

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Great Budworth Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

School Lane
Great Budworth
Northwich
Cheshire
CW9 6HQ

Diocese: Chester

Local authority: Cheshire

Dates of inspection: 10th January 2007

Date of last inspection: 18th to 21st June 2001

School's unique reference number: 111248

Headteacher: Miss Catherine Shaw (Acting)

Inspector's name and number: Mrs Sue Bowen 454

School context

This is a very small village school whose pupils, 56 in number, are predominantly of white British backgrounds. The number of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is close to the national average.

Following the resignation of the previous Headteacher, who led the school at the time of the most recent Section 5 inspection, the school has had an Acting Headteacher

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Great Budworth CE Primary School as a Church of England school are satisfactory

The school is a highly cohesive community which offers broad Christian values in a supportive and happy setting. Its position as a Church of England school has been less clearly delineated in recent years. Under the new Acting Headteacher, the capacity for improvement in this respect is very good.

Established strengths

- The strong, cohesive and stable community at the heart of village life
- Relationships between staff and children and the way the team works together
- The clear vision of the Acting Headteacher for the future of the school, and her ability to implement this vision

Focus for development

- Articulate a clear message of the Christian foundation of the school so that all stakeholders share this vision
- Ensure that the environment of the school, including displays and artefacts, reinforces this clear message
- Update documentation to reflect the importance of the school's Christian basis

Great Budworth School is satisfactory in meeting the needs of all learners through its distinctive Christian character.

Great Budworth Primary School conveys a strong message of a community that works together and supports all its members. The children feel valued and safe due to the care and kindness shown to them by all the teaching staff. Older children look after younger ones, and make valuable suggestions about considering the needs of others, such as through charity fund-raising which they organise themselves. The school is very inclusive and has recently made alterations to cater for two disabled pupils who are integrated on a part-time basis; their presence has been greeted very positively by the rest of the pupils. There are a small number of pupils who offer particular challenges, and these are dealt with firmly but fairly. Relationships in school are excellent. A calm and happy family atmosphere prevails, in spite of the extra demands on all staff engendered by workloads in a small school. Plans are in

hand for the school's forthcoming 150th birthday, offering an extra opportunity for the community to celebrate together.

However, the school as a whole does not see itself clearly as a Church school.

Documentation such as newsletters do not refer to the Christian basis of the school; there are no artefacts or displays which reinforce this message. The Acting Headteacher is very clear that these matters need to be addressed.

Collective worship has a good effect on the school community.

The Acting Headteacher gives a strong lead through her sessions of Collective Worship, which are all constructed on Christian themes. Recent work has included using the Parables as a way of explaining and strengthening the school rules, and looking at the idea of faith through the story of Daniel. These themes have a very positive impact on the pupils. The Acting Headteacher ensures that pupils know that they attend a church school, and she provides opportunities for reflection and discussion, which works well with this small number of pupils. Pupils of all ages enjoy the Act of Worship, listen keenly and offer ideas with confidence. They know some conventions of Anglican practice such as the Lord's Prayer, and can recite the school prayer. The Headteacher gives them ideas to help this, for example by encouraging them to use their ten fingers to think of ten things about which they would like to thank God in their own prayers. This gives them an excellent focus for reflection and helps them to make a personal response.

The Vicar leads an Act of Worship once a fortnight, and also visits informally. He has good local knowledge of the families in the small community of the school. Pupils visit the Church, situated nearby, for major occasions throughout the year.

During the rest of the week, some sessions are predominantly focused on personal development and on praise for good achievement, rather than the Christian foundation of the school.

Leadership and management of the school as a church school are satisfactory.

The Acting Headteacher, who has only been in post for one term, has a clear view of where she wants the school to be in terms of its distinctive Christian vision. She has established good relationships with all stakeholders, which indicates that they will follow her in this implementation. She carries a substantial teaching commitment, and has not yet had sufficient time to embed her development ideas into daily practice. However, in her short time in post, she has revised the pupils' code of conduct so that it is based on Christian themes as in the Parables. She has effected significant changes in the focus for Collective Worship. At all times, her personal Christian commitment is in evidence.

Governors have an active involvement in the work of the school and care deeply about its future in their village community. They increasingly monitor the work of the school, but do not at present challenge its Christian foundation.

There is much work to be done in this respect, but the firm measures being put in place by the Acting Headteacher indicate that the capacity for improvement is very good.