

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### **Badwell Ash Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School**

The Street  
Badwell Ash  
Bury St Edmunds  
Suffolk  
IP31 3DG

#### **Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich**

LA: Suffolk

Date of inspection: 16 October 2006

Date of last inspection: June 2001

School's unique reference number: 124759

Name of Headteacher: Mrs S Roots

Name of Inspector: Simon Windmill 182

#### **Context**

Badwell Ash Primary is a small rural school of 50 pupils serving the village of Badwell Ash, with some pupils from outside the catchment area. Most pupils are from white British backgrounds. In common with many other schools in the area, the school has had to reduce staff and reorganise classes, but this was handled very well, and has not had any adverse impact on the quality of education provided.

#### **Summary Judgement**

##### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Badwell Ash as a Church of England school is good, with some outstanding features.**

The school's Christian ethos is evident in the excellent and supportive relationships between pupils and staff. Pupils feel highly valued as individuals within a caring and safe atmosphere. High expectations of attainment and behaviour are effectively promoted throughout the school.

#### **Established strengths**

- The school's Christian ethos and values are reflected in the excellent relationships and levels of care throughout the school
- Staff are very highly valued, and work exceptionally well together as a team
- Collective Worship is valued by all, and is seen as a very important part of school life
- The Headteacher and staff maintain high standards of behaviour among pupils

#### **Focus for development**

- Increase the level and range of pupils' direct involvement in Collective Worship
- Develop a shared understanding within the staff of what is meant by spiritual development, and how it can be fostered in pupils through the whole curriculum
- Explore the possibility of introducing prayer meetings for staff and governors
- Initiate a more formal system for the recording and evaluation of Collective Worship, with pupil and governor involvement

##### **The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is outstanding in meeting the needs of all pupils.**

The school's strong Christian ethos permeates all aspects of the life of the school. Staff see this as the foundation of the outstanding relationships between all adults and children in the school. This is reflected in the warm, welcoming and friendly atmosphere. Pupils' personal development is very well catered for. They feel exceptionally well valued by all members of staff, and are known and cared for as individuals. As a result, pupils learn from the good role models staff provide, and they look after each other exceptionally well. They are very aware of the needs of others less fortunate than themselves, and respond generously to charitable appeals.

The behaviour of most pupils is outstanding. They know the rules, and understand the reasons for them. They have some input into formulating the rules, and are aware of the consequences if rules are broken. A tiny number of pupils find it difficult to keep to the high standards of behaviour expected of them, but support staff are always at hand, and if lapses of behaviour occur, they always deal with it promptly and effectively. This ensures that the work of other pupils is not disrupted, and other pupils cope exceptionally well with this. Pupils say that there is no bullying in the school, and if friends do fall out, they quickly make friends again.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. For example, pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong, and have a strong sense of justice. They are very aware of environmental issues and support the school's recycling initiative. While opportunities for spiritual and moral development which arise naturally in the daily life of the school are seized on by staff, the school does not have a policy for encouraging such development.

**The impact of Collective Worship on the school community is good, with some outstanding features.**

Worship is regarded as a very important part of school life by pupils and staff. Pupils enjoy assemblies, and take part enthusiastically. Worship is soundly based on Christian principles and teaching. It follows a well planned cycle of worship themes, which include the main festivals of the church year. A lay Reader from the local parish church leads assemblies in the church for a week during each half term, and the church is also used for worship at other times, such as Christmas, harvest, end of year and other special occasions. For example, Ascension day is celebrated each year with a whole-school pilgrimage to the church, led by a processional cross. Pupils and staff contribute to special Sunday services at the church by reading lessons, playing music, decorating the church for festivals such as Mothers' Day, carol services and Midsummer songs of praise. The church is also used as a resource for other learning, such as art and history.

Daily Worship is held in the school hall, where worship and RE wall displays contribute to the atmosphere. Worship always includes singing, teaching and prayer or reflection. Pupils know the Lords Prayer, the School prayer and the Grace, and these prayers are used in worship or at other times of the day. Children have a good understanding of the purposes and styles of prayer. Each class has opportunities to lead worship. Pupils enjoy worship, and said they would like more drama, more opportunities to organise and lead worship, and more opportunities to use their own prayers in worship. Brief records of daily worship are kept, and worship is occasionally evaluated informally by staff.

**The effectiveness of Religious Education is good.**

The Suffolk syllabus is used effectively for RE, and the school is reviewing and updating its syllabus in accordance with the revised county scheme. Pupils and staff regard RE as a very important part of school life. There is an exceptionally wide range of abilities within the school, and this is well catered for through carefully planned learning.

Pupils enjoy lessons, and there are RE displays and artefacts in classrooms and other areas of the school. They contribute readily in discussions, and their learning influences their daily lives. For example, in a discussion a pupil said that she liked RE because it helped her to understand how she should treat other people, and that she should help people who don't have enough to eat.

RE plays a part in other subject areas across the curriculum. For example, a story used in RE was also used in a literacy lesson. RE teaching is soundly based on Christian principles, balanced with suitable teaching about other faiths. RE teaching is supported by close links with the Diocese, the local church and the wider community. Assessment of RE is informal at present, but formalising assessment is included in the school development plan.

**The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school is good, with some outstanding features.**

The headteacher's leadership and management is exceptionally good, and is founded on an ethos of openness, approachability and collaboration. Staff and governors are fully involved in the development of their school. The headteacher and governors give effective support to the school in promoting its Christian vision, aims and values. The headteacher has built an exceptionally good team spirit within the staff and governors.

Pastoral care is offered to the school through the vicar and a staff member who has been trained in bereavement counselling, and this is highly valued by staff and parents. The school is highly regarded by parents and the wider community, and the leadership team is strongly committed to ensuring that all pupils have a growing awareness of their own development as individuals and as members of a community. This is seen in the way that pupils respond to the needs of others within and beyond their school community, for example through their generous support of charities. Governors regularly contribute to the life of the school, for example by hearing readers, and getting involved in school events.

SIAS report October 2006 Badwell Ash Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP31 3DG