



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Wrestlingworth Church of England Voluntary Controlled Lower School

Church Lane
Wrestlingworth
Sandy
SG19 2EU

Diocese: St Albans

Local authority:	Central Bedfordshire
Date of inspection:	Tuesday 23 April 2013
Date of last inspection:	09 September 2008
School's unique reference number:	109609
Headteacher:	Mrs Heather Curry
Inspector's name and number:	Mr Bob Hopcraft 484

School context

Wrestlingworth Lower School is set in the small village of Wrestlingworth, directly opposite the parish church of St Peter's. Since 2005 the school has shared a headteacher with Dunton VC Lower School and the two schools now share a single governing body. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. It is a much smaller than average sized lower school, with 56 pupils currently on roll. The proportion of pupils with disabilities or special educational needs is below the national average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below the national average.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Wrestlingworth Lower School as a Church of England school are outstanding.

Christian values play a central role in promoting the highest of expectations and standards for all pupils. The school's Christian ethos is tangible at every turn, enabling each child and member of the school community to grow in the understanding that they are unique and valued.

Established strengths

- The implicit role played by Christian values in promoting high expectations and standards.
- The excellent relationship between the church and the school.
- High quality collective worship, which impacts positively on the lives of all at the school.
- Outstanding relationships at all levels which create an inclusive family atmosphere.

Focus for development

- Continue the current focus on making Christian values even more explicit, relating these to Christian teaching at every opportunity.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to plan and lead acts of worship.
- Ensure that areas for development as a church school are clearly identified alongside other strategic plans in the school development plan.

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

This is because Christian values, which are deeply embedded in the school's everyday life, make a significant contribution to pupils' development. Pupils are constantly challenged to achieve their best within a caring and supportive environment, enabling them to reach high levels of attainment and to make progress that is consistently well above average across the curriculum. Because Christian values are actively modelled and lived out by all members of the school community, they have a genuine impact on staff and parents, who refer to the way in which the school "... *instils good values and promotes an understanding of Christian family life*". This supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and contributes effectively to the distinctive family atmosphere in which all are valued and supported. As a result, pupils behave outstandingly well, showing great care for others within the school community and, through charitable activities, a widening understanding of the needs of those beyond their immediate world. Every opportunity is taken to extend pupils' spiritual development, for example through their continual engagement in the development of the *Reverence for Life Garden* and saying their collective 'goodbye' to the old horse chestnut tree that had to be removed from its long-established place adjacent to the school building. Religious Education contributes very effectively to pupils' growing and deepening understanding of the Christian faith and a variety of other world religions. As a result, pupils demonstrate their knowledge of a wide range of bible stories and can relate these effectively to the Christian values to which they are exposed. The school is currently focusing on making these values even more explicit through the development of a wider programme of values education.

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

This is because the daily act of worship is seen as a central focus in the life of the school and has a significant impact on pupils and other members of the school community. Pupils recognise it as an important and enjoyable time in the day when "... *we talk to God and learn more about ourselves*". Significant development has been undertaken in response to areas identified in the previous inspection report and as a result all members of the school community now regularly attend worship, which is now held once a week in the church. Parents are very positive about this development, encouraging one to write that the school "... *makes the most of the great relationship with the church opposite. Lovely family/community atmosphere!*" The excellent support received from the priest in charge and the parish enable pupils to develop their understanding of Anglican tradition, with regular opportunities to engage in song, prayer and response. Pupils use responses confidently, enabling them to engage with worship on a personal level. Discussion with pupils reveals the positive impact of worship on their growing understanding of complex concepts such as the Trinity, enabling one pupil to describe the Holy Spirit as "... *God being around us all the time and with us wherever we go*". Worship is well planned and promotes and deepens pupils' understanding of Christian values; this, in turn supports them in relating key values to Christian teaching and bible stories. While pupils have many opportunities to actively engage in worship, they do not yet have any opportunity to plan and lead worship themselves.

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

Leaders, including governors, are committed to the promotion and development of the school's distinctive Christian character and recognise the clear contribution this makes to the promotion of continuing high standards and progress for all pupils, whatever their background or ability. As a result the school is a strongly inclusive community and the well-developed relationship with Dunton enables all to benefit from the sharing of good practice and the development of shared values. The headteacher and the priest in charge have played pivotal roles in this development, ensuring that the school's Christian values continue to lie at the heart of a successful community, with high expectations and a strong sense of Christian purpose. Governors discuss and evaluate the school's work rigorously and constantly promote the school's Christian ethos in a variety of ways, for example by expanding the proportion of foundation governors as part of the recent reconstitution of the governing body. Leaders and governors engage regularly in reviewing the school's development as a Church school through monitoring and discussion, enabling them to gain a clear view of the school's development needs. However, follow-up actions to secure identified improvements are not yet translated as clearly as they could be into strategic planning within the school development plan.

SIAMS report April 2013, Wrestlingworth CofE VC Lower School, SG19 2EU