

***Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools
Report for Brington Church of England School,
Cambridgeshire,
Diocese of Ely***



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of
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Name and address of school:	Brington Primary School, Church Lane, Brington, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire. PE28 5AE
Type of school:	Primary, Voluntary Controlled
Diocese:	Ely
LEA:	Cambridgeshire
Dates of inspection:	17 th and 20 th October 2006
Date of last inspection:	8 th – 12 th May 2000
School's unique reference number:	110827
Name of Headteacher:	Mr. Peter Allen
Inspector's name and number:	Mrs Susan Metcalfe, 249

School context

Brington primary school is in the village of Brington, south west Huntingdon. It was opened in 1969 as the geographical centre of the seven villages from which it draws pupils, along with those from the nearby air base. The new incumbent at the parish church gives clerical and pastoral support to the school. The 121 pupils come from a range of backgrounds but almost all are from a white, predominately British heritage, with just a few from mixed cultural backgrounds. All children have English as their home language. The number of pupils who need additional help with their learning is very low.

Summary Judgement

Brington primary school is a good Church of England VC primary school with the potential to become outstanding. The school self-evaluation procedures are of a high quality and leave the school well placed to achieve this aspiration.

Focus for development

The school has identified key areas for development to move the school further forward, with which the inspector concurs:

- continuing to develop the planning, delivery and recording of acts of worship using Diocesan advice
- more involvement of all those with a stake in the school in evaluating its progress.

The Governors should also explore ways in which the recently formed school council could be more involved in the day to day activities of the school, to make good use of the pupil's enthusiasm and willingness to contribute effectively.

The school, through its distinctive Christian character, makes good provision to meet the needs of all learners.

The school is a welcoming, secure place in which pupils and staff are happy to work together. Conflicts are dealt with compassionately and fairly, in a way appropriate to pupil's ages and in a spirit of forgiveness and reconciliation. Good systems are in place within classrooms to guide pupils. Rules for living together are on posters in classes and about the school, with classrooms having marble jars, merit awards and stars to show achievement. Special successes, including extra-curricular activities, are acknowledged in celebration assemblies. Relationships are characterised by Christian care and concern for others with pupils choosing to support charities such as Jeans for Genes, a school in Kenya in need of classroom furniture and the Asian tsunami. Pupils also joined in activities linked to World Environmental Day.

Pupils are very happy to discuss problems with staff because they feel that their views are taken seriously and they will be well supported. Whatever their religious background, pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well developed. The chair of the foundation governors and the headteacher in particular have put a lot of time and thought into the high quality, draft policy, reflecting very well the schools aims, values and principles and extending spiritual development in particular. Pupils have good levels of self-esteem and independence and display understanding of the needs of others. So they work well, collaboratively and co-operatively together. Pupils enjoy their work, find it worthwhile, and are developing well both their academic knowledge and their citizenship of the school. Those on the school council, for instance, prepared manifestos for election. Although the council has only been in existence for a short time, they thought that membership gave them a good understanding of being a member of a community, showing their potential to become more involved with the smooth running of the school.

Evidence of the schools Christian character is found throughout the school. The inside accommodation is bright, warm and well maintained. The outside area is thoughtfully laid out with areas for pupils to sit and reflect. The high quality range of resources have a positive effect on the good quality of education, on opportunities for spiritual reflection, on prayer and on worship. Displays are prominent, bright and interactive, for instance the religious education displays and quiet corners in classes, while the entrance hall has a banner of felt crosses worked by pupils and pupils work about a visit to the Mosque reflecting the pride teachers have in pupils work.

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

Collective worship occupies a place of importance, central to life in the school, underpinning its Christian character. Pupils gain positively in their spiritual and moral development as the result of carefully planned, evaluated and thoughtfully delivered acts of worship. Pupils not only enjoy meeting together, sharing stories, songs, reflections and prayers but also gain understanding of the Christian values that such worship promotes and their impact on life. Hymn and song practices are fully inclusive, regardless of the church backgrounds of pupils. Good opportunities to reflect on the principles behind the words also occur. Celebration assemblies likewise focus upon the Christian principles of appreciating and enjoying others success with encouragement to be self motivated and work hard.

Older students prepare the hall well for assembly, putting out a focus table with a cloth and cross, arranging seating for staff and pupils, operating the CD player and organising the overhead projector. Worship thus takes place in an atmosphere of calm and respect. The Headteacher is also the school pianist and pupils gain tremendously from making live music together. Pupils sit very attentively, sing enthusiastically and listen very carefully, being more than willing to contribute their ideas and opinions. Pupils talk well about key Christian festivals and the churches year. For instance, the Harvest celebrations that have just passed, with Christmas to come. Most are able to recite the Lord's Prayer and know key prayers such as the Grace. There are good, productive links with the local parish Church with the Church used for special services and to enhance religious education. The new incumbent has good links with the school, taking on the work of her predecessor. The Bishops visitor takes assemblies two or three times a term and enjoys the eagerness and responsiveness of the pupils both in worship and in their religious education lessons. The school is highly sensitive to the beliefs and traditions of those who profess no home faith and takes care to ensure that acts of worship provide for their spiritual and moral development as well. Visitors from different denominations are welcomed into collective worship and participate in lessons. The school has identified the need for pupils to be more actively involved in acts of worship, including leading assemblies, as an area for development to enhance this work further.

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

All involved with the school speak confidently and accurately about the schools strong Christian vision. This is already evident in all documents and communications such as the prospectus, but is an area that the school has also identified as in need of refining to reflect more fully the schools status as a church school.

The Headteacher is an outstanding leader. He has a very clear view of what the school stands for and is working very hard to achieve this vision. Along with the chair of the governing body, the chair of the foundation governors and the challenging but supportive governing body as a whole, he provides good and effective leadership.

The schools successes are underpinned by the sense of team spirit, with mutual respect and support given, a close partnership where all partners appreciate the knowledge, expertise and skills of each other. The issue at the previous inspection relating to filling the places for foundation governors to secure continuity of representation has been thoroughly and carefully dealt with. Training for these governors is occurring and they have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. For instance, the chair of the foundation governors, with the headteachers support, has been leading developments in the school's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development policy, with a particular focus upon using environmental issues to add a spiritual depth to the schools work.

A new incumbent is in place at the parish church, and the school looks forward to

enjoying a close and productive relationship with the new vicar, as they did with her predecessor.

Management of the school is good. There are well-established and highly effective systems for monitoring, evaluating and developing each area of focus from the school development plan, including that of collective worship. The systems involve subject managers, as well as taking account of the views of other staff and learners. The personal management of the Headteacher, who is highly visible around and about the school, ensures that teaching and non-teaching staff feel involved and appreciated. Relationships are very good between all members of the school community. Learners and their parents speak highly of the school's Christian ethos, the commitment of the staff to all individuals and the high quality of education provided. Parents are positive about the way the school seeks and values their views via a range of questionnaires. At present the school council collects pupil's opinions through class councils for debate at their meetings, but the school has plans to extend these pupil evaluations through questionnaires also.

All members of the school support the school as a Christian family led by a very effective headteacher. This is evident in the very positive relationships between staff and pupils, and is made real in all aspects of life in the school, for instance with older children helping the younger ones at lunchtimes, lessons extra to the curriculum, and participation in community events such as fairs and fetes. Many of the staff are new to the school, but all feel completely confident and comfortable about their part in sharing and developing the school's ongoing vision.