



Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Greenfield Voluntary Controlled Church of England Lower School
Pulloxhill Road, Greenfield, Bedford MK45 5ES

Diocese of St Albans

LA:	Central Bedfordshire
SIAS Inspection:	Wednesday 09 September 2009
Previous S48 Inspection:	07 and 09 June 2006
URN:	109600
Headteacher:	Annette McCullion
SIAS Inspector Name:	Bob Hopcraft
SIAS Inspector No:	484

School Context

Greenfield is a smaller than average-sized primary school, which is set in pleasant rural grounds in the heart of the village. Pupils come from local villages and the wider rural area. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage and the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below the national average. The school is formally federated with another nearby lower school, with the headteacher and governing body taking shared responsibility for both schools.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Greenfield CofE VC Lower School as a Church of England school are outstanding.

This is because Christian values lie at the heart of the school's day-to-day life, resulting in a supportive and positive atmosphere in which pupils can work and grow. The school holds the *Values Education Award* and shares its expertise with other local schools. It promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very effectively and its work in the field of environmental issues, notably through the installation of solar panels and eco-awareness, is exemplary.

Established strengths

- The outstanding vision and leadership of the headteacher for the development of the school as a Church school and the support she receives in this from staff, clergy and governors;
- The outstanding focus on Christian values, which lies at the heart of all that the school does and which results in excellent relationships at all levels;
- The excellent links with the Church, parish, local community and the diocese.

Focus for development

- Promote further opportunities for reflection in order to enhance pupils' spiritual development;
- Provide opportunities for pupils to plan and to lead collective worship.

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

This is because Christian values lie at the very heart of the school and are promoted and reinforced at every turn. These values are a key part of lessons and the lives of staff and pupils both within school and beyond, thereby providing all who work and learn at Greenfield with strong spiritual and moral guidance for their future lives as citizens. Pupils are very clear about the impact of such values and are able to discuss and reflect on their importance. As one child put it: *"Values keep our school safe from nastiness. They keep us happy."* Parents are well informed about the values education programme as a result of the booklet which has been produced in response to the previous SIAS inspection report. There were many responses from parents in praise of the values that the school imparts, one example being: *"Values are at the heart of the school. They are part of everyone's natural vocabulary"*. As a result, relationships are outstanding at all levels. Pupils say that they enjoy their time at school and feel well supported by staff and one another. There is a strong family feel within the school and older pupils are encouraged to look after the younger ones and to guide them towards independence within a safe, secure setting. The focus on values supports pupils' moral, social and cultural development, which is excellent and they receive an outstanding introduction to spirituality. Through reflection, pupils are encouraged to understand what values mean for them and as a result, develop a caring and thoughtful attitude towards those around them. The school is aware that the provision of further opportunities for spiritual reflection is the next step in its development. Through the school's work in promoting eco-awareness, pupils are encouraged to think about the environment and the impact their footprint has on the world around them. The initiative to install and monitor solar panels is a fine example of how this focus impacts practically on the lives of everyone at Greenfield. The school buildings and environment provide an outstanding setting in which to learn and grow. Displays are bright, informative and often encourage active participation, for example the interactive display in the entrance hall asking pupils to match symbols from various world religions to their names. Displays are also used to reflect pupils' feelings and thoughts, for example the year 2 pupil asked to consider Noah's qualities as a leader, who wrote *"They trusted Noah – he's helpful, friendly and kind"*.

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

Pupils are very positive about collective worship. They say that they enjoy worship, that it is a central part of the school day and that they enjoy the opportunity for quiet reflection and thought. As one pupil put it: *"Assembly is a time to feel calm and peaceful, to share"*. Christian values lie at the heart of worship and are an important part of the excellent planning, which underpins provision. Since the previous SIAS inspection, a section on collective worship has been included in the school brochure and worship is effectively recorded and monitored. The use of pupils' thoughts on what they have learned during worship is a particularly effective monitoring tool. While pupils have many opportunities to participate actively in worship, at present they do not have opportunities to plan and to lead worship. A range of visitors and visits are used to ensure that pupils develop an understanding of other faiths and belief systems. As a result, worship is inclusive and helps to develop a shared understanding of other cultures and religions. Very good use is made of prayer and song to enhance worship and pupils are familiar with some traditional elements of the Anglican faith, such as the Lord's Prayer. A candle is used effectively to signal that worship is a special time and displays and symbols are used well to establish the hall as a space conducive to worship. There are excellent links between the Church and the school and the vicar plays a central role by leading worship on a regular basis. Links are constantly being developed and of particular note is the recent *"Church in School"* initiative, which resulted in a well-attended *eco-service*. All staff attend and lead worship and there is no doubt that collective worship is an important part of the school day.

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

This is because school leaders, staff and governors have continued to work hard to promote the Christian ethos and values which lie at the heart of all that the school does. The headteacher and vicar, in particular, play a central role in ensuring that values continue to flourish and are distinctively Christian. In this, they are effectively supported by staff. Governors, too, play a major role in promoting and maintaining this ethos, one notable example being the recent investigation by governors, through asking the question *"How would a visitor know that Greenfield Lower is a Church school?"* As a result of such activities, the school has a wide evidence base from which to judge its effectiveness. It has completed an accurate and full self-evaluation of its effectiveness as a Church school and school leaders have clear strategic plans for its future development in this area. The school has been particularly effective in working with other local Church schools, notably in the area of values education, and the very effective federation with another local lower school indicates its preparedness to look beyond its own walls for future development. As a result, its commitment to promoting community cohesion is outstanding. There are excellent links with the Church and the local community and pupils have many opportunities to engage in charitable giving, encouraging them to develop a deepening understanding of the wider world and the needs of others.