



**St Anne's Church of England (VA) Primary School**

London Road  
Godmanchester  
Huntingdon  
PE29 2WW

**Diocese: Ely**

Local authority: Cambridgeshire  
Dates of inspection: 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> November 2006  
Date of last inspection: 26<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> March 2001  
School's unique reference number: 131238  
Headteacher: Mrs Anthea Kenna  
Inspector's name and number: Mrs Kathryn Wright (436)

**School context**

St Anne's is a slightly smaller than average primary school with 186 pupils on roll. Most children are White British, with a few children from Asian or mixed heritage backgrounds. The school serves the local area of Godmanchester and is frequently oversubscribed. Up to twelve places each year are allocated to children whose families attend local churches. The school is seven years old, and the headteacher has been in post since its opening. The staff and governors have carried out a thorough review of the school using the Diocesan self-evaluation materials. The church is a ten minute walk from the school, where a new incumbent has been in place since September.

**The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Anne's VA Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding.**

St Annes has a dynamic Christian ethos and vision which is shared by the whole school community. This has a significant impact on the children's learning experiences, their motivation and spiritual development. The emphasis placed on being a 'Christian school that serves the community' is understood by all, and is demonstrated through impressive church and community links.

**Established strengths**

- Inspirational Christian vision and leadership of the headteacher
- The understanding of what it means to be a church school by all stakeholders
- The Christian ethos which permeates all aspects of the school community
- The importance of collective worship and religious education in the life of the school

**Focus for development**

The school has identified the following areas for development with which the inspector concurs:

- The assessment of religious education, particularly in the light of the forthcoming new agreed syllabus
- Provision of further spaces within the school environment for quiet reflection, including an

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

The Christian Ethos underpins and pervades all aspects of school life. Relationships in the school are caring and supportive. The whole school is characterised by teamwork and a sense of positive well being. Children describe the school as 'one big family', 'comfortable' and 'homely'. Children are at ease with themselves and others, and have opportunities to reflect on what it means to be a human being. The whole child is valued and emphasis is placed on active learning. Children take part in an extensive range of extra curricular activities, residential visits and local initiatives. The school demonstrates its positive approach to inclusion by welcoming children with differing needs. Children have opportunities to contribute to school development through the school council and house system. For example, the children were given responsibility to choose new play equipment. Children are highly motivated and thrive on the stimulating learning environment. The behaviour of pupils is excellent and achievements are celebrated through a 'Book of the Week'. The spiritual development of children is a high priority and permeates all aspects of the curriculum and beyond. For example, children regularly contribute to an 'Anthology of Prayer' and are able to cite places where they may go to be quiet and thoughtful. The Christian nature of the school is evident through prominent displays. For example, a cross is visible in all classrooms and Christian quotations can be seen around the school. In addition, children are able to talk about the Christian meaning behind their school badge.

**The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding.**

Collective Worship is highly valued by the entire school community. Acts of worship are exceptionally well planned, monitored and evaluated. Children speak positively of meeting together every day and can talk about occasions when collective worship has been particularly special to them. For example, one child talked about an occasion when Key Stage One children danced with hand-made palm leaves. Children and staff play an active role in worship. Children lead prayers and music, give readings, act as servers and perform drama. The Anglican tradition is nurtured through the use of appropriate liturgy and prayers. Acts of worship follow the festivals of the Church year, and special celebratory Eucharists take place. Children talk about the importance of receiving a blessing and can accurately explain the meaning of the bread and wine. Children respond well and are engaged during acts of worship. In an act of worship on the theme of Advent a Year 3 pupil talked about angels spreading the word of Jesus and a Year 6 pupil explained the role of prophets in the Old Testament. In addition, children were asked to suggest items for prayer, which the leader used at the close of worship. In response to a Christingle Service, Year 1 children were able to explain that the candle represented Jesus as light of the world. The local clergy and Christian organisations lead worship at least once a week. Children are able to experience a range of styles, including those from different denominations.

**The effectiveness of religious education is outstanding.**

The image and profile of religious education in the school is exemplary. RE displays were observed in most classrooms, including Sikhism, Judaism, Remembrance Day and Saint Martin. The subject is effectively planned according to the local agreed syllabus and a balance between the two attainment targets is met. Many teachers have received training in 'Godly Play' and use this to encourage children's 'learning from' religion. Lessons are well prepared and make use of children's own experiences. Children have a clear understanding of the nature of religious education and are able to talk confidently about their work. Children particularly enjoy practical aspects of the subject including links with the creative and expressive arts. In Year 6 children have a good understanding of Judaism, and were able to apply their learning to create a 'Torah' scroll with contributions of poems, songs, prayers and commandments from the whole class. Two children in Year 6 are contributing work for the new agreed syllabus publication. Teaching observed was good. In Year 1 children were able to make personal responses about 'special times'. Children use a wide range of appropriate vocabulary, particularly in relation to Christianity. Children generally know how well they are doing in the subject and how they can improve, although this was more evident in Key Stage 2. In a Year 5 lesson, children confidently used the Bible to find references and could talk about different biblical genre. The standard of work matches that in other subjects, and sometimes is of a very high standard. ICT is used by children for research, and to support

staff in their own subject knowledge development. In addition, Year 5 used a 'painting tool' to develop their own images of the Annunciation. The subject is well resourced and children visit places of worship on a regular basis, including Ely Cathedral. The RE co-ordinator is enthusiastic and well organised. He has a clear vision for the subject and attends in-service training. He regularly monitors the subject and is involved in developmental work with the local authority.

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

The headteacher provides an inspirational Christian vision, which is wholeheartedly reinforced by the governing body. She is an exceptional role model who is admired and valued by the whole school community. She takes an active role in the Diocese and has spoken at the local church on Education Sunday. Along with the governors and local clergy, the headteacher provides effective spiritual guidance for the school. For example, in-service training days and staff residentials provide space for reflection and prayer, and a Eucharist is held for staff once a year. The staff are enthusiastic about the leadership and feel supported. The Christian ethos of the school is made explicit in all recruitment material and in interviews. Some staff spoke of their own spiritual journey since taking up a post in the school. The practical outworking of the school aims is to be commended. The governors are actively involved in supporting the school and ensuring it is true to its Christian foundation. For example, governors regularly visit the school to observe collective worship and religious education as well as hearing children read, helping at lunchtimes and providing support on school residential trips. The school has very effective links with the local churches and wider community. The school and church provide mutual support, and the new incumbent aims to sustain and develop the partnership. The school has a positive impact on the parish, including the recent rise in the number of families attending church on a Sunday. Children regularly take part in community events such as carol singing, providing afternoon tea for the Mother's Union, musical concerts and fund raising.

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