

# Ofsted at Edward Betham Church of England Primary School

## from the perspective of the Chair of Governors



On Monday 1st March, 2010, the office at Edward Betham Church of England School answered the phone.

It was Ofsted! "We are coming to inspect you on Thursday" said the voice on the other end of the line. That is how it is with Ofsted. Just 48 hours notice and then the Inspectors arrive to make their judgements of what is happening at the school. Two days in which the school and Governors try to ensure that they have everything in place and ready to demonstrate with evidence that they are doing the job properly.

As Chair of the Governors of the school, I have a responsibility to speak to the Lead Inspector, and I was questioned for 40 minutes during the first day of the Inspection. She was interested in my opinion of the Head Teacher's work and also in what ways the Governing Body had challenged the school to improve.



The Governors are an integral part of the "Leadership and Management" of the school and the Inspectors looked carefully at the minutes of the GB meetings and the various committees of the GB. We were able to show evidence that the Governors had seen issues in the school and challenged the Head Teacher at meetings. Thinking for ourselves is what the GB is for and we are fortunate that whilst in a spirit of supportiveness, the Governors have, over the years, expressed a widely different selection of disagreements without ever falling out between ourselves.

The rest of the school felt the weight of the inspection. Every teacher was observed at work and the Head Teacher was questioned at length on every aspect of the school's life. The system is based on a principle of self-assessment. The Inspectors see how the school has self-assessed and they come in to see if they agree or not.

Fortunately, agreement was almost totally achieved and the school was rated as a "good" school. We actually knew that already, but now it is official! The Governors were very proud to be associated with a staff team which has such excellent qualities and we were thrilled to see the Ofsted Inspectors smiling upon us!

Neil Richardson