



## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### **Nacton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School**

The Street, Nacton Village, Ipswich, Suffolk IP10 0EU

#### **Diocese: St. Edmundsbury and Ipswich**

Local authority:	Suffolk
Dates of inspection:	12 <sup>th</sup> March 2013
Date of last inspection:	16 <sup>th</sup> June 2008
School's unique reference number:	124738
Headteacher:	Miss Joanna Kidby
Inspector's name and number:	Steve Cutts 495

#### **School context**

This is a small rural school in a refurbished Edwardian building with large grounds. There are 95 children on role from 4 to 11 years, divided into 4 classes. The vast majority are from white British families. The church is a short walk from the school, and is one of three in the benefice. A significant number of pupils have special educational needs and several live outside the catchment area.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Nacton VC Primary School as a Church of England school are good.**

The school's Christian ethos ensures good relationships with positive values and attitudes to teaching and learning. Pupils are well cared for in a happy, inclusive and secure environment which promotes hard work, achieves good academic standards, nurtures respect for others and gives all children equal opportunities. The staff team, together with the incumbent and foundation governors, fosters good working relationships with the local church and community.

#### **Established strengths**

- Christian values clearly guide and influence school life and are recognised and encouraged by everyone connected to the school.
- The school enjoys, and benefits from, close links with the local church and village.
- Good academic results and excellent attendance are attributed by all stakeholders to the school's Christian ethos.

### **Focus for development**

- Establish a rigorous and structured system of monitoring for collective worship and religious education that involves governors, staff and children.
- Bring to fruition the school's plans for a new worship team, consisting of pupil representatives and key staff, so that the children become far more actively engaged in all aspects of collective worship, including planning and leadership.
- Include targets directly related to the Church School Foundation prominently in the school improvement plan.

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

Parents and pupils highlight trust, love, respect and forgiveness as the main Christian values that lead to high academic standards in this school, as well as creating a happy and positive environment for learning. Children care for each other as reading buddies, playground friends and sports leaders because they say "we should love and help our neighbour" as God taught us. They express the importance of supporting those who are feeling lonely, sad, sick or experiencing problems, and clearly link this to the stories of Jesus. There is a real focus on the individual with many enriching activities, trips and clubs to develop individual skills and talents. All members of staff are good role models and relationships are excellent. Christian compassion is seen in the large variety of charities supported each year. Good work and behaviour is recognised through a variety of reward schemes. Prayers are an integral part of the school day and children talk clearly about different types of prayer. Each class has its own prayer book written, and used daily, by the pupils and an outdoor area for quiet reflection is also decorated with children's thoughts and prayers. Visits to the church are made on festive occasions and there are very good links with church personnel and the village community, including volunteers who run guitar, art and cookery clubs in school. There is an active parents' association. Good displays leave visitors in no doubt that this is a Christian school, and a number of prestigious awards including Active Mark, Food for Life and Investors in People have been achieved. The school's ECO Award reflects care and understanding of God's creation, and children speak of "inspiring" visits to the cathedral. Responses to a recent questionnaire were overwhelmingly positive from pupils, parents and staff indicating that everyone values Nacton as a centre of spiritual as well as academic learning.

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

Worship is seen as an important part of the day for all members of the school family. The input of seven church leaders and all staff leads to a variety of styles. Each act of worship begins with a liturgical sentence and the lighting of a candle, and ends with prayers. A hymn is usually sung, though this was not the case on the day I visited, when the children had very little participation or time for reflection. However, they agreed that they enjoy worship and that it impacts on behaviour both in and out of school, adding several examples of how the theme of perseverance had recently made them more determined to succeed. This view was supported by parents who said that children now look forward to worship because they enjoy singing the new action hymns. Children are able to talk to their parents about what they have learned. One parent said that she was learning from her child and, as a result of this, had attended church services. Special festivals are celebrated, often in church, and these are well attended by parents and villagers. This year the school helped to further an understanding of Anglican tradition by including the imposition of ashes on Ash Wednesday. Currently children have little involvement in the leadership or planning of worship, however the majority of children would value being part of a worship team. The strong values upon which the school is built are reinforced through worship.

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

The head teacher and governors, in most areas, provide good, effective leadership and work in close partnership. This contributes significantly to the success of the school. Everyone shares and effectively articulates the school's Christian vision which was drawn up at a full-day meeting attended by all staff and

governors, thus ensuring that everyone has clear ownership. The local vicar is a regular visitor to the school and a long-serving member of the governing body. All learners and staff feel valued and secure and the head knows them well. Members of the governing body meet occasionally with the school council to hear their opinions, and everyone feels that their views are heard and considered. There is mutual respect and support throughout, and recent surveys are full of praise for the leadership of the school, highlighting that learning has become more exciting. Documentation and signage leaves people in no doubt that this is a church school. Close links between the church, school and village benefit the whole community. Governors give priority to staff well-being and talk of "prevention rather than cure". However, the governors and leadership team are not pro-active in ensuring the quality of worship and religious education. In these two vital areas there is little evidence of adequate monitoring or evaluation being carried out in order to inform forward planning and build on good practice.

SIAS report March 2013. Nacton CV Primary School, The Street, Nacton Village, Ipswich. IP10 0EU