



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Boxford Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Stone Street
Boxford
Sudbury
CO10 5NP

Diocese: St Edmundsbury and Ipswich

Local authority: Suffolk
Dates of inspection: 7 October 2008
Date of last inspection: May 2004
School's unique reference number: 124691
Headteacher: Robert Giles
Inspector's name and number: Simon Windmill 182

School context

Boxford school is of average size, and serves the villages of Boxford and several outlying villages. The local church is very close to the school. Pupils come from mainly favourable socio-economic backgrounds, and nearly all pupils are from white British backgrounds. Pupils' attainment is broadly average, and the percentage of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is below average.

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

The school's Christian ethos and values are embedded in school life, and have a strong positive influence on pupils' values and attitudes. The supportive and caring relationships give the school a family atmosphere, which is evident to all.

Established strengths

- The levels of care, support and nurture offered by staff
- The quality of relationships between pupils and staff, and of role models provided by staff
- The relationships between the school, the church and the wider community

Focus for development

- Reviewing and developing new approaches to collective worship
- Increasing opportunities for pupils to contribute to collective worship
- Providing more places for quiet reflection in the school and grounds

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

The school's Christian ethos permeates through all aspects of school life. Care and support for pupils and staff are outstanding, and reflect the Christian values on which the school is based. This is seen in the school's warm, welcoming, inclusive and friendly atmosphere, in which all pupils feel valued as individuals. The excellent role models staff provide for pupils are soundly based on Christian values.

Pupils say they enjoy school, and they feel respected, happy and safe. In turn, they respect the staff and each other. Parents speak highly of the care, guidance and support provided by staff. Pupils get on exceptionally well with each other and with the staff, and these excellent relationships help pupils develop self-confidence and independence.

Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. This is helped by the good examples set by the older pupils. The School Council is a highly effective body, and pupils value the opportunities it gives them to suggest improvements, and they feel involved in the school as a result. They enjoy the opportunities they have to help run the school, for example by looking after the tuck shop.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They have a clear understanding of right and wrong. Pupils' spiritual and moral development is a vital part of pupils' learning, and it is encouraged by giving pupils opportunities for such development in collective worship and across the wider curriculum. For example, the school is planning to create more quiet areas for reflection and prayer both outside and in the school.

The school environment is used exceptionally well to contribute to pupils' learning and development, for example through many excellent and lively displays of pupils' work. Pupils enjoy a wide range of extra curricular activities, including art, choir, French, netball, football and percussion.

Pupils' awareness and concern for the needs of others is excellent, and as a result they treat each other with care and respect. They help to raise money for the school and for charitable causes. They are also very aware of the need to adopt healthy lifestyles.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship is seen as an important part of school life by the head and staff, and is securely based on the Christian gospel, supplemented with suitable stories from other sources, such as 'Values for Life' and the SEAL materials. It always includes teaching, time for prayer or reflection, and singing.

Worship is well planned around Bible and other themes, and includes the main festivals of the Church year, such as Christmas, Easter and Harvest. These and other special services, such as the end of year leavers' service, are held in the church. The head, staff and the rector share in leading collective worship, with other occasional leaders at times. A lit candle is always used as a visual focus for worship. Records are kept of daily worship, which is monitored and evaluated by staff and governors.

Pupils enjoy worship, especially when they have a part to play. They have a good understanding of the purposes of prayer, such as saying thank you, asking for help, or saying sorry. The Lord's Prayer is used in worship, and pupils enjoy writing and reading their own prayers for special services held in the church. They would welcome even more involvement in worship.

The school is beginning to widen the styles of teaching used in worship, for example by using white board technology to give visual and audio dimensions to the stories used. This is proving to be a very effective way of enhancing the pupils' experience and understanding of worship.

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

The headteacher gives outstanding leadership to the school, and is very well supported by the staff and governors. Between them they promote a distinctive and active vision for the school, with Christian values underpinning its life and work.

The staff feel valued and involved in the school's development. They all work together exceptionally well, and enjoy the support given by the governors. This contributes greatly to the happy and supportive atmosphere among staff, and in turn this has a very positive influence on pupils' overall development.

The partnership between the school, the church and the wider community is outstanding, and highly valued by all. Links with the Church are particularly close, and the rector has an effective and valued pastoral role in the school. Parents and members of the wider community hold the school in very high regard, and parental surveys show a very high level of satisfaction with the school's work. One parent said, "When I visit the school, I always go out on a high."

Parents acknowledge that the school's successful and purposeful family atmosphere is generated and sustained through the school's caring Christian relationships. Parents and members of the wider community feel well informed about the school's activities, for example via shared newsletters advertising events such as fetes and open garden days. They enjoy the fact that they are positively encouraged to get involved in its life in many ways. This is evident in the very large number of extra volunteer helpers, such as present and former parents, church members, and other people living in Boxford and beyond.

As a result of implementing the recommendations of school's previous inspection, all pupils can now attend collective worship together, and collective worship is recorded, monitored and evaluated for its impact on pupils.