

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### **Newton Blossomville Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School**

Newton Blossomville

Turvey

Bedfordshire

MK43 8A

**Diocese: Oxford**

Local authority: Milton Keynes

Dates of inspection: 13 March 2007

Date of last inspection: 30 and 31 January 2002

School's unique reference number: 110405

Headteacher: Mrs Gina Gunn

Inspector's name and number: Mrs Priscilla Parry

#### **School context**

Newton Blossomville School was established in 1822 in the newly built schoolhouse, but for several years pupils have been taught in the village Reading Room close by and the original building used for administrative purposes and small group teaching. Structural alterations and refurbishment are due to take place in the old building during the summer to give more space for Foundation stage pupils. It is situated by the village green next to the church. There are 19 pupils on the roll and none has a statement of special needs.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Newton Blossomville First School as a Church of England school are good**

This is a good church school where Christian values and principles are at the heart of school life and give a distinctive and inclusive ethos.

#### **Established strengths**

- Pupils' personal development in behaviour and attitude
- Well established and close links between church and school
- Commitment and co-operation of all members of the school community to the well-being of the learners.

#### **Focus for development**

- Training for members of the Governing Body to enable them to execute their full responsibilities.
- Members of the Governing Body to visit school in an official capacity and on a regular basis in order to fulfil their leadership roles.
- Give greater prominence to the Mission Statement in all aspects of life in the school.

#### **The school through its distinctive Christian character is outstanding.**

It is apparent when talking and listening to members of the community who are involved in the day to day life of the school that this is a much loved, vibrant and happy establishment where each child is valued and given every chance to excel. It is very much a family atmosphere and staff, parents and members of the village community work together to promote this. The Christian ethos underpins the behaviour and attitude of all. Pupils are exceptionally mature for their age, very well behaved, work quietly and are friendly and polite. They care for each other, an example being the buddy system, where older pupils take responsibility for younger ones when they enter school, and go on feeling their responsibility even when the younger member is integrated. Learners love their school and say there is

nothing they would want to change. Grace is said before lunch, and a special prayer for each child's birthday which they say makes them feel special. Parents are full of praise for the staff and all that goes on in school life, are kept well informed of events and the progress of their children, and are welcome into school at any time to discuss any concerns. There is a positive behaviour policy where achievements are celebrated. Pupils know the school rules that govern pupil behaviour and are able to discuss them with understanding. Members of the community delight in serving the school: learners enjoy a session each summer with the local beekeeper.

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

The day begins with Collective Worship which is an important part of school life. The church calendar is followed where appropriate, but all subject matters are made relevant to the lives of the children. In the Act of Worship observed the children sang with obvious enjoyment, listened attentively to the Bible story and were able to retell it later with understanding. A candle was lit after discussing the story, but not enough time given for reflection. On occasions pupils write and offer their own prayers, and they have a real understanding of what 'talking to God' means. They are aware of the needs of the world having listened to stories from visitors about Africa and Ghana, and have a real desire to eliminate poverty. They support a number of charities, such as Marie Curie and Farm Africa. Services are held in church at the end of each term. Parents and members of the community are welcome to these, and to the open assembly each month in school. Activities are regularly undertaken with other church schools in the Milton Keynes area which provides an opportunity to be part of the wider church-school family. The Head plans Worship on a termly basis, and monitors and evaluates it with a view to more long-term planning. The Incumbent is a great support and the children enjoy her visits. She has known most of them, and their parents, from her church-based toddler group and some attend the Family Service.

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

Leaders and managers all work together to make this school the safe and happy place it is. Parents give unstintingly of their time and resources to support them. The parent group (FONS) raises money with which, for example, they take the school on a day trip or to the theatre. The Head is dedicated and hard-working. She gives strong leadership and has the full support of her staff and an excellent relationship with the learners. The Incumbent and Head work together to ensure the Christian faith is the basis on which school life is built. RE is well-planned, monitored and evaluated by the Head and Incumbent. The Chair and members of the Governing Body are very committed to the school and fully support the Head as far as they understand their role but have had little, or no, training. They have all taken up their responsibilities within the last 18 months. All are anxious to receive training including the Chair and Foundation Governor. Governors also need to take responsibility for monitoring and evaluating all aspects of the curriculum, and undertake official and regular visits into school. The evaluation process was a key issue to be dealt with in the 2002 Section 23 Inspection. Some members of the Governing Body did not know the Mission Statement, said it was not taken as a basis for decision-making at their meetings, and nowhere was it displayed in the school. This needs to be rectified.