the school.
- Excellent support for learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- Happy, confident learners who relish opportunities to take responsibility.

Focus for development

- Implement formal procedures, involving staff, governors, parents and learners, for planning, monitoring and evaluating the impact of the school's Christian vision.

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. The strong focus on care and respect for one another, and excellent relationships and behaviour, result in happy, confident and articulate young people who relish responsibility. They are proud of their school and especially of being buddies for younger children, and members of the school and eco councils. They speak enthusiastically about recommending improvements in the school environment, and planning out-of-lesson activities which are greatly appreciated. Learners especially enjoy the exciting activities on Wednesday afternoons enthusing in particular, about opportunities to study wild life and the computer club. They deeply value the Happy Sad club, run fortnightly in partnership with the church, to support their emotional needs. Learners' confidence and self-esteem are boosted by the celebration of their achievements through the merit system, and the accolade of the Headteacher's Award for special effort. Learners are exceptionally well supported in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by worship, teaching in religious education, fund raising for charities and the Christian ethos of the school as a whole. Vibrant displays strongly promote thought and reflection. Learners value the quiet areas in the school grounds as places where they can reflect on wild life. Prominently positioned crosses throughout the school; the banner and distinctive displays linking the school and church in the entrance area; the candles, fish symbols and children's prayers in the hall; are clear reminders of the school's Christian character.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship is very important in the life of the school and has a profound impact on learners and adults. The headteacher and a foundation governor take a lead role in planning and monitoring worship to ensure its effectiveness in providing an inspirational Christian focus. Acts of worship are held each day and grace is said before lunch. Worship is led by all teachers and the vicar, and by other visitors who provide variety in styles of delivery. Themes reflect Christian values, festivals and other events in the Christian calendar. The major Christian festivals and special services, such as the leaver's service, are celebrated in church, and are well attended by parents. Learners also attend other church services including the recent service to dedicate the church bells. They enjoy worship, saying they value being together in the presence of God's love. In the worship seen during the inspection, pupils entered quietly, listened attentively, eagerly took part in role play, joined lustily in singing and reverently in prayer, and left to quiet music reflecting on the relevance of Jesus' message of loving one another, for their own lives. Staff appreciate the opportunity to reflect quietly at the beginning of each day, and value the way worship bonds the school community together. Worship makes an important contribution to learners' understanding of Anglican faith and practice. They understand the significance of the festivals and pattern of the seasons in the Church calendar, and the purpose of the main features in the church building.

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

The acting headteacher, staff, and foundation governors are deeply committed to the promotion of the school's distinctive Christian character, and are well supported by parents and the whole governing body. Staff feel highly valued and are excellent role models. Christian values underpin the school's mission statement. The school's self-evaluation of its progress in achieving its Christian vision is mainly accurate, but the process did not fully involve staff, governors, parents or learners. A staff meeting at the beginning of the Autumn term began to address this need by involving all staff in reviewing procedures for monitoring and evaluating the impact of the school's Christian vision. The foundation governors, including the vicar, have a significant influence in the school visiting frequently, and promoting a strong partnership with the church and community. This includes shared fund raising and the active support of each other's events. The school initiated a fun run to raise money for the church roof appeal, and the church supports many school activities and provides Bibles for teachers and Year 2 pupils, and books for Year 6 leavers. The strong links with the local community include an open day for all who live in the area, and close liaison with the parish council. The school made re-cycling posters to be displayed in the

villages, and community sports events are held in the school. There are also close links with the diocese involving learners visiting Ely cathedral, and diocesan support and training for staff and governors.

SIAS report September 2009 Great Wilbraham Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School, Great Wilbraham CB21 5JQ