



## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### St John's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Sallowbush Road  
Huntingdon  
PE29 7LA

**Diocese: Ely**

Local authority: Cambridgeshire  
Dates of inspection: 22 June 2010  
Date of last inspection: 20 March 2007  
School's unique reference number: 110818  
Headteacher: Helen Curtis  
Inspector's name and number: Marion Betts 220

#### School context

St John's school is a smaller than average school. It serves the community of a large estate in north Huntingdon. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is well above average when compared nationally. The proportion of pupils whose first language is not English has risen and is now above the national average. The church is some distance away from the school.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St John's School 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 a wide range of 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 Christian vision and the committed leadership of the headteacher to the care, well-being and pastoral support of each child's and their families' needs.
- The high emphasis on the Christian value of respect for all which promotes the very good relationships within the school and wider community.
- The strong partnership between the school and the vicar.

#### Focus for development

- Develop the new evaluation processes that involve analysing the views of pupils by the foundation governors so that the distinctiveness of the school as a church school, and the impact of collective worship on the pupils are formally monitored.
- Implement the plans devised for making the school's Christian values' statements more explicitly linked to the Bible
- Give more opportunities for pupils to be involved in the planning and leading of collective worship.

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

Pupils are proud of their school, praising the care of the staff who listen to them, help with their problems and provide practical learning activities. They feel special and valued by the school especially when their achievements are celebrated or acknowledged by their peers on "Pride Balloons". Pupils know the values expected and their attitudes to achieve them are positive. One major value statement is solidly linked to a Bible quote. Diversity of pupils' beliefs is celebrated as shown when leavers receive a gift of their own faith book

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 nurturing of a sense of positive well-being. The pastoral care of the school is excellent with each child's needs known and catered for. Pupils know and understand that they are part of God's family.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils' moral and social development is promoted by the SEAL (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning) activities. The school rules are known well by pupils and linked to a Bible quote. The free breakfast club provides opportunities for social inter-action and a calm beginning to each school day. Pupils have a strong concern for the needs of others demonstrated by pupils' own ideas of charity fund-raising.

The school encourages pupils' spiritual development by inter-active displays with thought-provoking questions. Pupils can access a quiet area if they signal they are in need of this with adult support if necessary, examples being in the library, outside shelter and the Smiley club.

**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 and staff for this whole school, beginning of the day, peaceful community time. Worship is well planned and led by a variety of leaders including the local vicar.

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. Pupils have some opportunities to participate in delivering worship but would appreciate more responsibility both for planning and leading their own sessions

Collective worship is enhanced effectively by singing Christian songs, stories sometimes from the Bible, and visual presentation to motivate interest and aid understanding. Pupils enthusiastically compose their own prayers which are valued and used during worship. They exchange prayers with their linked church school. Pupils have some understanding of the purposes of prayer, such as thanksgiving and petitioning.

Worship themes are evaluated by staff. The school is beginning to use pupils' views to evaluate the impact of collective worship, and actions have been taken as a result.

Pupils use Christian responses and are familiar with the Lord's Prayer. The Church's year is celebrated during collective worship and the input of the vicar explaining Church practices and the meaning of artefacts used, develops well the pupils' understanding of the Anglican faith. Christmas celebrations take place in the church and 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 provides very effective leadership which makes a powerful contribution to the Christian vision of the school. She personally sets the tone of Christian care and concern for others throughout the school. Governors actively support the school vision. Staff are

strongly committed to and implement the school's expectations of their roles in this Christian community. Their views for further developing the ethos of the school are regularly sought. Staff feel appreciated for their work and are very supportive of each other both personally and professionally.

The school's church school status is well known within the community. It is made explicit through signs and the badge which also shows the eagle symbol of St John which is linked by the school to describe Christian living. The Christian context underlies all school activities. The foundation governors do not at present formally monitor the school's distinctiveness, but can extend their present evaluation system to incorporate this.

Links with the local church are strong. The vicar is known well by pupils and families. The church is used as a curriculum resource. Parents praise the approachability of the headteacher and all staff who listen to and act on their concerns. The school provides good support to families particularly those with special difficulties. The school is active in the local community with pupils supporting local charities and visiting local homes. Links with other schools are good. Especially commendable is the link with a rural church school with the regular interchange of pupils for celebrations and other Christian linked projects.

SIAS report June 2010 St John's C of E Primary School PE29 7LA