



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Barnabas Oley Church of England Primary School

Little Lane
Great Gransden
Sandy, Beds.
SG19 3AE

Diocese: Ely

Local authority: Cambridgeshire

Dates of inspection: 10 March 2014

Date of last inspection: 21 October 2008

School's unique reference number: 110814

Headteacher: Rebecca Smith

Inspector's name and number: Marion Betts 220

School context

Barnabas Oley school is smaller than average and the pupils are taught in five mixed age classes. The school serves the village of Great Gransden and nearby villages. Almost all pupils are White British. A very small number of pupils are eligible for free school meals. There has been a change of headteacher since the last church school inspection.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Barnabas Oley C of E Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The dynamic leadership of the Headteacher who, together with dedicated governors and committed staff, is very effective in promoting the Christian vision of the school.
- Christian values have a very positive impact on pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils and staff fully enjoy and highly value the daily collective worship experience.
- The school and local community, including parents, work in a close partnership together so that the expertise of all can be shared for the benefit of increasing pupils' skills and knowledge.
- Pupils are encouraged and supported extremely well in striving to be the best they can be in a variety of areas, and their achievements are celebrated with the whole school community.

Areas to improve

- Develop a permanent indoor prayer area to enhance the opportunity for quiet reflection and hence further promote pupils' spiritual development.
- Further develop pupils' understanding of Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith.

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

Pupils enjoy their school life and praise the care of the staff who listen to them and help with their problems. Pupils make very good academic progress overall during their time at the school. By the end of Year 6, their attainment is above average. Christian values are made clear to pupils by their visual representation, five stars and school motto. They are taught thoroughly and are explicitly linked to following Jesus. A pupil said, "We try to be like Him". The Christian values deeply underpin the relationships and respect throughout the school and pupils strive to achieve them in their behaviour and actions. Pupils who demonstrate the current focus value well are given the Star of the Week award.

The school is characterised by close teamwork, praise used effectively and the creation of a positive sense of well-being. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils behave well and develop positive attitudes to learning. They are given many and varied opportunities to undertake responsibilities and care for other pupils for example through peer mediating. The older pupils use and explain the school's Christian values, for example those for restorative justice, when resolving pupils' conflicts. Pupils are enthusiastically undertaking the Bishop's Lent challenge with its strong emphasis on helping others and are striving to repeat their gain of the gold award. They are learning more about the Church throughout the world for example by their partnership link with a Polish Catholic school. They are discovering their different Church traditions. Pupils have a strong concern for the needs of others demonstrated by their enthusiastic fund-raising for charities. Pupils appreciate their ideas being sought through questionnaires and by the school council and are confident in expressing their thoughts.

Religious education (RE) has a high profile in the school evidenced by the Deputy as subject leader, by the high quality of RE displays and its strong focus within the school development plan. The school has chosen units of RE work which confirm and make tangible the Christian distinctiveness of the school.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship is regarded by the whole school community as a central part of each day. It is paramount in reinforcing Christian values and extremely important to staff and pupils who regard it as affirming a sense of the school's whole community and Christian ethos. Worship makes a powerful contribution to defining pupils' attitudes and links these to a Christian and Biblical context. Many pupils mention collective worship as the best part of the day and staff too, value the interesting presentations and vibrant singing. Creative delivery using imaginative visual prompts and drama engages pupils' interest and contribute to their understanding of the message or learning. Pupils are involved in the daily presentations and in the planning for their class assemblies. Worship is effectively enriched by being led regularly by visitors including the vicar and Christian groups. It develops well, pupils' understanding of the Anglican faith and has a set pattern of liturgical elements. The themes include the celebration of the main Church's seasons and festivals. Four times a year these are celebrated in church. Pupils develop their personal spirituality through reflection opportunities and a range of experiences such as through the recent collective worship theme of "Prayer in Art". They understand the purposes and variety of prayer and its importance within the Christian life of the school. The school organised temporary prayer spaces which were so beneficial for pupils that they are planning to create a permanent inter-active area. Pupils are developing their awareness of the Trinity by the regular mention of the three persons. Pupils articulate clearly their learning about Jesus and, in relation to their Lenten challenges, pupils were reminded that God, the Father will see their efforts and the Holy Spirit can give them added strength for their tasks. Collective worship is effectively linked to religious education ensuring time for further reflective and thoughtful discussion of the worship themes. Collective worship is well monitored by governors, staff, pupils and parents and improvements are made following from these

evaluations, for example the timing of assemblies has altered and pupils are now more involved in worship delivery.

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

The leadership of the Headteacher with the very effective support of the Deputy powerfully directs the Christian vision and values of the school both explicitly and implicitly so that the church school distinctiveness is understood by the whole school and village community. All staff are fully committed to the school's expectation of their role in this Christian community. They feel highly appreciated for their work and are very supportive of each other both professionally and personally. Governors are well informed, highly supportive and regularly evaluate worship and church school ethos. Their strategic planning has led to the school's review of the Christian vision as well as providing budget for themselves and staff to undertake training related to working within a church school. The school has fully achieved the development issues from the last church school inspection. Pupils' learning is enhanced by a very wide range of extra activities which include a Praise workshop. The expertise of local people is used very effectively to enrich pupils' knowledge, for example a village blacksmith led a demonstration of his skills. The school is regarded as the centre of village life. This was demonstrated recently following a family bereavement when the school acted as a hub for volunteers to provide support for the family. The school has a positive relationship with the diocese. The Headteacher has aided the Cathedral days' worship planning and she represents diocesan schools on the religious education forum - SACRE. The Deputy is involving the school in a national pilot for RE assessments. Close links exist with the local church with the school very involved in its outreach work, for example hosting a choir of orphans from Uganda. The vicar leads worship regularly and aids in the school's pastoral care for families. She greets all children and families on arrival to school on a weekly basis and is active in her support of the staff and governors. Parents in a recent survey were very positive about the school and are particularly appreciative of the staff's approachability.

SIAMS report March 2014 Barnabas Oley C of E Primary School, Great Gransden SG19 3AE