



The Diocese of St Edmundsbury
and Ipswich



Bedfield Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Bedfield

Woodbridge

Suffolk

IP13 7EA

Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich

Suffolk LA

Date of Previous Inspection 29th May, 24th and 26th June 2002

Dates of Inspection: 6th November 2007

Unique Reference Number 124720

Headteacher: Mrs J Overbury

Inspector's Name and NS Number Mr E Green (NS 267)

Bedfield is a small village Church of England Voluntary Controlled school situated in mid Suffolk. The school caters for 42 pupils aged 4 to 11; there are just two classes. Nearly all the pupils come from White British backgrounds and over half live outside the school's catchment area. Pupils often enter the school with attainment below that seen nationally for four year olds and the percentage of pupils with learning difficulties is much higher than the national average. The number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is also above the national average. There is high pupil mobility and many pupils join the school late in their primary education. In the last few years there have been frequent changes in teaching staff.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Bedfield School as a Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School are good.

Christian values and the valuing of each individual child underpin all aspects of school life. Through the strong and effective leadership of the headteacher, staff and governors the school has created a caring ethos in which all pupils are able to develop their full potential. The school plays a key role in the life of the community and is highly valued by that community which it serves.

Established Strengths

- The valuing of each individual child
- The active leading role the school takes in the life of the community
- The strong and effective leadership of the headteacher, staff and school governors.

Focus for Development

- The school should review the way it proclaims its identity as a church school.
- The school should investigate how the use of a focus for worship could enhance the worship time.

The way in which the school, through its distinctive Christian character, meets the needs of all learners is outstanding.

The school places a very high emphasis on this; consequently the pupils are confident and secure in a friendly and supportive learning environment. The pupils speak of feeling valued and involved and being able to make a positive contribution to the life of the school. They acknowledge and understand how the Christian values, which the school promotes so well, through, for example, challenging teaching and time for reflection impact on the whole of their school life. Pupils understand the need to respect each other and be understanding of a different point of view – they appreciate the importance of integrating the school's Christian values into the everyday life of the school through, for example, the way they play with each other at break times. There are weekly 'Golden Assemblies' where school and individual achievements are celebrated. Pupils in need of additional support are provided for through the provision of individual education plans and support staff. Good relationships, characterised by Christian values such as care, concern, love and valuing everyone as an individual exist throughout the school and all members of the school community appreciate this. The views of pupils are taken into account through an active school council. Commitment to putting Christian values into action has seen the school raise a significant amount of money for a number of charities such as National Children's Homes. Very good use is made of the school environment both inside and out, for example, there are quiet areas and sensory themed planting. The school is able to run a number of extra-curricular activities and the pupils talk of the enjoyment and benefit of these clubs. The school also has a thriving mini enterprise – waste is recycled in the school's wormery and the resultant 'liquid' is sold as fertiliser. Relationships within the school are excellent. The school encourages the pupils to adopt healthy lifestyles through activity and healthy eating and to support this the school has its own school garden.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good.

Collective worship plays an important role in the life of the school; it is well planned and organised and good detailed records are kept. Despite the practical problems caused by not having a school hall, care is taken to ensure that acts of worship take place in a well-organised and reverent manner. There is, however, scope for further development and the worship could be enhanced by use of a clear focus such as a cross or a candle. A good mix of traditional and modern music is used with those leading the worship taking time to explain to pupils what they are actually singing about. The Lord's Prayer and the school's own prayer are used weekly. The pupils enjoy collective worship; they are interested and responsive and participate readily in the singing, prayer and all that makes up the time of worship. Further, they talk positively about the times of worship and stories they have heard; they appreciate that the values talked about during times of worship, such as, respecting another's point of view and helping others can be put into practice at various times during the school day. They enjoy having the Rector and other visitors lead their time of worship and one pupil is quoted by the Rector in the parish magazine – "I can't wait till you come again." They also speak of the use of prayer at other times during the school day, for example, before lunch. The school observes the major festivals of the church's year and despite the distance holds services in the Parish Church to mark a number of these festivals. These services are well attended by parents and other members of the local community.

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

There is a very good and strong working relationship between the chair of governors, the foundation governors and the headteacher – this helps considerably in the effective leadership of the school as a church school. The foundation governors are aware of the school's Christian foundation and purpose. They visit the school monthly, and if attending collective worship complete a monitoring and evaluation sheet for the head and governors. The governors and headteacher acknowledge that they need to ensure that a rigorous system of evaluation and monitoring is maintained. The school aims are made clear in the school's prospectus; the school has already identified that it needs to review its logo and mission statement. Prospective employees are made aware of the school's Christian ethos and values. The school plays a prominent role in the life of the church and the community, for example, the church invites the school to participate in services and ensures that there is always a school 'agenda item' at each parochial church council meeting. Each month the headteacher writes an article for the Church and Village magazine and other news concerning the school is also included. Parents are very supportive of the school – there is an active 'Friends at Bedfield School'. Parents, pupils and staff are given an opportunity to become involved through the use of questionnaires and consultation. Staff speak of feeling valued and cared for and greatly appreciate being able to contribute fully to the school's on going development through consultation and professional development days. All staff see themselves as important role models for pupils.