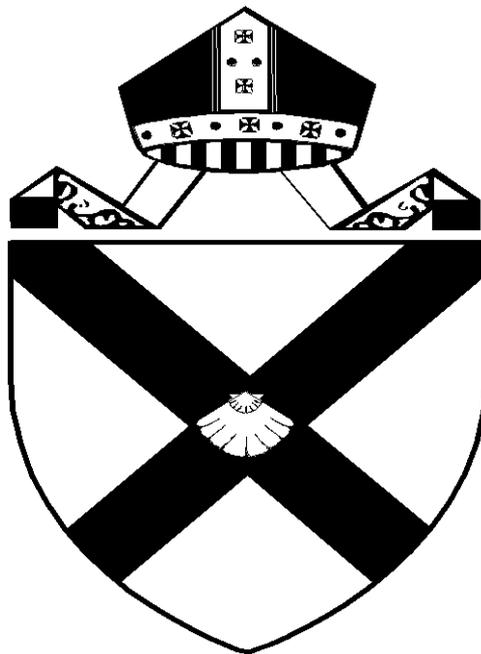


STATUTORY INSPECTION of ANGLICAN SCHOOLS

ROCHESTER DIOCESE

2010



**West Kingsdown Church of England
Primary School**

Voluntary Controlled

Fawkham Road, West Kingsdown, Sevenoaks,
Kent TN15 6JP

Unique Reference No: 130948
Kent L.A.

Head Teacher: Mr. Ian Whittaker
Chair of Governors: Mrs. Pat Bosley
Incumbent: Rev. Judy Thurlow
Inspector: Ms Jan Thompson (NS 92)
Inspection: 22nd April 2010

SUMMARY JUDGEMENT

How distinctive and effective is the school as a Church of England school?

West Kingsdown Voluntary Controlled Church of England Primary School in Kent is a good and improving church school. It has built on its strengths from the last inspection and acted upon its areas for development.

Grade 2: Good

SCHOOL CONTEXT

West Kingsdown Church of England Primary School has 160 pupils, about twenty percent of whom have Traveller backgrounds. The school was originally separate Infant and Junior schools and therefore benefits from extensive buildings and grounds. The school and the church together play an important role in the local community, but less than ten percent of pupils come from active church families. Ofsted judged this to be a good school. From a below average start, pupils make good progress and attain average standards by Year 6.

ESTABLISHED STRENGTHS

- The caring Christian ethos.
- The strong two-way relationship between the school and the local church.
- The committed Christian leadership of the head teacher.
- The sound Christian teaching.

FOCUS FOR DEVELOPMENT

- Give greater attention to the impact of the school environment on spiritual development.
- Involve pupils in the evaluation of Collective Worship.
- Identify the explicit Christian values that underpin the school's ethos.

How well does the school, through its distinctive Christian character, meet the needs of all learners? Grade 2: Good

This school lives up to its claim in its mission statement to be a 'caring Christian community'. People feel welcomed and valued here, and one parent commented that 'the caring and nurturing environment is second to none.' Consequently, pupils are happy and make good progress. They gain a good knowledge and understanding of Christianity because the school is concerned for the development of the whole child, including their moral and spiritual development. This is based on Christian teaching, particularly through Collective Worship and Religious Education (RE), but also through church links within the local parish and the wider world. For example, there is a well-established link with a church school in Uganda. Several parents commented on the sound moral guidance that their children receive at school, where they learn to treat everyone with respect. This results in very good behaviour, and relationships within school are good at all levels. However, pupils are not always able to make clear links between their behaviour and Christian teaching, possibly because the school has not identified and focused clearly upon the specific Christian values that it wishes to promote. Since the last inspection, the school has tried to use its environment better for pupils' spiritual development, with Christian displays around the school and reflection areas in the classrooms. However, these have not yet had sufficient impact because pupils regard them more as displays rather than something to engage with.

What is the impact of collective worship on the school community? Grade 2: Good

Daily Collective Worship is planned by the headteacher, in close liaison with the Rector. It is always Christian, following the Church's calendar and drawing on the Bible for its themes. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils also take a more active part in worship now, particularly when it is led by their class teacher. They enjoy both taking part and watching other pupils. They sing heartily and join in well with the set responses. They also contribute well to question and answer sessions. Another improvement is that the worship is more distinctively Anglican. For example, worship starts with a liturgical greeting and each class uses the small parish church for their Collective Worship at least once a year. This helps them to feel comfortable with worship in church and to know how to behave there. Years 5 and 6 attend the Church Schools Festival in the Cathedral every two years, where they take part in a Eucharist service. The Rector leads worship in school every week and has been very supportive of these developments. Worship is given an important place in the life of the school. All teachers are supportive and take turns in leading Collective Worship as well as ensuring that prayers take place in their classrooms at lunchtimes and at the end of the day. However, pupils have not yet been fully involved in evaluating worship for themselves and in thinking about its impact on their lives.

How effective are the leadership and management of the school as a church school? Grade 2: Good

The head teacher is a very committed Christian leader with a long experience of Church schools. He has worked hard over the past eight years to bring the school to this point, where its Christian distinctiveness is clearly having a good effect. He has been assisted in this by the Rector and the strong two-way links with the parish church of St. Edmund King & Martyr. The Governing Body is also actively supportive of the Christian life of the school. For example, the chair of governors (who is not a Foundation Governor) worships at St. Edmund's and helps with the Christian '5 Up' club that is run after school once a month. This is an important opportunity for church members to make contact with pupils and their families when they first join the school. Parents are mostly very appreciative of the church links and the Christian foundation that the school gives their children. The governing body has acted upon all the recommendations from the last report and is now involved in the self-evaluation process of the school as a church school. When governors visit the school, they always attend Collective Worship and also interview a small group of pupils with questions that include RE and Collective Worship. RE has been well managed and the governing body has recently reviewed the RE syllabus and decided in favour of the Diocesan syllabus. This is because of its focus on Christianity at Key Stage 1 and introduction of other religions at Key Stage 2, when pupils are more able to compare and contrast religions and value diversity.