



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Barningham Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Church Road
Barningham
Bury St Edmunds
IP31 1DD

Diocese: St Edmundsbury and Ipswich

Local authority: Suffolk

Dates of inspection: 7th March 2012

Date of last inspection: 3rd November 2006

School's unique reference number: 124689

Headteacher: Mrs Frances Parr

Inspector's name and number: Michael Kee 316

School context

This is a small school with 66 children on roll from foundation stage to year four. Development to years five and six is being planned. The village church is in close proximity to the school with easy access.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Barningham Church of England Voluntary Controlled School as a Church of England school are good

The head teacher, staff and governors are dedicated to the education and welfare of the pupils, ensuring excellent learning experiences within a clearly acknowledged Christian environment. The leadership of the head teacher and the strong partnership with the incumbent and curate provide a firm basis for the children's spiritual development.

Established strengths

- The clear focus of Governors, head teacher, staff and parents on the spiritual and educational welfare of the children
- Regular involvement of clergy and church community in the work of the school
- Excellent caring relationships between staff and pupils and among the pupils

Focus for development

- Develop clearly focused feedback from governor observations
- Maintain the current drive to firmly establish the school's Christian identity as its core strength

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

The children are proud of their school and say it is a happy place to be where their learning is exciting and fun and teachers look after them and teach them well. They clearly understand the school's church status and spoke of how they enjoy going to church and their happy relationship with the clergy and the church community. Pupils benefit from the clear Christian

belief and practice which is evident in the teaching and care they receive.

Pupils value the opportunities the school provides for learning French and Spanish and having music lessons. They spoke clearly about their reflecting circles and having time to think about the current theme which is 'Service'. They enjoy helping others and spoke of their connection with a school in Brazil and raising money to help the school there purchase a water pump. They write letters to children at the school and display their replies. Children also value the friendships they have at school and how they all care for each other.

Parents are very positive about the school and how Christian values are important there. They themselves value the school's church status and the family feeling which supports all the pupils in their learning. This is strongly underpinning the children's spiritual and moral development.

The head teacher and governors have ensured that the school declares its Anglican heritage and affiliation with clear outside signage and there are crosses in all classrooms and displays of work from religious education lessons as well as the Lord's prayer and children's prayers.

The impact of Collective Worship on the school community is good

Collective worship is an important part of every day when children, staff and visiting governors come together for quiet reflection, prayer and singing. The head teacher takes the lead in planning collective worship along with staff and clergy, and pupils are able to participate in several ways, particularly with their enthusiastic singing of the worship song and by taking a lead with prayers and the greetings.

On the day of the inspection a worship table with a wooden cross and a lighted candle provided a focal point and reflected Anglican custom and practice.

The head teacher used the theme of service from 'Values for Life' and the incumbent concluded with the reflection that God doesn't give us a medal for service he gives us love. Children said the Lord's prayer well and sang the worship song enthusiastically, also singing as they left the hall.

Following collective worship pupils were able to reflect well and spoke of service in terms of helping each other, respecting others and caring for those in need. They related this to the care they receive in school from their teachers and the love and care from their parents. Governors consider collective worship to be of high importance and that the head teacher since her appointment has strongly supported the Christian ethos of the school and the development of collective worship. The incumbent and curate are also very active in promoting collective worship and there is further support from a free church group who bring 'Open the Book' regularly to school. Children also experience the Eucharist both in church and in school. This clearly defines the way the school and the church are working together to support the children's spiritual development.

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

The current head teacher has made a significant impact on the school since her appointment and has inspired governors and colleagues with her focus on the Christian ethos and the revitalised relationship with the local church. The governors provide strong support for the headteacher and staff with regular visits and participation in school events including church services. They also monitor the curriculum delivery and collective worship and support the head teacher and staff in moving the school forward. Staff well being and professional development is encouraged and funded by the governors. The head teacher involves the staff in regular review of the school's vision and its Christian focus.

Parents speak of their faith in the school to provide well for their children and say they feel valued. They are also pleased that the staff listen to them and they in turn support the school strongly. They see the school as an integral part of the community and they value the head teacher and her drive to develop the school.

The church school ethos is seen by staff, governors and parents to have developed

significantly under the leadership of the current head teacher. The incumbent and the curate are both active supporters of the school with regular visits to collective worship and input to governors' meetings. The school is engaging well with the local community and welcomes residents to a range of events as well as services in church.

There is a very positive atmosphere in the school which is shared by everyone including pupils, staff, parents and governors and this has been facilitated by the clear focus of the headteacher in providing excellent opportunities for the children's development based on clearly articulated Christian principles.

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