

**National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report**

**Furneux Pelham Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School**

Furneux Pelham

Buntingford

Hertfordshire

SG9 0LH

**Diocese of St Albans**

LEA: Hertfordshire

SIAS Inspection : 17<sup>th</sup> May 2006

Previous S23 Inspection: 24<sup>th</sup> February 2000

URN: 117394

Headteacher: Mrs Sue Skelton

SIAS Inspector : NS Inspector No: 44 Ms Chris Westgarth

### **Context**

Furneux Pelham Church of England School is a small rural school with 140 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are from white British descent and there are approximately 5% with learning difficulties. The pupils are predominantly from the 'Pelham villages'. Furneux Pelham has Healthy School status.

### **Summary Judgement**

The overall distinctiveness and effectiveness of Furneux Pelham School as a Church of England School is good, with some outstanding features. Christian values underpin its work and the experiences provided for the pupils. The strong sense of community enables all children to mature both spiritually and academically.

### **Established strengths**

- The Headteacher's strong supportive leadership and vision for the school
- Growing links with the local church
- Dedicated governing body

### **Focus for development**

- Increase the role of the governors, pupils and staff in monitoring and evaluating Collective Worship
- Develop a Mission statement that clearly expresses the schools Christian purpose

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

The school makes good provision to meet the needs of all learners [Overall grade 2] Relationships between staff and learners are very good and learners feel valued as individual. The school council values the views of their fellow pupils and count it a real honour to be elected. Achievements of pupils are shared and celebrated. Christian values are very evident and reinforced through the values programme. They are also underpinned by Bible stories. There is an obvious pride in the buildings and the grounds, which are delightful. The displays throughout the school are inspiring. The Early Birds Club (Before school group) is successful and highly regarded.

Behaviour observed was exemplary and learners were polite and showed respect. There are good opportunities to build relationships and care for each other, for example, in the playground through the 'friendship bus stop' and at 'family' tables at lunchtime. This reinforces the inclusivity of Furneux Pelham School.

Learners speak highly of the extra curricular activities and residential visits, which further enhance their social and cultural development.

The Code of Conduct and recently reviewed behaviour policy reinforce the positive expectations of behaviour that the school has for all learners.

### **What is the impact of Collective Worship on the school community?**

The effectiveness of the worshipping experience provided by the school is good [Overall grade 2] Collective worship is central to the school day. There is good use of music, drama and ICT in worship. Pupils enter and exit quietly and reflectively. Grace is said at lunchtime and the Lord's prayer used in church services. Year 6 monitors prepare the hall for worship and take this responsibility seriously. The school is looking to raise the importance of prayer within the life of the school and will be working with learners, staff and governors to create a 'school prayer'.

Due to the fact that the hall is used for a wide variety of purposes, there is not a permanent focal point for worship. However, a small table and prayer candle are provided. The school is investigating further enhancing the focal point by using drapes linking in with the liturgical colours used in church. This is to be commended.

The recently appointed vicar is having a positive effect on collective worship and the church is used twice termly for special services, including a leavers service when Bibles are presented. The children are very aware of the beauty and wonder of creation taking great pride in the Millennium garden, which incorporates the Furneux cross. At present the collective worship is monitored by the headteacher but there is little evaluation. Therefore, the role of the governors, pupils and staff in monitoring and evaluating Collective Worship

should be increased.

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

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school is good [Overall Grade 2] The quality of leadership contributes significantly to the success of the school. The Headteacher's clear leadership provides an example of care and concern for all members of the school family. As a result of her leadership, learners follow this role model to promote excellent relationships, good attitudes to learning and a sense of responsibility, resulting in high standards of attainment. The recently appointed deputy head and local vicar are also effectively contributing to the school's development. Members of the governing body are highly committed and supportive and they carry out their duties diligently. There are growing links with the local church community and this is encouraging.

Recent staff, governor and clergy changes provide an excellent opportunity to review what it means for the school to develop a distinctive Christian character.

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