



## Buxted CE Primary School

Diocese of Chichester

Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools

Inspection Report

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Date of inspection:	14 February 2011
Name of inspector:	Shane Morton
NS inspector's number:	563
School address:	Hurstwood Road Buxted East Sussex TN22 4BB
Unique reference number:	114493
Status:	Voluntary Controlled
Number on roll:	125
Age range of pupils:	5-11
LA:	East Sussex
Name of chair of governors:	Nicola Whitehead
Name of headteacher:	Anne Radford
Date of previous inspection:	23 November 2007

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The inspection of denominational education and collective worship in the school was carried out in accordance with Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

## Description of the school

Buxted CE Primary School is a small, rural school set on the outskirts of the village of Buxted. The school building is bright, welcoming and fit for purpose with attractive environmental areas outside. Almost all children are of white British heritage. Since the last inspection the school has achieved the Active Mark, the International Schools Award, the BECTA ICT Award and the Gold Arts Mark Award.

## Summary judgement

**The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Buxted CE Primary School as a Church of England school are good.**

The school is well-led, staff members are committed and stakeholders are proud of their school. The Christian ethos of the school creates a positive environment in which the children thrive because they are supported, nurtured and cherished. The impact of Collective Worship is good, there is a good relationship with the parish church and Religious Education (RE) contributes to the very good Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) development of all children.

Grade: 2

## Established strengths

- A happy, caring and inclusive learning environment, based on Christian principles
- Learners feel valued and special and have good levels of self-esteem
- Very good relationships and the commitment of all stakeholders to the success of the school
- Good capacity to grow and develop as a Church School as well as a village school

## Focus for development

- To make the Christian foundation of the school more explicit through visual symbols, both external and internal
- To strengthen the monitoring and evaluation of Collective Worship and to provide more opportunities for children to lead acts of worship.
- To involve all stakeholders in the Church School self-evaluation process

<b>The school meets the statutory requirement for Collective Worship</b>	Yes
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**The school, through its distinctive Christian character is outstanding at meeting the needs of all its learners.**

Christian values have a very positive impact on the personal development of the children. These values make an important contribution to the creation of a learning environment in which children flourish because they feel happy and safe. Children are empowered and celebrated so that they enjoy their learning and show excellent levels of independence and responsibility. The children's behaviour and care for one another is very good and based upon the school code of behaviour, e.g. Year 6/Year R Buddies. One parent commented, "My four year-old can't wait to start school because she knows everyone already."

The school's SMSC provision is excellent and children and families with other faiths or with no faith are welcomed and affirmed. The school has worked hard to develop the provision of a cultural and multi-cultural curriculum, although visits to different places of worship and visitors from other faiths would enhance learning. Pastoral care and family support is excellent for all learners. Children have very positive views about their school and their relationships. Their ability to respect the views of others was demonstrated by children of all ages. RE is recognised as a core part of the curriculum and has an important place in the life of the school. The teachers encourage creative, collaborative and child-centred learning. One child commented, "I love the projects that we take part in here." The children raise funds for different charitable causes and the school's curriculum ensures that the children learn about a wide range of topics and environmental issues. Children leave this school as considerate and thoughtful young people. One parent explained that she chose this school because, "if that's how they turn out then that's the school for me!"

**Grade: 1**

**The impact of Collective Worship on the school community is good.**

Collective Worship is important in the life of the school community. It reflects the church year, honours the Anglican tradition and follows Christian themes. The act of worship observed had some good features, such as the use of a candle and quiet music to create a reflective atmosphere and the use of St. Valentine's Day to help the children to understand the key value of love. Prayer was used as a means of spiritual growth, the singing was very good and most participants responded positively. One child observed that he went home, "singing the words of the hymns in my head every day."

There is a system for regular monitoring and evaluation of the impact of Collective Worship, but this could be widened to provide opportunities for further improvement and to embed the development of Christian values for life. The leaders of Collective Worship are good and have identified ways to help the school to improve this area further, e.g. to provide more opportunities for children to lead Collective Worship.

The parish has been in a period of inter-regnum for two years. However, the school is supported very well by the ordained School Chaplain, who leads weekly acts of worship at school. The children visit the Parish Church on a regular basis for services and parental support for this has increased greatly in recent years. The Church also welcomes parents to attend outside school hours. The children in Year 6 take part in a Leavers' Service at Crowborough and links with other Christian organisations widen the children's experience, e.g. the Methodist Church.

**Grade: 2**

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

The school lives by its aims to encourage the development of a Christian ethos with Christian values to underpin all that it does. The Headteacher is an outstanding leader and is well-supported by the staff and governors, who work well together to support new initiatives and the development of SMSC education. Positive relationships and good teamwork exist amongst all members of the school community. One member of staff commented, "You can just feel how lovely it is to be a part of this school. No-one ever wants to leave!"

Recruitment and induction procedures are effective in conveying and explaining the school's Christian character. The leadership team promotes the Christian ethos and ensures that it is inclusive to the local community, although the Christian foundation of the school could be more explicit in the school's visual symbols. Resources are good and well-maintained throughout the school.

The partnership between the school, the Parish Church and the local community is good. The school leaders are approachable and act upon feedback from both parents and children. As a result, parents provide very positive feedback about the school and give active, regular and informed support. Parents are welcomed to share their skills in school. The foundation governors give great personal support to the school and have been important in the development of the school link with Sierra Leone. However, governors could monitor the impact of RE more systematically.

Most of the recommendations from the previous denominational inspection have been effectively implemented and the school leadership team demonstrated good potential to improve as a Church School in the future. Since the previous inspection, the school is now in a stronger position to develop a shared Christian vision by involving all stakeholders in the Church School self-evaluation process and by drawing upon best practice from across the Diocese.

**Grade: 2**