



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Burchetts Green Church of England Voluntary Controlled Infant School

Burchetts Green
Maidenhead
Berkshire
SL6 6QZ

Diocese: Oxford

Local authority: Berkshire

Date of inspection: 10 December 2013

Date of last inspection: June 2009

School's unique reference number: 109945

Headteacher: Mrs Delia Sheppard

Inspector's name and number: Mrs Lizzie McWhirter MA 244

School context

Burchetts Green Infant School is a small, rural school, serving the village of Burchetts Green and the surrounding area on the outskirts of Maidenhead. Currently, there are 67 pupils on roll, who are mostly from a White British background. There are excellent and supportive links with the parish churches of Hurley, Littlewick Green and Stubbings as well as with Jubilee Church in Maidenhead. The headteacher is building up a strong team around her in this school community which is held in high regard locally.

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

- The strong sense of a welcoming family community, underpinned by Christian values and enhanced by the close links with local churches.
- The high quality experiences offered to pupils in collective worship and religious education [RE], nurturing their spiritual development.
- The positive attitude of these young pupils, who become confident learners and achieve highly, within a supportive Christian environment.

Areas to improve

- Enhance the evaluation and ownership of collective worship, involving governors and pupils, ensuring best quality worship at all times.
- Establish a forum for clergy and pupils to discuss the big questions of life and faith together.

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

Burchetts Green Infants School provides an excellent learning environment where pupils are proud to belong, feel valued and achieve highly. Data shows that standards have been constantly high for the last five years. This year all pupils met or exceeded their Key Stage 1 targets in reading, writing and mathematics. Indeed, all pupils are making good to outstanding progress, attaining highly, with many pupils achieving above national expectations, and some pupils making two levels of progress or more. Attendance is excellent and there are no exclusions in this inclusive environment which comprises 15 different cultures. An important part of the school's Christian ethos is acknowledging that all are part of the one body. Moreover, the school identifies vulnerable parts of the body, such as children from travelling families. To this end, the school ensures compassionate support for individual children who may be low achievers. Very positive learning experiences take place, such as the recent termly focus on Narnia, which was celebrated in the diocesan newspaper, 'The Door'. Pupils were able to gain an insightful understanding into how the children in 'The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe' lived as wartime evacuees. Relationships are exemplary and behaviour is excellent and is well supported by whole school awareness of values. Pupils take on responsibility from an early age and address moral issues through RE and circle time activities, with all pupils engaging with Discovery RE, enabling them to learn about Christianity. Parents value the welcoming Christian family they encounter at this school where 'all needs and abilities are well met and the staff live by the values which are so engrained'. The eight core values chosen by the school include forgiveness, which pupils describe as 'saying sorry, accepting it and meaning it'. Pupils enjoy RE here with its focus on 'Believing, Belonging and Behaving'. Pupils have opportunities to ask questions, such as why did God give us Jesus? These young children have a good level of theological literacy and show good knowledge of Christianity and other faiths such as Judaism. They can articulate incarnation as Jesus being the saviour of the world and Emmanuel as 'God with us'. They speak of salvation in their own words, saying, 'In The Bible it says Jesus died to save us on the cross'.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

The attitude of these young pupils to collective worship is excellent because the inspirational and creative experiences offered to them in worship is making a real difference in their lives and the lives of their families. Prayerful and meaningful worship takes place daily, greatly enhancing their spiritual development. Such young pupils can name the three persons of The Holy Trinity and can explain the role of each in their own words. The Trinity Box used in worship contains a cross, a Bible and a candle to symbolise all three members of The Godhead and pupils sing of 'The Three in One'. There is great support from the clergy and the local Open the Book team who are regular and welcome visitors to school, leading weekly worship. Pupils speak highly of worship led by the vicar, saying how God's Storyteller 'helps us to remember about stories from The Bible', recalling the story of David and Goliath which 'helps us if we are trying to defeat the enemy' and encourages them to 'believe in ourselves'. Key festivals are celebrated in church such as Christingle. Pupils value worship in church as in their young minds it is 'a place where everyone thinks about God when they enter it'. They explain reverence as 'connecting to God and praying'. Indeed, prayer is an important part of school life, with pupils acknowledging 'it doesn't matter where you are, you can pray absolutely anywhere; outside, inside, on the move. It helps us live our lives better'. An excellent example of this are the prayer places in the woodlands across the road from the school where pupils enjoy 'finding values and writing prayers and hanging them up because we were writing to God and thanking him for making the world'. Pupils are given layered opportunities in order to build confidence in praying spontaneous prayers out loud. In addition, foundation governors, the headteacher and vicar meet together monthly for prayer. An extremely high number of parents attend worship in school or church. Class log books capture a snapshot of what pupils feel they have learnt from worship which staff sit and discuss with them. Pupils welcome

writing down their thoughts on worship to share with governors as well as a regular opportunity to lead worship themselves. They also welcome discussing deep questions of life and faith with their vicar. In all these ways, collective worship is constantly enriching the community life of this church school.

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

Burchett's Green's Christian heritage is effectively promoted by the headteacher, clergy, governors, parents and staff so that the school's Church of England foundation is celebrated. The pursuit of excellence in all school activities is demonstrated by a highly successful drive to improve achievement or maintain the highest levels of achievement in all pupils. This extends to Primary Science Quality Mark as well as Artsmark national awards. All children make outstanding progress, whether they have special needs or are high flyers. The headteacher meets each term with the diocesan adviser and other church school headteachers to ensure they are all briefed on the latest best possible practice. Indeed, the headteacher's Christian vision and leadership is instrumental and she carries the portfolio for both collective worship and RE, showing the high profile these two key areas are in the life of this infant school. The Early Years Foundation Stage [EYFS] and Key Stage 1 teachers support and advise staff from other schools in the local area as Burchetts Green has been identified as a school with outstanding practice. All staff job descriptions identify supporting the school's Christian values as the first priority in order to fortify church school distinctiveness. Christian leadership is supported through professional development and diocesan training for staff and governors alike. Moreover, governors are strongly committed to their robust and effective strategic development plan and are open to new ways of improving their monitoring and evaluative role. Parents feel valued, involved and included and welcome the establishment of a parents' forum. A strong partnership exists between the school and the Burchetts Green Village Association with joint activities such as the Christmas carol service and the village fete. So too, there is an excellent relationship with the local Agricultural college, using the grounds and woodland areas. In all these ways, Burchetts Green Infant School shines as a beacon in the community it serves, committed to its strong Christian vision.

SIAMS report Burchetts Green VC Infant School, Maidenhead, Berkshire SL6 6QZ