

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### **Ampney Crucis Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School**

School Lane,  
Ampney Crucis,  
Cirencester,  
Gloucestershire  
GL7 5SD

#### **Diocese of Gloucester**

Local Authority: Gloucestershire  
Date of inspection: 16<sup>th</sup> January 2007  
Date of last inspection: 23<sup>rd</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> June 2003  
School's URN: 115673  
Name of Headteacher: Mrs A. Wilkie  
SIAS Inspector NS268: Mrs Muriel Griffiths

#### **Context**

Ampney Crucis is a small rural primary school with three mixed-age classes and small numbers in each year group. The school serves the local village and also accepts an increasing number of pupils from other villages and the nearby town of Cirencester. Most children are from white British backgrounds. All members of the school community have been involved in planning and designing the school's grounds. The headteacher took up her appointment at the beginning of the current term.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Ampney Crucis as a Church of England school are good**

Ampney Crucis is a good and improving Church of England Primary school. It is a happy school with a strong family atmosphere.

#### **Established strengths**

- There is a strong emphasis on personal and social development underpinned by Christian values of care and concern.
- There are strong links between the school, the parish church and the local community.
- Very positive relationships exist between all members of the school community.

#### **Focus for development**

- Revisit the school's mission statement with the whole school community in order to embed the Christian foundation and make it more explicit.
- Include a clear statement of intent and a detailed action plan for developing the Christian foundation as part of the school's improvement plan.
- Establish assessment in religious education so that children know which skills they are developing and how to improve their work.

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

The school's Christian character contributes well towards meeting the needs of all learners. All children are secure in the knowledge that they matter as individuals. As a result, they achieve well and standards are above average. Pupils are well behaved and appreciate the friendship of other pupils. There are good reward systems in place with many opportunities for celebration, such as being named in the 'Golden Book'. Children show courtesy and consideration for each other and towards all adults. They are proud of their school and are keen to talk about the interesting curriculum and after-school activities that are provided for them. They are confident in sharing their views as they know that what they say will be valued. This was especially evident in lessons observed during the inspection.

The School Council is recognised by everyone as a useful 'voice' for members of the school community and all children have been involved in reviewing the playground rules in order to be safer and happier at playtimes. Pupils are delighted that their suggestions are not only considered, but also, acted upon.

The school makes good provision for pupils' personal development and well being and also their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Displays around the school show that the school has a Christian foundation. Examples are a cross and candle in the hall and the School Prayer in each classroom. Pupils are involved with fund-raising for a variety of charities. For example, an 'Open School Garden Day' with musical entertainment by pupils was a very successful event and well attended by the local community. Children are enthusiastic about their gardening club and enjoy working with members of the local community on this project.

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

Pupils enjoy collective worship and have a good appreciation of its importance in the life of the school. A child said during the inspection that 'it provides time to think about things that you don't normally have time to think about.' They especially enjoy the weekly visits of the Reverend Annette. They like being involved in acts of worship, for example, in role play or reading a prayer. Pupils can talk about their favourite acts of worship and remember an act of worship about being brave, when the Reverend Annette brought in her puppy as a 'visual aid'. There are strong links with the parish church and the school worships there for major Christian festivals and also for the annual Leavers' Service. Parents are invited on these special occasions and much appreciate these opportunities to worship with the school. Pupils learn about Bible stories, religious traditions and Christian values through a carefully planned programme of worship. In a good act of worship, observed during the inspection, the theme was 'Peace' and children listened intently to the story of 'Christ of the Andes'. The quiet relaxed atmosphere in the hall meant that pupils readily joined in with different elements of worship with enthusiasm. They especially enjoyed singing 'Thank you Lord for this new day'. As well as joining in the words of their own school prayer, they are developing a good understanding of Anglican traditions through appropriate prayers and responses. The school is now well prepared to put in place procedures for recording, monitoring and evaluating their daily acts of worship.

**The effectiveness of the religious education is good**

Religious education follows the locally agreed syllabus, and contributes to the social, spiritual and moral development of pupils and the school's overall ethos. It is recognised as an important subject in school. Pupils achieve well in Religious Education because of well planned lessons and good teaching. For example, they have opportunities to write about the Nativity Story from the point of view of one of the shepherds. They learn about

Judaism and how the Bar Mitzvah is a celebration of reaching maturity for Jewish children. Pupils make good contributions to lessons and teachers' questions help them to relate what they are learning to their everyday lives. Lessons were observed in each classroom during the inspection. Older children were thinking about the qualities of inspirational leaders. They recognised that Moses had a strong personality and was aware of his weaknesses after watching a slide show of the Children of Israel going to the Promised Land of Canaan. Younger pupils listened intently to the story of the 'Good Samaritan' and considered which qualities they should develop in order to be good 'neighbours'. The youngest children in the school enjoyed a time of quiet reflection, thinking about someone who is a special friend. The subject leader is effective in her role and has ensured that all teachers are confident with the recently introduced syllabus. She has assembled a portfolio of pupils' work, which provides a good resource for her colleagues. Some informal assessment is already taking place but she is aware that the school needs to introduce more formal procedures as suggested by the Locally Agreed Syllabus.

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

The recently appointed headteacher has a clear vision to evaluate and develop the school's Christian ethos further. The school's Christian foundation is also an important priority for governors. Christian life and values are evident out in the everyday life of the school. The shared commitment of the headteacher, staff and governors to the children and their families contribute to the very evident family feeling in the school. Parents are confident that the school provides a caring environment, inspired by Christian principles, which helps pupils develop confidence and good self esteem. There are opportunities for parents to give their views about the school such as at the Parent Forums held each term.

The wider church community is actively involved in the school and helps in a variety of ways thus promoting the links with the local church. Children have been able to form good relationships with these visitors and this has increased their experience of the Christian church and those who belong to it. A further example of the strong relationship between the school and the parish church is a display in church of pupils' art work, currently a triptych of the Nativity. The new headteacher is also keen to provide children's contributions for the parish magazine. The Reverend Annette provides pastoral support and care for all members of the school community.