



## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

<p><b>School name:</b> Park Street Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School  <b>Diocese:</b> Ely  <b>Local authority:</b> Cambridgeshire  Date of inspection: June 29<sup>th</sup> and July 2<sup>nd</sup> 2009  Date of last inspection: November 16<sup>th</sup> 2005  School's unique reference number: 110837  Headteacher: Mrs. Gill Owen  Inspector's name and number: Ann Williams 573</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>School Context</b></p> <p>Park Street Church of England VA Primary School is situated in the centre of the city of Cambridge. There are 116 learners drawn from the local community and from further afield within the city. Pupils are taught in four classes, each spanning two school years. Most are from white British families, with a number of pupils attending for a relatively short time due to the transient nature of their parents' professions or studies at the university. The percentage qualifying for free school meals or with special educational needs is below the national average.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Park Street Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, Cambridge as a Church of England school are good.</b></p> <p>The headteacher, who has been in post for only one term, has worked tirelessly to maintain and build on the school's reputation as a Christian community. The staff work together as a mutually supportive team to nurture and care for each individual pupil, with Christian values at the heart of their teaching. The children respond positively and parents choose the school specifically for the Christian ethos permeating its daily life. Visual reminders of the school's Anglican heritage are displayed throughout the school.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Established Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A dedicated and supportive team of governors who have vision for the future of the school and a realistic awareness of present needs.</li> <li>• A committed headteacher and hardworking staff who respond positively to challenges.</li> <li>• Well-behaved and confident pupils who are proud of and happy in their school.</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Focus for Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To further develop links with Great St. Mary's Church so that the school may become and feel part of the church community.</li> <li>• To develop a policy for the formal assessment of religious education.</li> <li>• To undertake more structured and long term planning of collective worship.</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is outstanding at meeting the needs of all learners.</b></p> <p>That every child matters is evident in the way in which staff strive to develop the talents of each individual, with differentiated tasks and opportunities to participate orally. Despite limited space, a room is set aside for small group work, where the more able are challenged and the less able nurtured in a secure and gentle environment. Those pupils requiring individual support have their own quiet workspace within their classroom to which they can choose to</p>

withdraw with their key worker. The school prides itself on inclusivity and has developed strategies to help all comers and to make welcome those pupils who may be in the school for only a short time while their parents are involved at the university. The curriculum is enhanced by visits from specialist teachers for art, music and sport and opportunities exist for a wide variety of extra-curricular activities both at lunchtime and after school. Achievement of all kinds and at all levels is celebrated weekly and pupils enjoy 'golden time' each Friday afternoon when they are able to choose activities with other age groups. Older children especially enjoy being able to help the younger pupils with reading and games. Pupil voice is heard through the enthusiastic school council whose members are elected from each year group. All are aware that their school is special, and pupils and parents alike appreciate the Christian values that underpin the life of the school, encouraging mutual respect and support. Displays around the school celebrate the school's Christian heritage and limited space is used imaginatively and creatively. The library doubles as a quiet area for reflection and a corner of the playground is to be developed for the same purpose.

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

Collective worship is central to the school day. Pupils are reflective as they enter and focus on the cross and candle, which is lit by a member of Year Six, who also delivers the opening sentence to which the whole school responds. They are attentive and offer thoughtful answers to questions posed by the leader. The whole school community participates reverently and takes the opportunity to offer prayer requests when invited to do so. However, pupils' perception of prayer is limited and prayer is used at no other time during the school day.

Worship is sensitively led by the headteacher, who, because of the demands on her time as a newly-appointed headteacher, has undertaken planning on a week by week basis. Noted as a focus for development is the need to adopt a more structured, long-term approach to the planning of collective worship and to communicate the theme to the visiting clergy to assist them in their own planning. Worship is enhanced by their weekly visits and occasionally by visits from Scripture Union's Gener8 drama team.

Learners remember the Christian message, are able to apply it to their own lives, and are keen to discuss issues raised.

The developing links with Great St. Mary's Church offers the opportunity for the school to hold special services there, and visits to the cathedral for 'school days' have also enriched pupils' experience of worship.

**The effectiveness of religious education is good**

Religious education follows the Cambridgeshire agreed syllabus. More curriculum time is devoted to Christianity than to the study of other faiths, and pupils demonstrated a good knowledge of the Christian year and major festivals. Their awareness of the Anglican tradition is increasing as the school connection with Great St. Mary's church moves forward. This was demonstrated when a recent visit to the church's Pentecost exhibition became possible as the church extended the timing to accommodate the school. As a result, the children produced thoughtful and creative work on this theme.

During the lessons observed, which continued learning about Islam, the pupils showed good factual knowledge as well as being able to compare the Muslim faith with Christianity. The personal experience of a Muslim boy in the key stage one class was used to really good advantage. The pupils in the key stage two class were challenged to think carefully about religious law and confidently offered their opinions. Both lessons made good and imaginative use of ICT and follow-up activities were carefully differentiated.

No child is withdrawn from religious education, and this is testament to the sensitivity with which the subject is taught.

Assessment of RE is informal and made through observation of oral responses and marking of written activities. The writing of a policy for a more formal and rigorous approach to the assessment of RE is noted as a focus for development.

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

The headteacher has accomplished much in this, her first, term. She is dedicated to the welfare of her staff and to the success of every one of the pupils in her care. She has a pride in the school's many achievements as well as a realistic view of its shortcomings, and has put measures in place to take the school forward in the coming academic year.

The governing body shares her vision and is committed to developing the school. Governors are supportive of the headteacher and all the staff. Staff feel valued by their managers and some specifically joined the school because of its Christian ethos. Advertisements for staff emphasise its Anglican status, and the school prospectus gives prominence to the daily act of worship and the importance of religious education.

Foundation governors take their particular role very seriously and are proactive, with the headteacher, in forging links with Great St. Mary's Church, which is noted as a focus for development. The incumbent has agreed to join the governing body as a positive start to this relationship, and the headteacher is to write regularly for the church newsletter.

The headteacher is developing her role as spiritual leader of the school and has put plans in place for a staff/governor Eucharist at the beginning of each term.

Relationships with parents are excellent and they are unstinting in their praise of the school family, the approachability of all staff and governors and the Christian values they see entrenched in the school and influencing the daily lives of their children.

The local community is supportive of the school in its midst and join in with school events such as the summer fete.