

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### **Babraham Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School,**

High Street  
Babraham  
Cambridgeshire  
CB2 4AG

**Diocese: Ely**

LEA: Cambridgeshire

Dates of inspection: May 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> 2006

Date of last inspection: 2000

School's Unique reference number:110780

Headteachers: Mrs Mary Evans and Mr Richard Lloyd

SIAS Inspector: Jill Pauling 196

#### **Context of the school**

Babraham Church of England Primary School has 78 pupils on roll and serves a rural community. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is low. A higher than average number of pupils has English as a second language, as the local area includes several scientific research establishments where international workers reside with their families. Pupils at the school represent at least four different world faiths. The proportion of children experiencing physical, emotional or learning disabilities is higher than national average. At the time of inspection, two headteachers share the leadership and management of the school. One is an experienced headteacher and the other in his first headship. Both bring complementary strengths to the school.

#### **Summary Judgement**

Babraham Primary School is a good church school with a distinctive Christian ethos and some outstanding features. Pupils and the wider community enjoy and value their school. High expectations and a secure environment enable all children to develop and flourish.

#### **Established strengths**

- There is a distinctive, inclusive Christian ethos demonstrated by the central place that R.E. and Worship play in the life of the school. Learners know and appreciate what it means to be part of a church school.
- Planning, evaluation, monitoring and assessment of both Worship and R.E. are outstanding. Work in R.E. impacts well on the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils.
- Pupils are motivated, independent and well behaved. Their skills and aptitudes are encouraged and celebrated.

#### **Focus for development**

- The school should further involve all relevant stakeholders in identifying, monitoring and evaluating every area that underpins the Christian foundation of the school.
- Communicate to the whole school community the difference between Acts of Worship and assemblies.

**How well does the school, through its distinctive Christian character, meet the needs of all learners?**

The distinctive Christian ethos of the school is good and is embedded in every area of school life. Learners feel valued and confident that their voice will be heard. The secure, family nature of the school is reflected in the friendly, outgoing attitude of the children towards visitors. Children are able to identify the special nature and characteristics of their school as a church school. They are eager to identify and discuss their links with the church. They look forward to visits from the local clergy and Christian worship groups and talk enthusiastically about the wide range of services that they attend in the church. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the children is good throughout the school, irrespective of their faith background, as evidenced in the recent OFSTED report and discussions with learners. Parents are very positive about the inclusive and caring nature of the school. Children with special educational needs thrive. Children who arrive with little knowledge of the English language or culture make good progress and are able to contribute to prayer and Worship. A young Chinese boy told me that Christianity is a world faith as he was also a Christian when he was in China. Relationships are very strong and children behave responsibly, respecting others. A good example of this is the care and concern shown by all the children towards a Japanese pupil who had arrived during the inspection week. They demonstrated sensitivity towards the difficulty he may be experiencing with both cultural differences and spoken English.

**What is the impact of collective worship on the school community?**

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good. The learners benefit from a range of collective worship activities that take place each day. They talk with enthusiasm about a variety of acts of Worship and recognised that worship could include singing, prayer and reflection. There is however some confusion throughout the whole school community about the terms 'Assembly' and 'Acts of Worship'. Parents and members of the wider community appreciate being invited to special assemblies and expressed a belief that acts of worship are an important and integral part of this church school. Acts of worship are very well planned by the Worship co-ordinator. They are evaluated and monitored by both the staff and children. They are well resourced. There is regular participation by both individuals and groups of learners. Worship has a good impact on the learner because it is accessible and varied in content using story, drama and a wide range of music. Several members of staff lead whole school worship. The children say or sing a short communal prayer every lunch-time and at the end of school. Local clergy regularly participate and the vicar undertakes monitoring and evaluation on behalf of the Governing Body. Worship is Christian with some strong Anglican elements linked to seasons in the Church year. An example of this is an act of Worship when the whole school took part in the events of Ascension Day. The 'Good news, bad news' approach to the story made a strong impact on the learners who were then all able to talk about the relevance of Ascension Day and the subsequent coming of the Holy Spirit. The school regularly attends the Parish church both for Worship and as part of the RE curriculum. The vicar describes the school as 'a gathered community' and feels that the school proclaims its Christian status visually and that Christian principles are strongly evident. The school also recognises and is sensitive to the beliefs and traditions of those children from other faiths and cultures. It takes care to ensure that there is constructive dialogue with all their families. At the moment no child is withdrawn from R.E. or Worship.

**How effective is the leadership and management of the school as a church school?**

The leadership and management of the school, as a church school, is good. The whole school community has a strong sense of identity. The headteachers and governors work continuously to promote a distinctive Christian vision for the school. Both the headteachers provide strong leadership and all staff feel valued and affirmed. Everyone within the school community is confident that their voice will be heard. They speak of a strong team ethos based on Christian principles. There are already some systems for Governors and senior staff to monitor and evaluate RE and SMSC. Other systems, such as the use of the Diocesan toolkit, are well developed resulting in a management team who know and understand all aspects of a church school. There are links with individual members of the local Church although the worshipping community is very small. The school has worked hard to establish an exciting Christmas service in the Church that is enjoyed by the whole village. Parents feel that the staff are always available for their children and that the school provides unique opportunities for their children to flourish in a compassionate and caring Christian environment. The impact of R.E. teaching is good throughout the school. The learners are able to talk confidently about significant features from their R.E. curriculum and describe some of the displays that they have created. An example of this is a detailed discussion about all the elements of a 'Passover meal' that the whole school worked for and shared on a special celebration day.