

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

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

Kingston Road  
Shalbourne  
Marlborough.  
Wiltshire  
SN8 3QH

**Diocese: Salisbury**

Local authority: Wiltshire

Date of inspection: 23 April 2008

Dates of last inspection: 19-20 June 2003

School's unique reference number: 126354

Headteacher; Mrs Ruth Matthews

Inspector's name and number: Mr T R Reynolds NSIN: 237

#### **School context**

Shalbourne Primary, a small rural voluntary controlled school, is built on the edge of a prosperous Wiltshire village. The pupils are mostly (94%) of White British heritage; a quarter come from outside the catchment area. The present Headteacher and her staff have been together since 2004 following a complete change-over of teachers and administrator in that year. The buildings offer limited space and are only just adequate, but the outside play areas and facilities are pleasing and excellent.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Shalbourne Primary as a Church of England school are outstanding**

Being a very small school, all teachers and learners know each other very well, the latter feeling confident, secure and nurtured while in school. The teaching staff work as a united, caring team, with strong support from St Michael's church, the village and governors - all participants intent on giving the learners the best possible education in a calm, friendly and Christian environment.

#### **Established strengths**

- The good behaviour allied to Christian principles that is expected - and practised
- The support given to the school by the parish church, governors, parents, the people of the village and beyond
- The preparation, delivery and assessment of Collective Worship

#### **Focus for development**

- To continue looking for methods by which learners can become more articulate in explaining how effective they find Collective Worship in their lives
- To include Collective Worship in the School Improvement Plan
- To speed up the planning for more building; more space is much needed

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

Evidence of the Christian nature of the school is seen in the school name and the logo which includes a drawing of nearby St Michael's church (done by a former pupil). The school Mission Statement states that their aim is to strive to achieve excellence in a caring, Christian environment, and this challenge is being met in a positive and sensitive way. Distinctive Christian attitudes of the learners can be observed in their Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development.

Visits to the village church at festival and other important times, coupled with frequent visits by the Rector and his staff, and by the Foundation governors give spiritual encouragement. Use of Circle Time when an incident occurs that calls for it; and the influence of Collective Worship and Religious Education stimulate the spiritual element. The pupils found recent outings to two churches in Hungerford and to Salisbury Cathedral inspiring experiences. The idyllic Wiltshire country-side in which the school is placed offers space and time for spiritual reflection. For moral development the teachers follow the principles of the clear policies on Good Behaviour (and Bullying) and guide and train accordingly. CW and RE have their influence here as well. Social development is a strong feature of school life. Pupils support a raft of charities (e.g. Jeans for Genes and WaterAid), musicians and actors perform concerts and plays outside the school, one performance of the Nativity Play in the village hall getting a 'full house'. Harvest hampers are distributed to elderly villagers, and many clubs and events outside get school support. Cultural activities also include Art competitions, and links with other countries (Japan, India and Tanzania). A Sudanese bishop is going to visit the pupils this term.

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

The focal points made in the previous inspection (2003) have all received careful attention to the extent that the impact of Collective Worship on the learners is good. They observe and listen well, they respond with keenness, and they speak eloquently of their appreciation of acts of worship. One is held at the end of each school day when they thank God for the day's activities before dispersing. Some older pupils spoke intelligently of their preference for an act of worship to be first thing in the day. The ability to assess learners' spiritual growth is not an easy task, but the Headteacher recognises this and plans to experiment with ways of achieving it. The Rector, a curate and a lay preacher come in weekly to lead an act of worship choosing from their prepared Themes; Headteacher and teachers also lead. There is plenty of material to hand (a recent addition being 'Values for Life' - a diocesan publication). Parents join the Friday assembly which includes the sharing of successes and the award of cups for good work and good manners, etc. The Foundation governor who monitors Collective Worship (and RE) is a frequent visitor to acts of worship and a critical friend. An assessment of acts of worship is rigorously recorded by the Headteacher. There have been no withdrawals from C.W. (or R.E).

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

The Headteacher's faith, vision and enthusiasm lead the way in creating a positive Christian school, and the staff are keen to follow the example that she sets. The Chair of governors

and the Foundation governors give frequent comforting, and occasionally critical, support. The Rector and his staff are on hand to help with maintaining the ideals of the school; it receives much assistance, also, from the village and the parents who involve themselves in many ways in the school routine, and who speak encouragingly of all the effective achievements of Shalbourne Primary.

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