

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### Lea and Garsdon Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

The Street  
Lea, Malmesbury  
Wiltshire  
SN16 9PG

#### Diocese: Bristol

Local authority: Wiltshire  
Dates of inspection: 16 January 2008  
Date of last inspection: 29 March 2004  
School's unique reference number: 126335  
Headteacher: Mrs Elizabeth Bowyer  
Inspector's name and number: Mrs Rosemary Bartlett NS 120

#### School context

This is a small rural school serving the village community of Lea, and with a number of pupils coming from beyond the catchment area. The school has grown steadily in numbers over the last few years and this growth has been well matched by an effective building programme. Attainment on entry varies from year to year.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Lea and Garsdon School as a Church of England school are good.

A clear Christian spirit permeates all aspects of school life. The headteacher and staff work closely together to promote an ethos of inclusion and respect for others. The many links between the school and the local church support the distinctive church school character.

#### Established strengths

- The dedication of the headteacher and staff to the welfare and development of all pupils
- The happiness, friendliness and very good behaviour of the pupils
- The confidence and support of the parents

#### Focus for development

- Increase opportunities for pupils to learn about the variety of world faiths, as well as Christianity, in religious education and provide appropriate staff in-service training.
- Provide increased times of reflection in collective worship
- Clearly record the school's Christian vision in all documentation

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

The school's high expectations are based on tolerance and respect for others. The staff are very good role models and this is reflected in the pupils' very good behaviour. They ensure that pupils settle easily into school and relate well with one another. Pupils know that their individual behaviour influences others, one pupil commenting, 'If I do something I set an example of how to behave'. Pupils listen attentively to one another in group situations and move unprompted to help each other with everyday tasks such as stacking chairs. They talk appreciatively of staff encouragement and support and of the school's recognition of effort and achievement. Another pupil said, 'The older you get the more trusted you are'. A high priority is given to healthy lifestyles and pupils speak enthusiastically about the variety of after school activities including many sports. The School Council take their responsibility seriously and are involved in planning events and distributing the funds they raise. These activities, together with the fact that their treasurer has a notional £100 fund to manage, contribute well to pupils' sense of citizenship. However, a broader sense of global citizenship is less evident. Pupils benefit from the good opportunities for music provided by the school. The history curriculum is

enriched by visits to museums, contributions from members of the local community and visits to the Victorian Schoolroom. These and other areas of the curriculum make a contribution to pupils' cultural and religious development. However, pupils do not have full access to the rich diversity of lifestyles, faiths and cultures across the world. In religious education pupils are given a good grounding in Anglicanism and made aware of other Christian denominations. Lessons are well prepared and resourced. Younger pupils show a good knowledge of the features and purposes of a church building. Older pupils speak enthusiastically about the experience of a 'virtual' Christian pilgrimage. They remember the teacher's account of her personal response to pilgrimage sites. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities to learn about other world faiths, as outlined in the Local Authority's Agreed Syllabus. This is an area for development.

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

Daily school worship is a time clearly set apart from the busyness of school life. The attendance of all staff and pupils enhances a strong sense of the school as a community. Music contributes well to worship. Pupils participate enthusiastically in the singing, together with gestures and movements. A number of instrumentalists play regularly in worship. Pupils bring their own experience to school worship especially in the weekly class assemblies, which are much enjoyed by the pupils. Worship has an overall theme for each term which links Christian values with the school's social and emotional learning programme. Pupils also enjoy the school worship led once a week by a local church member. Stories, including Bible readings are imaginatively presented, as seen in an illustrated power-point presentation of Psalm 23. Many links are in place between school worship and church worship. School worship is held in the parish church on special occasions such as Easter, Christmas and Harvest. Pupils are very attentive during worship. They are keen to contribute and respond to questions readily. There is a good visual focus of candles with a cross, which aids reflection. The school now plans to further increase opportunities for reflection within worship. Collective worship provides many opportunities for pupil's spiritual growth and development.

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

The headteacher's vision and the consistent dedication of the whole staff team are fundamental to its effective management. However, this vision, and the Christian values underlying the life of the school, has yet to be clearly recorded in all the school's documentation. In addition to leading the school, the headteacher also has a considerable teaching commitment. This has provided increased resources for the school, which have been well deployed. The welfare and progress of all the pupils are the school's clear priority. This concern has been the basis for all decisions on individual care, class arrangements, building projects and grounds development. Governors have given diligent support to the school through their involvement with the well-planned and well-resourced building programme. Each governor is linked with a curriculum area. The headteacher and staff work together as a close team with a clearly shared ethos based on mutual respect. Staff strengths are maximised. There are very good channels of communication with parents. Parents appreciate the teachers' accessibility and comment 'they are all approachable,' and "you never need to wait until parents' evening'. They praise the school's skills in identifying pupil's needs early so that remedial action can be taken promptly. Parents recognise and value the school's strengths. The many links with the parish church include effective systems for the exchange of information about events and activities. A considerable number of pupils take part in an after school club run by the church, which contributes to their learning about Christianity. The last inspection identified two areas to be addressed: training for all staff in leading worship and an audit of spiritual development across the curriculum. The school has made a start in both areas, which still needs to be completed.