

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Bourn Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Riddy Lane
Bourn
Cambridgeshire
CB23 7SP

Diocese: Ely

Local authority: Cambridgeshire
Dates of inspection: 19th January 2010
Date of last inspection: 7th March 2007
School's unique reference number: 110782
Headteacher: Mrs Christine Page
Inspector's name and number: Peter Adams (205)

School context

Bourn is a six-class primary school that serves a cluster of villages and the rural area to the west of Cambridge. Pupils are from a range of backgrounds and a significant number rely on school buses for transport to and from school. About 20% come from beyond the designated catchment area. The modern, well-equipped school buildings are set on a spacious site, a short walk from the parish church.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Bourn as a Church of England school are outstanding

The school has a clear Christian ethos that permeates relationships and every aspect of its corporate life. It presents a warm, inclusive and supportive environment with high levels of care for each individual. There are high expectations in terms of behaviour and academic achievement. Learners are confident and demonstrate a care for each other and for the environment. There is an excellent relationship with the local parish church.

Established strengths

- High expectations and attention to the needs of individuals
- Strong partnership with parents and the local church community.
- Learners display qualities of independence and personal responsibility towards each other and the school community.
- Sensitive and effective leadership that encourages collaboration – the views of all stakeholders are valued and acted upon.

Focus for development

- To provide an appropriate Christian symbol in the entrance area to celebrate the church status of the school.
- To raise the profile of the school beyond the home village with displays of work in the church buildings in the catchment villages.
- To provide more places for quiet reflection in the school.

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

The school sets high standards in terms of behaviour and achievement all underpinned by a clear Christian ethos. This is demonstrated in an exceptional level of nurture and care for each individual. Parents commented on how well the staff knew the children, they said the school 'meets the needs of the children, whatever their ability.'

The pupils say that they enjoy school life and see the school as a happy and secure place, where they are treated fairly and their achievements are celebrated. They are made to feel special and have high levels of self-esteem. They are encouraged to participate in the life of the school,

developing initiative and qualities of personal responsibility.

Christian values are at the heart of the culture of the school and have a significant impact on the personal development of the learners. A foundation governor commented on the relaxed and caring atmosphere where 'everybody looks out for others'. Older pupils support their younger peers and take on mentoring responsibilities such as sports coaching during a lunchtime club. Learners are encouraged to look beyond their own environment through cultural links with schools in Ghana and Peru. There is also a strong interest in healthy lifestyles, ecology and a commitment to charitable causes.

This is a friendly and welcoming school where the adults provide excellent role models for the learners. Staff identify with the Christian ethos and work in an atmosphere of mutual support and co-operation. There is a real sense of community and shared values.

Parents are supportive and speak highly of the school, they commented on the high level of care and of the interest staff have in the individual needs of pupils.

Attractive symbols and displays have been placed throughout the building to celebrate the church status, although not yet in the entrance area. There are places designated for quiet reflection in the school grounds, with plans for further development.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship is seen as a fundamental part of the school's Christian character and takes a central role in its daily life.

Worship is carefully planned, coordinated, varied and structured to meet the needs of the whole school community. A recent initiative is to make hymn words more accessible for younger pupils. The collective worship coordinator has put effective structures in place to monitor and review worship. This includes interviews with pupils and staff. There are regular visits by foundation governors who are enthusiastic in their support and provide reports and feedback. Collective worship is overtly Christian in context, inclusive and demonstrates a respect for other beliefs and cultures.

Pupils say that they enjoy collective worship and that it has a strong influence on how they behave. They are engaged and respond in a positive way, including in prayers and times for reflection. In an inspiring collective worship time led by the team rector the pupils came in quietly, choosing where they sat, and were attentive. They joined in with a worship song and said the Lord's Prayer. An accomplished school orchestra complemented the worship.

Collective worship includes different worship styles and supports Anglican heritage and practice. The headteacher, all members of staff, a group from the parish and visitors lead worship. The contribution made by the local clergy team is clearly valued by the school.

Learners are given opportunities to make contributions and take on leadership roles in collective worship, particularly in writing and saying prayers.

The local parish church is well used as a resource and venue for festivals and special services. These are well supported and appreciated by parents.

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

The headteacher is committed to the Christian ethos of the school and gives a very effective lead and inspiration to the school community. She has a collaborative style that actively involves all stakeholders in the development of the school.

She works closely with the team rector and other clergy, foundation governors and all staff to plan and promote the shared vision of the school as a Christian community. There is a reflective approach grounded in effective evaluation and the aspiration for continual improvement.

The distinctive Church status is made clear in the school documentation and written aims.

The foundation governors uphold the Christian vision of the school and provide excellent support to the headteacher. They liaise with the local church community in the planning and delivery of joint events.

The school uses some of the services offered by the Diocese, including 'cathedral days'.

Parents are well informed and the vast majority is supportive of school activities. They see the school as a happy place where 'customer satisfaction is high.' They appreciate the open door policy and openness to new ideas. The variety and quality of extra-curricula activities that the school offers is particularly valued. The views of stakeholders are seen as important and are used to positively influence progress.

The school is energetic in its pursuit of what it means to be a church school and to develop

strategies that strengthen the Christian ethos.

The staff supports the ethos and appreciate the support given by the leadership and the 'team spirit' that is a characteristic of the school.

There is a strong relationship with the local church community that is mutually beneficial.

Pupil's work is regularly displayed in the church. There is limited contact with church communities in other villages in the catchment area.

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