

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Great Budworth Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

School Lane,
Great Budworth,
Northwich,
Cheshire.
CW9 6HQ

Diocese: Chester

Local authority: Cheshire West and Chester

Date of inspection: Tuesday 17th July 2012

Date of last inspection: February 2009

School's unique reference number: 111248

Headteacher: Mrs. Sandra Finney

Inspector's name and number: Mrs. Anne B. Woodcock 445

School context

Great Budworth Church of England Primary School is a small, but growing school of 58 pupils aged from 3 to 11 years. The school serves the village and surrounding communities including the town of Northwich. The vast majority of pupils are of white British heritage and come from mixed socio-economic backgrounds. The school has benefitted from the addition of a pre-school facility since the last inspection. The current headteacher has been in post for just over 2 years.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Great Budworth Church of England Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding.

The strong Christian leadership and example of the headteacher, together with the effective support of the governing body and dedicated staff, provides an explicitly Christian environment in which pupils' personal and spiritual development is nurtured and grown effectively. The very significant improvements brought about since the last inspection have been established through a clear and distinctive Christian vision shared and agreed by all members of the school community.

Established strengths

- The excellent Christian leadership and example of the headteacher.
- The personal development of pupils.
- The caring and nurturing relationships, based on Christian love and trust, which effectively support pupils and their families.
- The very effective support of the governors.

Focus for development

- Provide regular opportunities for pupils to plan, lead and evaluate acts of worship.
- Develop the use of the outdoor environment to further promote pupils' spiritual development.

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

Pupils feel very safe and valued in school. They are confident and articulate, expressing their ideas and opinions in an atmosphere of trust and acceptance. The school's tag line, "By God's grace, we learn to love and love to learn," is fully understood and demonstrated by all members of the school family. Behaviour is excellent being firmly based on well-established Christian values of love, care and respect. "We follow the ten commandments God gave to Moses," they explain, "and we notice when someone is sad or needs our help." Pupils work well together, supporting each other to achieve shared goals. Older children 'look out' for the

younger ones and they take their responsibilities seriously. For example, when one child fell over in the playground, she was immediately helped by other children, who comforted her and called for further help from an adult. The school's calm, purposeful working atmosphere encourages all pupils to achieve their potential. Pupils are well-supported enabling all, including those with additional needs, to make a positive contribution to the life of the school. Relationships throughout the school are excellent. Pupils have great trust in and respect for their teachers, who they say, "Make lessons fun, help us to learn and are always fair." Teaching is very good and pupils are eager to learn. The curriculum has been enriched and developed significantly since the last inspection. Creative themes and topics such as 'Who lives in a house like this?' and 'Money doesn't grow on trees' challenge pupils' thinking and develop essential skills. Where appropriate Religious Education (RE) is included within the theme planning. This ensures that, in addition to discrete RE lessons, pupils are able to reflect on and develop their ideas and beliefs. RE makes a very positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Through the study of Islam and Judaism, pupils have a growing awareness and understanding of faiths and cultures other than their own. Very effective use is made of music and the arts. Local artists, such as a potter, work with the pupils to create high quality art work. Examples are thoughtfully displayed throughout the school creating a rich and spiritually inspiring environment which also celebrates pupils' achievements. Displays such as the natural wooden cross and woven wall hangings make a very positive contribution to the school's distinctive Christian character. Pupils have a developing sense of their place in God's world and their responsibilities to care for their own and the wider environment, acting as recycling and road safety officers. They recognise the need to help those less fortunate than themselves and are proud of their fund-raising activities, supporting charities such as the NSPCC and Sports Relief. Although effective use is made of the school's outdoor and natural environment, it could be further enhanced to promote pupils' spiritual development. This is an area for further development.

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

Collective worship is well-planned and recorded. It is firmly based on Christian values and festivals and on Bible teaching. Pupils have a positive attitude saying that they enjoy their worship experiences, particularly when they are able to take an active role in telling a story or responding to questions. In the worship observed, pupils confidently expressed their prior knowledge of the Old Testament stories of Moses and Joseph. Pupils' own experiences and feelings were effectively used to develop the theme of 'challenge'. Worship is enhanced by joyful and enthusiastic singing which pupils clearly enjoy. Pupils experience a range of worship styles through the effective use of visitors from local faith groups such as the Methodist and Salvation Army churches. Prayer is an important and integral feature of the daily worship life of the school. Pupils know and use traditional prayers such as the Lord's Prayer and graces and they write prayers for use in school and church worship. The recently introduced 'prayer box' has been very well-received and is used confidently by pupils of all ages. The prayers are offered to God silently, but pupils' understanding of the purpose and nature of prayer is being sympathetically developed. Worship is very effectively monitored and evaluated by teachers, pupils, governors and parents using an agreed format which focuses on impact. The focus on the use of prayer has been achieved through the monitoring of worship. The church is used for special services such as Christmas and Easter and the school is actively involved in the Mothering Sunday service. Pupils enjoy and value the opportunity to take part in these services. However, they have limited regular opportunities to plan and lead acts of worship and this is an area for development. Parents value the opportunity to share in worship events, attending the special services in church, together with members of the local community.

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

The leadership and example of the headteacher is outstanding. She has established and developed a distinct Christian vision for the school which is well-understood and agreed by all members of the school community. Governor support for ongoing improvement is excellent. Governors monitor and evaluate all aspects of the school's work very effectively. They provide practical support, acting as willing helpers and visiting the school regularly. Governors ensure that parental views and opinions are canvassed. For example, the foundation governor used a questionnaire to collect parental views of the school as a church

school which contributed to the school's self-evaluation work. The commitment to improvement can be seen in the school's consideration of a change to the church school status. The very significant changes have been brought about through the hard work and determination of dedicated teachers who say that they have been included 'every step of the way.' Teachers feel valued within a supportive and happy working atmosphere. Parents are very supportive of the work of the school. They recognise that the school has changed in character and that the safe, secure and nurturing Christian environment has a positive impact on their children. "Every child is valued in this school, and I feel supported as a parent" said one parent. Pupils are confident that their views and ideas are valued and acted upon. They are proud of the contributions they make to the life of the school saying, "We work as a team and enjoy organising and arranging things." Very effective use is made of partnerships with the diocese and local high schools. For example, the Christian Youth Worker from Hartford High School and Church leads worship in school. Links with the church are being strengthened and parents recognise the improving relationship between the church and school. The school contributes to the monthly church magazine and features regularly in local village news such as the Pickmere Press. The school and church work together on some fund raising events. Links with the local village and community are strong and they continue to be developed.

SIAS report July 2012 Great Budworth Church of England Primary School, Great Budworth, Northwich, Cheshire CW9 6HQ