



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Fringford Church of England Primary School

The Green
Fringford
Bicester
OX27 8DY

Diocese: Oxford

Local authority: Oxfordshire

Date of inspection: 25th June 2013

Date of last inspection: 1st July 2008

School's unique reference number: 123102

Headteacher: Mrs Susan Pearson

Inspector's name and number: Mr Andy How 587

School context

Fringford Church of England Primary School is a small school in a delightful rural setting and part of a ten-parish benefice. Pupils, nearly all of White British heritage, travel to school from several villages and the neighbouring town. The proportion of children with special needs is below the national average and pupils are taught in four mixed-age classes.

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

The calm, inclusive ethos of this idyllically situated village school, is implicitly underpinned by its Christian character, enveloping its members and uniting them into a strong, effective learning community.

Established strengths

- the inclusive nature and strong relationships which reflect the school motto "Love, God, Learning, Life, Each other," and unify the whole school community;
- the atmosphere of peace and calm which pervades the school and is an outworking of the school prayer displayed in the entrance "Let peace dwell here";
- the enjoyment which the children express of religious education and worship.

Focus for development

- to establish a focus group to meet at least twice yearly to review the school and strengthen the evaluation of itself as a Church school;
- to complete the review of the school mission statement and aims so as to increase the clarity and strengthen the vision for the school as a distinctive Christian school.

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

The school has strongly embedded values such as peace, love and forgiveness which, due to the planning and practice of worship, and good religious education, pupils are able to link with Christian beliefs and the teaching of Jesus. Governors appointed in the Autumn of 2012 have reviewed the mission statement and aims with the purpose of making this link more explicit. Conversations with pupil's show that they have a love of learning, and their attainment and achievement are good throughout the school in reading, writing and mathematics, evidenced in the effective tracking of performance and substantiated in the relatively recent Ofsted

inspection. Attendance is good and exclusion extremely rare because children enjoy school, know that they are valued, and the Headteacher is determined to maximise the learning opportunity of every child. The peaceful, calm atmosphere which greets the visitor on entering the school, has a positive and fruitful impact on every aspect of work and play. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also good, and the SMSC policy states: "Recognise the challenge of Jesus' teaching" and "Begin to understand the Christian imperative for the disadvantaged". The effect of this was clearly identified in several ways on the day of the inspection including: the readiness with which children spoke about the practical applications of the stories of Jesus; the atmosphere and inclusive behaviour of children of all ages in the playground; and the children's ability to listen and discuss different points of view in an emotional debate in RE on the question of whether we need religion. All parents spoken to were aware and pleased that their children are part of a Church of England school because of its positive influence on their lives.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Pupils speak positively about school worship and some pick it out as one of the things they like most about their school. Worship is well-planned around themes and values such as friendship and respect, and Biblical stories help to enrich pupils' understanding of these values in a Christian context. Consequently children are familiar with the teaching of Jesus and readily explain how this underpins day to day school life and helps them, in particular with behaviour and relationships. At key Christian festivals, school worship is held in the local Church, enriching children's spiritual development, and strengthening the school's links with the local village community. Parents tell stories of their children talking about worship and singing Christian songs at home. All primary phase staff participate in the leadership of worship and attend on occasions, though not with regular frequency all together. Pupils are responsible for setting up the hall for worship and contribute regularly by, for example, reading prayers which they have written for the prayer tree, in lessons, or elsewhere. A recent "Prayer Space" event was a huge success as evidenced in the feedback sheet full of heartfelt quotations such as "It has really helped me to be myself and feel at one with God." and "Please help me to consoutraid in class"! The review of this led to the decision to plan and run similar events on an ongoing basis as a way to further enrich the children's spiritual development. A newly appointed Foundation Governor is already very familiar with the review and monitoring of worship and Reverend Bill from the local Anglican team, also a newly appointed governor, is a highly popular figure in the school with his leadership of worship; he is enthusiastic in his willingness to contribute to the development of the school's Christian character.

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

The school motto, displayed on a cross is clearly visible in a window; "Love, God, Learning, Life, Each other" and the school prayer which faces visitors on their entrance to the school: "This is our school, let peace dwell here" gives explicit expression to the Christian distinctiveness of the school. Once inside, the meaning of these is seen personified in the calm, family ethos with its strong inclusive relationships. The Chair of Governors is looking to and supporting the clergy and new, enthusiastic, foundation governor in a review of the school's mission and aims. The Headteacher, whose vision is "to celebrate the school's distinctiveness as a church school," works closely with the RE subject leader who ensures that the subject maintains a high status and contributes to the pupils' understanding of the Christian faith and the way it impacts day to day living. Regular worship in the local Church strengthens the school's relationship with the wider community, as does the Church's use of school building for its summer holiday club. A recent recruitment was carefully organised in order to ensure that a new teacher would be able to contribute positively to the school as a Church school. The school's evaluation does not clearly describe the link which does exist between the school's distinctive Christian values and its performance in all areas of school life. This is because the leaders, all of whom have a vision for the school as a church school, have not yet shared their ideas with each other as clearly and fully as they could.

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