



**Puller Memorial C of E Primary School
High Cross, Ware SG11 1AZ**

LA:	Hertfordshire
SIAS Inspection:	1 st April 2009
Previous SIAS Inspection:	28 th March 2006
URN:	117453
Headteacher:	Liz Aitken
SIAS Inspector:	Lindsay Fraser
Inspector Number:	107

School context

This is a small rural school in which almost all children are from a white British background. Most children are drawn from the village, but a number of pupils live out of catchment. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. A below average proportion of pupils has learning difficulties and/or disabilities. On entry to the school, children have the skills and knowledge expected for their ages. The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises of a morning Nursery group and a Reception group. The school has received the ActiveMark and Eco-School Bronze awards, and it has National Healthy School Status.

Summary Judgement

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Puller Memorial Primary School as a Church of England school are good. Christian values are evident throughout the school community and there are very strong relationships, giving a real sense of the school as a close family. The headteacher's strong leadership, combined with the commitment of the governors, is ensuring that the school is constantly improving.

Established strengths

- The excellent leadership of the headteacher in promoting the Christian vision.
- The strong Christian values held by the pupils and their impact upon pupils' personal development and attitudes.
- The particularly strong links and partnership with the local community.

Focus for development

- To further improve the quality of Collective Worship through professional development, cohesive planning and regular evaluation.
- Build on the good provision for Religious Education by observing and sharing effective practice already evident in some classes and incorporating greater creativity.
- Increase pupils' understanding of cultural diversity through visits and visitors.

The school is good in meeting the needs of all learners through its distinctive Christian ethos.

The school meets the needs of all pupils and, in particular, the more vulnerable, through the strong ethos of care, enabling them to flourish as individuals. This is based on Christian values of tolerance, responsibility and justice. The pupils speak highly of the relationships within the school and how they can trust the teachers to listen to their concerns and to sort out any problems with justice. However, the pupils do not necessarily articulate these values or understand these values as Christian values. The learners' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development results from the strong values promoted within the school. It is the excellent leadership and role model of the headteacher which underpin this distinctive Christian ethos. Since the last inspection the Christian distinctiveness has also become more obvious through the use of crosses in different parts of the school, the displays of Christian artefacts and in one classroom a prayer corner. Prominent displays give value to the school ethos of raising money for a variety of charities and the valuing of pupils' achievements. The outdoor environment is well developed and maintained, such as the Foundation Stage permanent growing area for vegetables and herbs. However, the school hall in which Collective Worship takes place still lacks an effective visual focus. Within the curriculum pupils have opportunities to explore a range of cultures, beliefs and practices, but first hand experience is very limited. The learning of sign language in Years 3 and 4 has enabled the pupils to develop an understanding and awareness of disability. Community cohesion is well developed, especially in relation to the local community, an example of which is the maintenance of the nearby churchyard by the Gardening Club. On a local and international basis the school has been proactive in raising money for such charities as Keech Cottage Hospice and, wider afield, the collection of books for children of Mozambique.

The impact of Collective Worship on learners is good.

The pupils state that Collective Worship is an important part of the school day when the whole community comes together. They particularly enjoy their Friday achievement assemblies and the celebration of birthdays. They also enjoy the Bible stories, but would welcome the opportunity to participate more actively in Collective Worship. Worship is led by a range of people from within the school and from the wider community, using a variety of techniques. However, there has been a lack of professional development and cohesive planning which have been acknowledged within the school. The church is well used by the school, for Harvest, Christmas, Easter, Ascension Day and Leavers' Service. Used also for curricular activities the pupils see the use of the church as central to the school as a Church of England school. This, together with the 'memory verses' given out by the church community, the regular use and display of the Lord's Prayer and the responses in Collective Worship, lends strength to the development of the pupils' understanding of their Anglican heritage. Monitoring and evaluating of Collective Worship are yet to be fully developed.

The impact of Religious Education on learners is good.

There is good provision for the teaching and learning of Religious Education through detailed planning. A range of teaching and learning styles lends interest and engages pupils in the subject, although the use of creativity is limited. Assessment uses the eight point scale and current levelling shows that standards in Religious Education are in line with standards in the rest of the curriculum. Future moderation of assessment has been planned to ensure the validity of standards. Pupils value Religious Education and one parent stated that her child on moving to Secondary School was reported by the Religious Education teacher as having been well taught. Since the last inspection teachers have incorporated 'learning from Religion' into their planning which has impacted upon pupils' deeper understanding. Displays in each classroom of Religious Education are of a good standard, especially in one class where pupils are encouraged to think more deeply about important questions through the use of a one, two and three point answer. In each class observed there was evidence of different aspects of good practice, such as the creation of an Easter Garden, the sharing of hot cross buns as a reminder of the Last Supper and the use of Leonardo Da Vinci's 'Last Supper' to identify what might have happened on that important occasion. Observation and sharing of expertise will further impact upon learning. Monitoring and evaluation of the subject are still to be implemented.

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

The headteacher's excellent leadership, supported by the Governing Body, underpins the progress made in the development of this school as a Church of England School. The headteacher and Governing Body have ensured that a distinctive Christian vision for the school is promoted through the signage, mission statement and admissions policy as well as the school environment. Governors play an active part in the life of the school, showing considerable commitment to providing a Christian atmosphere. Standards in behaviour have shown demonstrable improvement as a result of the measures taken by the leadership and management. The partnership between the school, the church and the local community is very effective both within the school and within the wider community through the involvement of the pupils in the locality and the involvement of local residents in the school, where they take on a variety of roles. The views of all stakeholders are taken into account through the annual school improvement evening. Monitoring and evaluating the impact of Collective Worship and standards in Religious Education have yet to be fully implemented.