

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### **Lambourn Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School**

Greenways,  
Lambourn  
Berks  
RG17 7LJ

#### **Diocese of Oxford**

Local Authority: West Berkshire

Dates of inspection: 27<sup>th</sup> March 2008

Date of last inspection: October 2003

School's Unique reference number: 109968

Name of Headteacher: Peter Shelton

Inspector's name and NS inspector's number: Gillian Allison NS 142

#### **Context**

Lambourn Church of England School is an average sized village school in a somewhat isolated rural area. Most pupils are drawn from the local area. The number of pupils with special educational needs is above average. The current headteacher has been in post since September 2006, following a period of temporary leadership.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Lambourn Church of England Primary School as a Church of England school are satisfactory.**

The school has redefined its vision with a new emphasis on the Christian foundation. It is poised to build upon its caring, family ethos to maximise opportunities for all children.

#### **Established strengths**

- The care and support which staff offer to every child
- The very good relationships between staff and between staff and children
- The support of local clergy to the Christian life of the school

#### **Focus for development**

- Involve all stakeholders in the evaluation of church school distinctiveness
- Incorporate the findings in overall school planning

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

The school's commitment to "the best for every child" is reflected in the initiatives to raise achievement in core subjects. These initiatives are beginning to make an impact. Alongside these efforts, the school continues to emphasise the development of the whole child within a Christian framework, with a strong focus on personal development. Parents comment positively about the caring, family atmosphere which enables children to feel safe and happy. Adults model respect for one another and this is reflected in good relationships between children and adults. The celebration of achievements in special awards assemblies raises confidence and motivates children. Classes make their own rules, based on good understanding of the school's core values. This confidence about moral and social issues carries over into the school council, where representatives value the opportunity to support school development. Children's involvement in the local community, within the village and in the wider area, builds social awareness. The school environment is spacious and well kept, though it lacks displays to represent the Christian ethos. The grounds offer appropriate space for quiet and reflection which the school plans to develop further.

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

Worship is a distinctive feature of the school because the characteristics of worship reflect the Christian foundation. Themes reaffirm the school's values, and in the best practice, link to children's own experiences. Celebration of festivals builds children's understanding of the Church's year and reinforces learning in religious education. The Church has a real and effective presence in the school. The Vicar and the local Methodist minister take turns to lead Tuesday worship in school. Parents and children enjoy celebratory services in the parish church and the sense of the school community joining with the wider community. Children are generally positive about collective worship. Older children talk about the place of prayer but are less certain about quiet reflection. However, even the youngest respond to the lighting of a candle and can explain its symbolism. They are familiar with Bible stories. A pupil explained that you may hear a story repeated and appreciate different meanings. Singing is the high point of worship in the school and makes an important contribution to children's spiritual and cultural development. They speak enthusiastically about sharing their passion when they sing in public, especially at Christmas. Their natural enjoyment was evident in a Foundation / Key Stage One act of worship when several children spontaneously broke into song and linked hands to broadcast music. The headteacher is taking part in a diocesan initiative about worship, with a view to enriching the school's collective worship programme. The school has yet to evaluate the impact of worship on the school community, so as to support this area of church school distinctiveness.

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

The headteacher has a clear vision for the church school. He is well supported by staff and governors and together they have revised the school's mission statement, agreeing greater emphasis on the Christian foundation which underpins the ethos. The prospectus includes a very clear section about being a church school. The governing body plans to build upon this by promoting the vision throughout the school and wider community. Other organisational plans reflect the commitment to children's spiritual and personal development, already a good feature of school life. The school values its relationship with parents and works hard to build effective partnerships, emphasising the inclusive ethos. The local Anglican and Methodist churches have a valuable link with the community through the school. Families join special worship occasions in the church and clergy involvement in school worship builds pastoral relationships in the community. The church community supports school life through the commitment of foundation governors. Though some informal self evaluation of the church school has taken place, the school has not undertaken a comprehensive analysis of the impact of church school distinctiveness. This means that best practice has not been audited. The school has no clear agenda for future development of church school distinctiveness.