

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### **Great Bedwyn Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School**

Farm Lane,  
Great Bedwyn,  
Marlborough  
SN8 3TR

#### **Diocese: Salisbury**

Local authority: Wiltshire

Dates of inspection: 10th December 2007

Date of last inspection: March 2004

School's unique reference number: 126391

Headteacher: Mrs Anne Davidson

Inspector's name and number: Mr A W G Rickett 201

#### **School context**

Great Bedwyn is an average size primary school of 195 children. Most children come from the immediate area although a significant number come from outside the catchment area. Pupil mobility is low. The number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below the national average. Nearly all children are from a white British heritage. The socio-economic background of children is generally favourable.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Great Bedwyn CE VC Primary School as a Church of England school are good**

Great Bedwyn is a good church school with an ethos based on fundamental Christian values which help to develop a clear set of moral guidelines for the children. It lives out its mission of creating an environment in which everyone treats each other with kindness. This is a community which values the individual and creates opportunities for children to reach their potential in their learning and personal development.

#### **Established strengths**

- A strong ethos which ensures that the well-being of all children is put at the heart of the school.
- High expectations in the learning and behaviour of all the children.
- A real sense of care between all members of the school community.

#### **Focus for development**

- Review collective worship themes so that the message delivered has a stronger focus.
- Develop the role of governors and children in the monitoring of collective worship.

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

The outstanding quality of the school is the kindness that pervades the whole school community built on Christian values. The school interprets this in an excellent way by encouraging children to empathise with others and to truly understand how others are feeling. This has created a community where there is a mutual trust and children are able to talk openly about their beliefs and opinions with each other, knowing that their views will be listened to with respect. This is a reflection of the value placed on the individual which is at the heart of the school and is a very good example of the emphasis placed on treating others as you would wish to be treated yourself. Staff have high expectations of the children and these are reached not because there will be a reward but because it is a part of the school ethos. Children work very well together in lessons, sharing and helping one another with their work. Good teaching was seen in all lessons. In one lesson the younger children were asked to consider their feelings when responding to concepts such as 'peace'. They answered very

well to this challenge, clearly demonstrating the level of empathy amongst the children and showing a good example of how to engage them personally in their learning. This emphasis on valuing the individual creates an environment in which children respond excellently to their learning and they therefore make very good progress. Standards are very high and children with learning difficulties, as well as the gifted and talented, make higher progress than expected. The School Council is an important part of the decision-making process in the school and this is a reflection of the way that the school takes the views of the children seriously. Children speak of the future with confidence and show excitement for and appreciation of the wider world.

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

The impact of collective worship has been enhanced through significant recent developments in the way that it is delivered. Themes have been carefully planned so that appropriate links are made between worship themes, the school's PSHÉ programme and the children's social and emotional development. This has created a very cohesive structure and provided a framework through which each theme can be explored in considerable depth. This has noticeably strengthened the place of collective worship in the life of the school. Children have responded well to these changes, showing a positive attitude. They understand the importance of worship in a church school, that through the example of Jesus it shows people how to lead their lives. The development of class-based worship has been another improvement that has helped to strengthen worship overall. It is linked to the whole school worship at the beginning of the week and has become more meaningful to the children since they appreciate that the message has relevance to them. The children's understanding of prayer is very good. They can explain how prayer is used to talk with God and that sometimes prayer can be very powerful if you have faith. Children also say that prayer can be used in quiet times to give them the time to think about problems. Acts of worship are well planned so that there are clear references to scripture. The school has identified the need to make the messages given in worship even clearer through the use of key questions to help focus the children's thoughts during reflective times. Children sing songs of praise with enthusiasm and as one child said, "singing carols can give you a lovely feeling". The vicar and team rector lead worship regularly and these occasions are popular with the children.

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

The headteacher provides good leadership with the well-being of the children at the heart of her vision. This aim is shared by the whole community and originates from the single school rule that kindness should be at the root of relationships. There is a strong rapport between members of staff and this plays a significant part in their well-being. Staff expectations are high and they provide very good examples of living life according to the school ethos. Governors are committed to the Christian status of the school and value the successful balance that the school has achieved between the promotion of its Christian foundation and its service to the local community. The Co-ordinator for collective worship is enthusiastic and has a very good understanding of the impact that worship can have on the lives of the children. She has a good grasp of what needs to be done to enhance the impact of worship further and make it even more central to the life of the school. Links with the local church community are good. The church is regularly used to celebrate major events in the Christian calendar and this reinforces the children's understanding of the importance of festivals in Christian worship. The PCC has a keen interest in the school and receives regular reports on the school's progress from the foundation governors. These links are further strengthened by the vicar who is seen as a familiar figure in school. The Team Rector offers the school tremendous support both through his contact with the church and in his pastoral involvement with everyone in the school community. Parents are very supportive of the school and are most positive about the way that opportunities are given to the children to appreciate faiths of all kinds. They are very pleased with the quality of care given and say that their children feel happy in a safe and secure environment.