

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Ringsfield Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

School Road

Ringsfield

Beccles

NR34 8NZ

Diocese: St Edmundsbury and Ipswich

LA: Suffolk

Date of inspection: 14 May 2007

Date of last inspection: February 2002

School's unique reference number: 124741

Name of Headteacher: Mrs Angela Hall

Name of Inspector: Simon Windmill 182

Context

Ringsfield Church of England VC primary school is a small primary school in rural Suffolk. It has good links with the local parish church. All pupils come from white British backgrounds. The number of pupils with disabilities or learning difficulties is about average.

Summary Judgement

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Edmundsbury as a Church of England school are good.

The school's Christian ethos is evident throughout the school. It is reflected in the caring and supportive relationships between pupils and staff. Pupils' personal development and behaviour are good, and they enjoy learning within a stimulating, caring and safe atmosphere.

Established strengths

- The Christian ethos and atmosphere, which sustain a high level of nurture, support and care in relationships within and between staff and pupils
- The supportive teamwork of dedicated staff and governors
- Behaviour management, with its Christian emphasis on forgiveness
- The encouragement of healthy living and concern for the environment

Focus for development

- Develop more structured planning and record keeping for Collective Worship
- Give pupils more opportunities to contribute to Collective Worship
- Develop a policy for encouraging Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development as part of the implementation of the SEAL project (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning)
- Develop the governors' role in monitoring and evaluating the impact of Collective Worship on the life of the school

The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is good in meeting the needs of all pupils.

Care and support for pupils and staff is very good, and pupils of all abilities are able to flourish in their learning and personal development. The school's Christian ethos is good, being soundly based on Christian values which influence the whole life of the school. This is seen in the school's warm, welcoming, inclusive and friendly atmosphere, which parents

value highly, with parents expressing high satisfaction with the school in surveys. It is also reflected in the high quality of relationships within the school.

Pupils learn from the good role models of staff and other adults, which help pupils develop self-confidence and independence. Pupils' behaviour is very good. This is because they are involved in setting the rules for their class, and therefore respect them and understand the consequences if rules are broken. They are also encouraged to take responsibility for their actions, and learn from their mistakes. A small group of the older boys sometimes present challenging behaviour, but staff deal with this promptly and effectively. Having dealt with poor behaviour, staff ensure that pupils know that they then have a fresh start, which helps them understand the importance of Christian forgiveness and reconciliation.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They have a clear understanding of right and wrong. The headteacher, staff and governors see spiritual and moral development as a vital part of pupils' learning, and encourage this by giving pupils opportunities for reflection, in Collective Worship and the wider curriculum. The school does not have a policy for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, but plans are in place to start using the SEAL resources, which will be a good opportunity to develop a shared understanding of how spiritual and moral growth can be encouraged.

Pupils' awareness and concern for the needs of others is good, and is reflected in their generous contributions to charitable causes. The School Council gives pupils a say in running the school. An Environment Club raises pupils' awareness of the need to look after the environment, and pupils are encouraged to develop healthy lifestyles through diet and exercise. The Christian identity of the school is visible in many ways, such as crosses, candles, a prayer table for pupils to put their own prayers, a Christian Mission Statement in the prospectus, and lively Christian displays and prayers around the school – for example one classroom had an excellent display of work based on Easter.

The impact of Collective Worship on the school community is good.

Collective Worship is the focal point of each day, and has a strong, positive impact on school life. It is soundly based on the Christian gospel. It always includes singing, teaching and time for prayer and reflection. Staff lead worship well, and the Vicar leads worship once a week. A Christian group from Ringsfield Hall Eco-Centre leads worship once a month, with an emphasis on ecology and environmental issues. Pupils enjoy worship and join in enthusiastically, especially when they have a part to play in it, such as acting out a story or reading a poem. Pupils understand a range of purposes and styles of prayer. They know the Lord's Prayer, which is sometimes said during worship. Prayers are said at other times in the school day, such as grace before lunch. The parish and other local churches are sometimes used for special services, such as Christingle, and pupils provide displays for the church for special occasions. Worship is planned around a theme for each week, and reflects the church year. Records of worship are kept, but worship is not systematically recorded, monitored or evaluated to assess its impact on pupils.

Pupils would like to have more opportunities to write and read their own prayers, and build them up into a collection to use in Collective Worship. They would also welcome more opportunities to contribute more to worship, for example by acting out stories, or helping to plan worship.

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

The Headteacher and governors give good leadership to the school. Many governors spend time in the school helping in various ways, so they have a good understanding and knowledge of the school. Staff are very positive about the school's leadership and management. They feel valued by the leadership team, and welcome the importance placed on maintaining staff well-being.

The leadership team works well to promote a distinctive and active Christian vision for the school, and Christian values underpin the school's life and work. This is reflected in the

school development plan, and is emphasised when new staff are recruited. Parents and members of the wider community speak very highly of the family atmosphere generated through the school's caring relationships, and are very happy with the school. They feel well informed about the school's activities, and enjoy the fact that they are positively encouraged to get involved in school life in a number of ways, for example as classroom helpers, after school clubs or fundraising.

Links with other churches, clergy and other church members contribute to Collective Worship. Links with the wider community are good, such as the playgroup, and other small village schools through sharing activity days, trips and special services. Pupils come from local high schools for work experience and other activities, and further afield the school has links with a large inner London multicultural school, which sends pupils to visit Ringsfield. This gives pupils opportunities to learn about the variety of faiths and cultures represented in other parts of the country. The school regularly contributes to the parish magazine through foundation governors, and the church reports its news back to the school.

The school has plans to develop a policy for Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development. Governors do not yet monitor and evaluate the impact of Collective Worship on the life of the school.

SIAS report May 2007 Ringsfield Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School
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