

**Woodham Walter Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School**

The Street  
Woodham Walter  
Maldon  
Essex  
CM9 6RF

**Diocese: Chelmsford**

Local authority: Essex  
Dates of inspection: 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2006  
Date of last inspection: 1999  
School's unique reference number: 115123  
Headteacher: Mrs Madeleine Matthews  
Inspector's name and number: Mrs Rosemary Morgan (64)

**School context**

Woodham Walter Primary School is a small school with 78 pupils. It is situated in close proximity to the Church of St Michaels. Pupils are mainly white British with some pupils coming from Traveller families. The percentage of pupils with Special Educational Needs is above average.

**The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Woodham Walter Primary School as a Church of England school are good with some outstanding features. 2**

**Established strengths**

- A strong, positive community minded ethos.
- Pupils and staff are valued and nurtured in their development.
- Pupils are happy, caring of one another and receptive to learning.
- The Head, Teaching Team and pupils have high expectations and a commitment to continuous improvement which is supported by Governors.

**Focus for development**

- To develop further the links with the Church maximising the involvement of the new incumbent within the school.
- To explore further the Christian character of the school by looking at the vision and aims in terms of its Christian foundation.
- To continue to build on to the opportunities provided within the school environment to create areas for reflection and peace.
- To build onto the significance of collective worship by embedding the themed approach linking where appropriate with the Church calendar and encouraging the children's involvement particularly in the evaluation of the impact of worship.

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

The School gives care and attention to a curriculum which meets the needs of the whole child, evidenced by its commitment to the "Social and Emotional Security for Every Learner" programme. This has a positive impact on pupils who feel involved, affirmed and valued. Achievement and effort is recognised through displays, certificates and acknowledgement within "Celebration Assemblies". Relationships are good. Pupils from widely differing backgrounds work well together and respect each other's views and beliefs. The School Council provides strong ownership for decision making and children talk with pride of charity fundraising, of the recycling project and of the school's distinctiveness saying "We look out for each other at playtime" and "We vote for the best people and you can trust them" (School Council). These opportunities for responsibility and involvement in planning

prepare pupils to be effective adult citizens. The Christian ethos of inclusivity, equality and caring is evident in all aspects of school life – a welcoming environment provides educational challenge, underpinned by support and encouragement. **2**

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

Pupils understand that worship occupies an important part of the school day, and School Council members talk of its relevance to school life. Pupils are generally attentive and are encouraged in their participation by the older pupils who also enjoy their responsibilities in preparing the hall for worship. Half-termly themes are currently linked to the “SEAL” programme, and this is an area highlighted for further development in the School Improvement Plan. Displays in the hall show whole school community events as well as a theme linked to the teaching of the parables. A candle is lit to indicate the time for prayer or reflection, and individual pupils are invited to lead the school in the Lord’s Prayer and the dismissal.

The school links with St Michael’s Church and PCC members will lead worship from time to time. Harvest, Christmas and the Leavers’ Service take place within the Church. The ‘Celebration Assembly’ is a focal point of the week which members of the wider community will also attend. **3**

**The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school is good with some aspects being outstanding.**

The Headteacher and Governors provide a strong clear direction for the school as a Church School and aim through the School Improvement Plan to develop further its distinctiveness. Staff and pupils feel empowered by the leadership, the former speaking of ownership of improvement priorities and of the ‘open door policy’ and the latter of “ideas being listened to”. The Headteacher provides a strong lead and is developing many successful partnerships with parents, other schools in the locality and the community in general. Foundation Governors have active links with the Church and with the new incumbent now in post the school is well poised to act upon its plan to enhance these links. **2**