



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Guyhirn Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

High Road
Guyhirn
Wisbech
PE13 4ED

Diocese: Ely

Local authority: Cambridgeshire
Dates of inspection: 9 March 2010
Date of last inspection: 5 December 2006
School's unique reference number: 110806
Headteacher: Justine Sands
Inspector's name and number: Marion Betts 220

School context

Guyhirn is a very small school with three classes. One class currently has a temporary teacher and another has a teacher who has been employed for less than one month. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is well above average when compared nationally. A high percentage of pupils do not come from the village but travel from surrounding areas. The church building has been closed as a dangerous structure, so the village congregation worships at another church in the benefice.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Guyhirn as a Church of England school are good

Christian values are embedded in school life, and have a strong positive influence on the high quality of staff and pupil relationships and well-being. The school makes provision for pupils' individual needs. The school's link with the Christian community is strong and pupils, staff and parents recognise this as a distinctive feature of the school.

Established strengths

- The strong emphasis on the care and pastoral support of each child's needs.
- The leadership and commitment of the headteacher to promote the well-being of each member of the school community.
- The positive attitudes of pupils to their school and to each other.
- The strong links promoted between the school and the church community.

Focus for development

- Develop the role of the foundation governors to formally monitor and evaluate the distinctiveness of the school as a church school, and the impact of collective worship on the pupils.
- Give pupils more opportunities to plan and lead collective worship and reflection sessions.

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

Pupils are proud of their school, praising the caring nature of the staff who listen to them, help with their problems and make lessons fun. Pupils feel safe and secure. Pupils' personal development is good and they enjoy undertaking responsibilities such as being playground squad members and working with the younger children. Pupils know the values expected from them but do not understand them as explicitly rising from the school's Christian distinctiveness.

Relationships and respect between all staff and children are very good and demonstrate the school's Christian context. The school is characterised by good teamwork, praise used effectively and a sense of positive well-being. Pupils' views are sought and action taken. Pupils' successes and achievements are regularly celebrated. They behave well and develop positive attitudes to learning. The pastoral care of the school is very good with each child's needs known and catered for.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Links with schools abroad allow them to learn about cultures different to their own. Pupils' moral and social development is promoted by the SEAL (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning) activities. Pupils devise their own rules. They have a strong concern for the needs of others demonstrated by money raised for a variety of charities.

The school encourages pupils' spiritual development by inter-active displays with thought-provoking questions for example "what would you like God to be doing". Time is given for reflection at the end of the day with opportunity to make a personal response. The school's outside environment promotes spiritual awareness especially through gardening activities and observations around the school pond.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship is important in the life of the school, demonstrated by its thorough planning and by the appreciation of pupils for this whole school community time. Christian visitors are invited to lead it and the local reverend takes worship each week.

Most pupils enjoy worship and understand the need to apply the message given to their own lives. Worship has a positive impact on pupils and promotes well their spiritual and moral development. They appreciate the responsibilities they are given to plan and lead the weekly special celebration assembly as well as to organise the worship environment and chose hymns. Pupils' contributions to worship greatly enhance its quality. The choir sings enthusiastically accompanied by instrument playing by pupils of all ages.

Collective worship effectively includes teaching and stories, with visual presentation to motivate interest and aid understanding. Prayers are said before dinner and at the end of the day. Pupils are given opportunities to write their own prayers and have composed a whole school prayer. Pupils have some understanding of the purposes of prayer, as thanksgiving and petitioning.

The school leadership monitors the impact of worship and pupils' views are sought. The prayer team resulted from pupil evaluation.

Pupils use a Christian response at the beginning and end of the session and are familiar with the Lord's Prayer. The use of a neighbouring church and local chapel for special Christian festivals develops well the pupils' understanding of the Anglican faith. Parents and governors are invited to these.

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

The headteacher and governors provide effective leadership which makes a significant contribution to the Christian vision of the school. The headteacher and her staff set the tone

of Christian care and concern for others throughout the school. This results in the pupils' appreciation of the inclusive, friendly family atmosphere of the school. The headteacher values the staff and uses their gifts and talents for enrichment activities throughout the whole school. Governors actively support the school vision. They are aware of their role to more formally monitor the school in all aspects of its church school distinctiveness, and now that finally all the foundation governor posts are filled they will undertake this.

Partnership with parents is good and the school provides workshops to promote parents' involvement in their child's learning. Parents praise the approachability of the headteacher and all staff who listen to and act on their concerns. The church school status is made explicit in communications and around the school with the Christian context underlying all school activities. Pupils and parents are aware of the strong link between the church and the school. A local reverend visits regularly and is known by all the pupils. The local chapel provides an extra resource and is used to enhance learning across of the curriculum.

The school promotes local community activities, such as those that take place in the village hall. The governors' community committee is exploring closer links with the local community. They have been active recently seeking ways to calm traffic near the school. The school has recently taken over the management of the village pre-school group to prevent this vital amenity being lost.

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