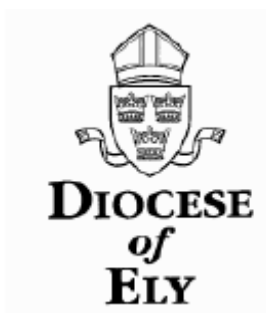


## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report



**St. Philip's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School**  
2, Vinery Way  
Cambridge. CB1 3DR

**Diocese: Ely**

Local authority: Cambridgeshire

Dates of inspection: 20<sup>th</sup>/21<sup>st</sup> February 2008

Date of last inspection: 19<sup>th</sup>- 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2003

School's unique reference number: 310437

Headteacher: Mrs. Siobhan Rouse

Inspector's name and number: Vicki McHarrie

### **School context**

The school serves a diverse community and is slightly larger than most primary schools. The percentage of children entitled to free school meals is above the national average. The proportion of pupils identified as having learning difficulties and /or disabilities is well above the national average as is the number of pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language. The school holds the Healthy School, Basic Skills and International Schools Awards. The Headteacher was appointed in September 2004.

**The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St. Philip's as a Church of England school is good.**

This is a welcoming, caring school where Christian values are evident in many areas of school life. The inclusive ethos and high levels of pastoral care ensure everyone in the school community feels valued. The leadership of the Head and governors gives a strong, clear vision for the school as a church school.

### **Established strengths**

- The relationships within the school community that are based on Christian values.
- The strong emphasis given to the value of each individual within the school. The pupils are secure, well cared for and happy.
- The vision and leadership of the Headteacher and the governors
- The well developed links between the school, the parish and the wider community that are mutually supportive.
- The good provision made for pupils from a diverse cultural background.

### **Focus for development**

- To develop assessment procedures in RE to enable the tracking of pupil progress.
- To plan a programme to monitor and evaluate standards in RE and collective worship.

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

The school, through its distinctive Christian character makes good provision in meeting the needs of its pupils and is sensitive to the beliefs and traditions of those of other faiths. This leads to pupils who feel valued, secure and proud of their school. Pupils report that they enjoy being in a friendly, caring school and that their teachers are 'kind and good fun'. The majority of pupils are making good progress and a weekly 'Sharing Assembly' recognises endeavour and success.

By taking on responsibilities around the school pupils are making a positive contribution to the school community. They enjoy playtimes when a buddy system and play leaders ensure they are well supported. The established school council is having a positive impact and pupils enjoy being involved in decision making.

The provision of social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good and this is reflected in pupil attitudes. A range of activities are used to enhance the spiritual development of pupils. A prayer board in the hall enables pupils to think about issues such as forgiveness in a thoughtful way and the 'Peace Garden' provides a place to be quiet and to reflect. A concern for the wider community is shown through having an active link with a school in Ghana and through fund raising for charity. The school also holds an 'International Schools Award'.

Relationships between staff and pupils are good. They respect each other and demonstrate the schools Christian context. There is a strong team spirit amongst all staff who gain from the high level of support they provide for each other. Very good provision is made to help pupils through times of difficulty and to support those with challenging behaviour.

Success is celebrated regularly to boost self esteem and several displays in the school celebrate pupil achievement including 'Stars of the week'.

The school environment is attractive but there are few Christian symbols displayed to serve as a reminder of the church foundation to pupils, staff and the wider community.

### **The impact of collective worship on the school community is good**

Collective worship is seen as fundamental in the daily life of the school and its importance is emphasised by pupils and staff attending. Worship is well planned and the needs of all pupils are met through the use of a range of styles and formats. Pupils speak positively about collective worship and contribute through drama, music and prayer. At present the older pupils together with the Head, local clergy, visitors and members of staff are involved in leading worship but plans are in place to increase the role younger pupils play. The two acts of worship observed were good with the majority of pupils engaged. Role play was used effectively to show how a Bible story could be related to actions in their own lives. A time of reflection and prayer enabled pupils to think and consider the issues raised in worship i.e. How could I help someone today? Most pupils said they enjoyed collective worship particularly listening to stories but they had difficulty talking about what they had learnt from the stories they had heard. They spoke enthusiastically about the 'Sharing Assembly' and being chosen as 'Star of the week'.

Through celebrating and learning about the major church festivals pupils are developing a good understanding of the Anglican faith. They are learning the 'Lord's Prayer' and becoming familiar with liturgy such as 'The Lord be with you'. Younger pupils had visited the church to re-enact a baptism service and were able to speak knowledgeably about what they had learnt. The whole school attends a 'leavers' service in the parish church The school values the support it receives from the Vicar and members of the parish.

Very good provision is made for those of other faiths who do not attend collective worship when a teaching assistant works with those pupils providing an opportunity for spiritual development.

The monitoring and evaluation of collective worship by staff, pupils and governors is in the initial stages.

### **The effectiveness of the religious education is satisfactory**

Most pupils enjoy RE and particularly like bible stories, quizzes and learning about different religions. Lessons are well prepared and by using a range of strategies including drama, ICT and artefacts, teachers gain the interest of pupils.

Two lessons observed demonstrated good standards of teaching and learning. The younger children were finding out about what it was like living in Jesus' time. Pupils were interested in the lesson, actively involved and clearly developing their understanding. In a Year 5/6 class the pupils were considering moral decisions and how they would solve to a dilemma. The passage 'Love your neighbour' was successfully used to link their learning to the teaching of the bible. Pupils showed that they were able to think in some depth about moral issues and the impact on their own lives.

RE is taught through a topic centred approach with the younger pupils. There is evidence of them learning about the Christian church, writing prayers and learning about other faiths. The work on 'Invisible gifts' shows the impact of learning with pupils saying that gifts don't need to be expensive because you 'can give someone a hug or a smile'.

In the upper school classes there is little evidence available to show what pupils achieve but samples of work suggest that standards are satisfactory. Pupils are developing their knowledge of the Christian faith through learning about symbols and thinking about the meaning of non-literal language e.g. Jesus is the light of the world. Staff and pupils of other faiths contribute effectively to RE lessons. A programme of visits to places of worship including the church, mosque and synagogue enhance pupil learning.

The scheme of work is based on the Diocesan Syllabus and there is a good balance of 'learning about' and 'learning from' religion. Assessment is carried out at the end of each unit of work but there are no systems in place to track pupil progress. At present there is insufficient monitoring and evaluation of standards in RE by the co-ordinator or governors.

### **The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school is good**

The Headteacher provides very effective leadership which contributes significantly to the Christian ethos of the school. She has a clear Christian vision for the school and is a very good role model to the school community. Governors also provide good leadership and work well with the Head. They have been actively involved in the self evaluation process and are aware of the need to develop their monitoring role.

The Headteacher and governors are sensitive to the needs of staff and to their well being. Consequently staff feel valued and there is a particularly strong team spirit. A good level of pastoral care is provided by local clergy and prayer meetings are held for staff. This support, together with very effective parish links, plays a part in maintaining the schools distinctive Christian character. The inclusive nature of the school ensures pupils of other faiths are welcomed and they make a valuable contribution to school life.

Parents are made to feel welcome and are kept well informed. There is a good sense of the parents and school working in partnership.

The school's Christian purpose is expressed in its documentation and there is a clear mission statement. Procedures for recruitment are good with prospective candidates being made aware of the schools ethos and aims.

The school council meets regularly. Many of their ideas are put into practice leading to them having a sense of ownership. Pupils are developing an awareness of the wider church community including attending Diocesan events in Ely Cathedral and Kings College. The children regularly raise money for charity and realise the importance of helping others.

SIAS report February 2008: St. Philip's C of E (VA) Primary School, 2, Vinery Way, Cambridge. CB1 3DR