



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Parker's Church of England Primary School

Pound Hill, Saham Toney
Thetford, Norfolk
IP25 7HP

Diocese: Norwich

Local authority: Norfolk

Dates of inspection: 28 January 2014

Date of last inspection: 11 December 2008

School's unique reference number: 121101

Headteacher: Laura Sproston

Inspector's name and number: Marion Betts 220

School context

Parker's school is smaller than average and the pupils are taught in four mixed age classes. The school serves the village of Saham Toney and nearby villages. The Anglican parish church is near the school. 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 governors provide a daily breakfast club.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Parker's CEVC Primary School as a Church of England school are good

- The school's four core Christian values are known and understood by all pupils and have a positive impact on their personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- A very strong emphasis is placed on care, respect and support for each other and this is demonstrated by all members of the school community.
- The leadership of the headteacher is very effective in promoting the Christian vision and values of the school.
- Strong links are made with the Anglican church through the committed work and active support of the foundation governor.

Areas to improve

- Develop pupils' awareness of the Christian origins of the school's core values so that they are able to understand the links these have with the school's Christian character.
- Devise ways for governors to monitor and evaluate more formally the church school distinctiveness and collective worship and so involve them more explicitly in the growth and leadership of the school as a church school
- Involve pupils in the regular devising of interactive reflection displays for whole school use to enhance all pupils' spiritual development and, by offering these for use in the church, to develop stronger links with the members of the congregation.

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

Pupils enjoy school life and are very aware of the school's expectations for their behaviour and actions. Parents appreciate how the values taught in school impact on their child's attitudes to others. Pupils' personal and social development is enriched by the responsibilities they are given. For example the older pupils as buddy leaders strive daily to demonstrate and encourage the school's values. They appreciate this role and find it challenging but rewarding. Although the school values are sometimes taught using biblical examples, both in collective worship and religious education, some pupils are unable to link these with their school's Christian context. Pupils appreciate their ideas being sought through questionnaires as well as the school and class councils. Pupils' academic progress is good. For the last three years standards achieved have been above average in all core subjects. Relationships and respect between all staff and pupils are good and demonstrate the school's Christian values in action. The school is characterised by good team work, by praise used effectively and by a sense of positive well-being. Pupils behave well and appreciate their successes in putting Christian values into practice, being noticed and celebrated during special assembly. Pupils' spiritual development is enhanced well by the opportunities given for their self expression during art activities and the quality of work produced is of a high standard. The school value of "responsibility" to wider communities leads to pupils organising fund-raising for local and global charities and hence gaining a broad understanding and respect for diverse cultural communities. Religious education (RE) has a high profile in the school exemplified by the headteacher taking leadership of this subject; by the quality of RE displays and by RE being a prominent subject mentioned on the school's website. Religious education contributes well to the school's Christian character and gives pupils beneficial opportunities to discuss their own religious ideas and opinions. This was evidenced by the depth and range of thoughts the pupils put forward when exploring why people listened to Jesus.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship is important in the life of the school demonstrated by being the main way in which the school community derives its value system. These **impact** strongly on the decisions pupils make at school and beyond. Bible stories are often used for illustrating the Christian origins of these values. Themes are planned around the Church's seasons and values. Most pupils enjoy collective worship especially when they are involved in the presentation. For example every week the older pupils present a Bible story in dramatic form. Pupils' singing greatly enhances worship. Collective worship develops pupils' personal spirituality through reflection opportunities given to apply the message to their own lives. Pupils compose their own prayers for use in class worship and sometimes write these into the school prayer book. They are aware of the importance of prayer within the Christian life of the school. Pupils articulate well their learning about Jesus and God and how this has impacted their attitudes and actions. Collective worship develops well pupils understanding of the Trinity through the association of the symbols on the focus table and through the Grace said, with actions, at the end of many worship sessions. Pupils experience a range of worship leaders. All teachers lead sessions as well as a key worker from a free church. Sitting with their buddy group gives pupils a sense of community and also of well-being and security. Services linked to the main Christian festivals take place in the Anglican church and many parents attend. The school has monitored the impact of collective worship through pupil questionnaires. These have highlighted areas of pupil satisfaction with further development identified.

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

The headteacher and teachers powerfully articulate and promote a Christian vision of care, respect and concern for all. The school badge and logo which issues from the school's mission

statement, strongly highlights in visual form the four core values and the cross of Jesus. This is one of the effective means by which the school's Christian vision is made explicit to the whole community. This vision impacts on staff relationships and they feel highly valued for their work and confident to share their expertise with others. For example they have led training for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development at other schools. School self-evaluation leads directly to improvement planning. For example a lack of suitable Bibles has led to new ones being purchased with money donated from church funds. Leaders have made good progress in working through their action plan drawn up after the last church school inspection. Governors are supportive and plan strategically to enhance staff's skills. For example the senior teacher was supported well when she undertook training for leadership in a church school. There is only one foundation governor at present with two current vacancies. Collective worship and the church school distinctiveness are monitored informally by governors during their school visits. Plans are in place to monitor these aspects more formally in the future. Links with the Anglican church are maintained through the committed support of the foundation governor and through the funding decisions agreed by the PCC (parochial church council). This governor actively supports the school's Christian dimension by organising the weekly Open the Book drama presentation in collective worship and facilitating the school's church visits for curriculum work and collective worship. The incumbent or lay minister supports the school at these services. Parents and pupils recognise this link with the church personnel as a distinctive feature of the school. Links with the free church are good. The school recorded a CD of songs to support their fund-raising activities. Parents appreciate the welcome they receive especially at "Parent Link" sessions when they work alongside their child. The school has good links with the diocese, accessing their training and seeking advice when needed.

SIAMS report January 2014 Parker's CEVC Primary School, Saham Toney, Thetford. IP25 7HP