



Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Diocese of St Albans



Silsoe Church of England Voluntary Controlled Lower School High Street, Silsoe, Bedford MK45 4ES

LEA:	Bedfordshire
SIAS Inspection:	27 & 29 March 2006
Previous S23 Inspection:	2000
URN:	109605
Headteacher:	Mrs S Purdue
SIAS Inspector:	Mr R J W Essery

School context

Silsoe Voluntary Controlled School is a small lower school with five teaching groups from Reception to Year 4. A small special needs nurture unit has been established at the school. Pupils come from Silsoe and the surrounding district which is an above average socio-economic area.

Summary Judgement

Overall distinctiveness and effectiveness of the school as a Church of England School

Silsoe VC Lower School is a good church school with many strengths. Pupils are secure and happy. All aspects of the school are underpinned by Christian values.

Established strengths

- strong relationship with the parish church
- clear values which underpin the school's Christian ethos
- commitment to raise standards in all areas of school life
- partnership between staff, governors, parents and the community

Focus for development

- monitoring and evaluation of worship
- preparing a policy for Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural education which incorporates the school's good practice
- timings of daily acts of worship
- reviewing the impact of the Values Education programme

The school, through its distinctive Christian character, meets the needs of all learners well.

Grade: 2

The school makes good provision to meet the needs of all its learners. Much work has been undertaken to ensure that the Values Education programme underpins the school's ethos statement. The impact of this programme should be reviewed. Governors and staff are committed to raising standards within a broadly based curriculum which values each member of the school community. A priority should be to develop a policy for SMSC (spiritual, moral, social and cultural) education which embraces current practice. Spiritual and cultural experiences should be identified in planning. A good partnership has been established between the school and its stakeholders. Parents are very supportive. Pupils feel confident and enjoy school. It is an inclusive, caring and welcoming school. Pupils behave well and a positive behaviour policy has been established. Success is celebrated. Charities are well supported and the whole school recently raised money to assist a bereaved family. The PTA holds fund-raising events to enhance the schools resources including ICT provision. The vicar and church are actively involved in the life and work of the school. An after school church club is well attended. Pupils' personal responsibility is being developed as demonstrated by the enthusiastic school council. The school's ethos statement is clearly shown in the entrance area which also contained fine models of the Easter garden. A calm and purposeful Christian atmosphere prevails throughout the school.

The impact of collective worship on the school is good.

Grade: 2

Worship plays a central part in the life of the school. Acts of worship during inspection were good. Consideration should be given to the timings of collective worship to enhance reflection and follow-up opportunities by classes. Daily worship is inclusive and generally follows weekly themes. Children benefit from the involvement of the vicar and are familiar with the main Christian festivals. Harvest celebrations and carol services take place in the parish church which is also used as a resource for teaching and learning. The school community is encouraged to take part in parish services. The monitoring and evaluation of worship is to be further developed and it is important that worship appears in the updated school improvement plans together with an allocated budget. Focal points are provided for acts of worship but a worship table, permanent Christian symbol and a screen for overhead projections would enhance the experience. The children sing well and are familiar with a variety of prayers. Parents are invited to class assemblies which take place each term and there are opportunities for successes and birthdays to be celebrated. Worship is led by the head, vicar, staff and visitors such as members of the Salvation Army.

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

Grade: 2

The quality of leadership and management contributes significantly to the success of the school as an inclusive church school. The governors support the ethos of the school and take the church foundation seriously. Link governors have been successfully established and there is a strong partnership with stakeholders. Parents and the church are fully involved in the life and work of the school. The church school self-evaluation recently undertaken by the head should be reviewed regularly and other stakeholders should be involved. The headteacher effectively leads this developing church school. The quality of relationships between staff and pupils underpins the school's work. Liaison between the school and other local schools is good. The nurture group is well managed and there are good links with support agencies. Effective in-service training has been provided. Teachers and support staff feel valued as members of the team. Detailed action plans related to values have been included in the school improvement plan. Responsibilities within the school have been reviewed and the role of the subject leader is to be developed to focus further on the quality of teaching and learning and worship in the school.