

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### **Wimborne St Giles Church of England Voluntary Aided First School**

Wimborne St Giles  
Wimborne  
Dorset  
BH21 5LX

#### **Diocese: Salisbury**

Local authority: Dorset  
Dates of inspection: 20 June 2007  
Date of last inspection: 3 April 2001  
School's unique reference number: 113819  
Headteacher: Miss Christine Goby  
Inspector's name and number: Mrs Rosemary Bartlett NS 120

#### **School context**

This is a very small school serving a rural area, with a third of the pupils coming from farther afield. The local pre-school has recently transferred onto the school site. The school playing field is an asset to all pupils as is use of the community adventure playground. Pupil attainment on entry varies from year to year.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Wimborne St Giles First School as a Church of England school are good.**

Christian values are fundamental to the life of this school. The close links with the church and community enable pupils to develop a good sense of connection. However, outstanding features are apparent in some areas of school life. For example, the excellent relationships which help the children to develop as kind and responsible people.

#### **Established strengths**

The clear vision and highly effective teamwork of the headteacher and staff  
The well communicated love of learning  
The strong links with the local church and community

#### **Focus for development**

Increase opportunities for visits to places of worship in religious education  
Further develop the cross curricular approach to religious education  
Continue to build on the links with the Pre-school and Middle School

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

The school celebrates the value of each individual and has an imaginative approach to learning and teaching. The start of each school day is well structured to enable the children to arrive, greet their friends and settle down easily to their work. The wake, shake and go routines energise the children, helping them to be alert and receptive. The good, broad curriculum is enriched by the weekly creative arts sessions. In these pupils have excellent opportunities to experience a very wide range of activities including clay modelling, cooking, and making artefacts such as tea light holders. These sessions are very well structured and involve all the pupils working in mixed age groups. As a result of this and other strategies, such as the Year 4 'monitor' system, good relationships are developed and sustained throughout the school. The good variety of extra curricular activities includes choir and gardening. Pupils take part eagerly, responding to the enthusiastic leadership of the staff. This is evident in the spirit of a lunchtime choir session: preparation for a performance at the school summer concert. Day trips and residential visits foster self reliance and consideration for others. The effective School Council provides a voice for pupils. One such result is the current redecoration of the toilets, which is much appreciated. Pupils appreciate their teachers. Year 4 comments include "They give you a lot of inspiration" and "I'll miss the teachers". Pupils benefit from the school's wildlife area. Follow up work includes "dragon

fly music” and much careful art work.

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

Good use of space, a clear focus (provided by pictures, symbols and candles) and the effective choice of music create a real sense of anticipation for the start of worship. The presence of all the teachers contributes well to the sense of community. The school’s ongoing evaluation of worship has led recently to each member of staff leading worship for a week. As a result, the weekly theme is increasingly clearly followed through. The rector takes an act of school worship once a week, which is much enjoyed by pupils, staff and parents. Pupils’ comments include: “He has a meaning for everything he does”. School worship is held in the church three times a year, including the Leavers’ Service for which the church bells are rung. The children enjoy taking part in the Christingle service and they remember well the significance of the orange, candle and red ribbon. Pupils become familiar with the Anglican tradition through their contacts with church members, daily school worship and their experience of worship in church. Music contributes well to pupils’ enjoyment of worship. They are very attentive and keen to take an active part. They respond with lively interest to the well chosen resources, such as a jewellery box in which they glimpse “something very special”.

**The effectiveness of the religious education is good.**

Standards are good and pupils progress well because of the teachers’ creative flair for doing things in new ways and because of the effective monitoring system. Pupils are enabled to see things freshly and to appreciate different points of view. Resources are well used. Good use of open questions helps pupils to deepen their thinking. Younger pupils are skilfully introduced to the Jewish celebration of Shabbat through story, very well matched to their age range. They respond with interest to the candles, the “wine” and the plaited loaf. Older pupils studying the Ten Commandments create their own tablets, and their understanding is extended through being invited to set the commandments within a modern day scenario. Pupils benefit from the cross-curricular approach to RE, which the school now plans to develop further. The start of Lent is marked by pancake making for all pupils. RE enables pupils to grow in awareness of other cultures. The school plans to build on the opportunities for visits to places of worship in order to further extend pupils’ understanding. There are good displays of pupils’ RE work across the school which continue to stimulate interest in these topics.

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

It is the creative vision and leadership of the headteacher, together with the energetic commitment of the staff which are having a strong impact on the development of the pupils. This is a staff team that enjoys challenges. Pupils benefit from the school’s willingness to explore fresh approaches to learning and teaching as well as its commitment to retain what works. The very close staff teamwork ensures that pupils’ needs are well met. There are very good opportunities for the professional development of the staff. The governors are very supportive and much involved in school life. Parents and members of the local church and community support the school well. Management of external links ensure that pupils benefit from the various interests and talents of many members of the local community. A local author introduces pupils to book illustration. In turn, the school itself is fully involved in the life of its community. The children exhibit at the church flower festival. The headteacher supports the annual church fete. Pupils serve tea to visitors after the school Harvest service. The pre-school is now sharing the school site and its resources. Pupils clearly benefit from the closeness of these connections. The school now plans to develop them further, together with the links with the Middle school. School home communications are very good. The school website is inviting and informative, giving parents easy access to school news. The daily accessibility of the head and staff ensures that matters of pupils’ welfare and progress can be addressed promptly. The school buildings have been very well developed and maintained over the years. Pupils enjoy using the upstairs library and watching the progress of the current improvements. The areas identified for action in the last report have all been addressed.