



Name and address of school: Guilden Morden Church of England (controlled)  
Primary School  
Pound Green, Guilden Morden, Royston, Herts SG8 0JZ

Type of school: Primary

Status: Voluntary Controlled

Diocese: Ely

LEA: Cambridgeshire

Dates of inspection: 19<sup>th</sup> October 2006

Date of last inspection: March 2001

School's Unique reference number: 110790

Name of Headteacher: Mrs Sue Arnold

Inspector's name with National Society inspector's number: Mrs Marion Betts 220

### **Summary Judgement**

Guilden Morden school is a good effective Church of England school with many outstanding features and a distinctive Christian ethos. Christian values are at the centre of the life and work of the school. Collective Worship makes a significant contribution to the daily lives of the pupils. Pupils are very aware of the inclusive nature of the school and are extremely considerate towards each other.

### **School Context**

Guilden Morden school is a small primary school serving the local village community. A quarter of pupils come from further afield because their parents have chosen the school. The number of pupils on roll is rising. The village church of St Mary the Virgin is visible across the school field. Most pupils are from favourable economic backgrounds and almost all are of White British heritage. An average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties or disabilities.

### **Established strengths**

- The headteacher and foundation governors provide very effective leadership which contributes significantly to the promotion of the distinctive Christian ethos.
- Worship evokes a very positive response from pupils who all greatly enjoy assemblies.
- Collective Worship is very effective in developing pupils' understanding of Anglican faith and practice.
- The school has a very close and productive relationship with the church.

### **Focus for development**

- Increase the confidence and expertise of all teachers to be able to lead worship.
- Increase the opportunities for the pupils to plan, lead and participate in collective worship.
- Consider how the approach to the building and foyer could be developed to demonstrate more overtly the school's distinctive Christian character.

**The school, through its distinctive Christian character makes good provision to meet the needs of all its learners.** Pupils feel valued and special. They are confident and enjoy their school life especially the curriculum trips. They are involved in decision making in the school. Pupils designed the school badge. They participated in the review of the school aims which support the school's Christian foundation. Success both of achievement and personal development is recognised and celebrated. The pupils know the procedures to resolve any problems. High quality care and guidance within the school ensure the pupils develop into responsible young people alert to the feelings and needs of others. Pupils make good progress throughout their school life. Relationships and respect between all staff and children are good and demonstrate the school's Christian context. Pupils mostly behave well and their attitudes to learning are good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Pupils are encouraged to contribute their ideas during discussions of issues and problems. This is effective in promoting individual personal development. The pupils have a strong sense of social awareness and support local and inter-national charities devising their own ideas of how to raise money. They have special links with children in Sri Lanka and Peru. Pupils are provided with opportunities for spiritual reflection which result in the very high quality of creative art, literacy and poetry work. They are also keenly interested in developing the school environment.

**Worship makes an outstanding contribution to the life of the school.** This is demonstrated by effective and thorough planning and the high quality of delivery. The worship programme fulfils statutory requirements. Worship is enhanced by regular stimulating, visual, imaginative presentations from visiting clergy and Christian worship groups. The worship experience is broadened by visitors from a range of backgrounds leading assemblies and sharing their faith. At present not all the teachers lead assemblies. The sessions follow the liturgical year and promote and explain the Christian values seen in action in school life. Collected Worship evokes a very positive response from the pupils who are stimulated and enthused by the delivery. They are given time to reflect on the theme and its application to their lives and are often given opportunities to contribute their ideas and thoughts. Pupils are not yet involved in planning and leading worship. Christian based hymns are used in worship. Church links ensure that the same hymns known to the pupils are used in all age church services. Pre-school children participate weekly in the worship sessions. The school celebrates major Christian festivals by the whole school being present at services at the local church. Pupils are involved in delivering the liturgy. Parents are invited and attendance is good. Pupils also contribute to the Sunday all age worship services. The school is sensitive to the beliefs and traditions of those of other faiths and of none.

**Leadership and Management of the school as a church school are outstanding.**

The headteacher and foundation governors provide very effective leadership which contributes significantly to the Christian vision of the school. The self-evaluation of the school as a church school is accurate and comprehensive. One of the foundation governors regularly checks the Christian dimension of school's life and reports to the governing body. The school improvement plan includes development of collective worship and more church links. The Christian nature of the school is made explicit by the school badge which depicts centrally a picture of the church. However there are no explicit signs at the entrance to the building to indicate the school's Anglican foundation. Staff understand and implement the school's expectations for their roles in this Christian community and feel appreciated for their work. Links with the local church are very strong. The vicar visits regularly and two parishioners, one a foundation governor, voluntarily help within the school. The church is used as a resource for learning within religious education and other curriculum subjects. Displays of pupils' work in the church and regular reports to the parochial church council give the school a high profile within the Christian community. Parents are aware of and support the Christian ethos of the school. They feel welcomed into the school and appreciate their views being considered. The school's partnership with the local community is very good. Events in the school, village and church are communicated to all and mutually supported. During this half term pupils have danced at the village show and contributed scarecrows and home-made bread to the church's harvest display. The school has extended its provision to the community by partnership with the local pre-school group and provision of a breakfast and out of school club.