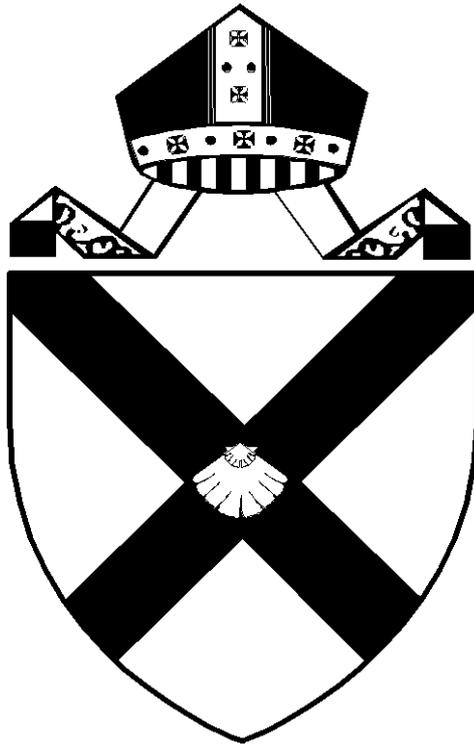


STATUTORY INSPECTION of ANGLICAN SCHOOLS

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2012



**Bidborough Church of England Primary School
Voluntary Controlled**

Spring Lane, BIDBOROUGH, Tunbridge Wells,
Kent TN3 0UE

Kent LA

Unique Reference No: 118598

Headteacher: Mrs. Clare Owen

Chair of Governors: Mrs. Talya Roberson

Incumbent: Rev. Stephen Hills

Inspector: Ms Jan Thompson

Inspection: 21 June 2012

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Bidborough Voluntary Controlled CE Primary School

Spring Lane, BIDBOROUGH, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN3 0UE

Diocese: Rochester

Local authority: Kent

Date of inspection: 21 June 2012

Date of last inspection: September 2007

School's unique reference number: 118598

Headteacher: Clare Owen

Inspector's name and number: Jan Thompson No 92

School context

Bidborough Church of England Primary School is located in a small, attractive village on the outskirts of Tunbridge Wells. Its 211 pupils are almost entirely White British, with a well below average proportion eligible for free school meals and a slightly below average percentage of pupils with special educational needs. About a third of pupils attend church on Sundays. The school is very successful and oversubscribed. The present headteacher has been in post for nearly two years.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Bidborough CE Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding.

Bidborough Church of England Primary School has improved since its last inspection, particularly under the current headteacher. It is now an outstanding Church school with the capacity to improve further.

Established strengths

- The impact of identified Christian values on the whole life of the school
- The impact of varied Christian worship on pupils' spiritual development
- The capable Christian leadership of the headteacher, well supported by governors
- The strong, mutual support between church and school

Focus for development

- Add Christian signage to the outside main entrance of the school.
- Involve all pupils more in planning and leading acts of worship.

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

The school's core Christian values are hope, love, honesty, forgiveness, thankfulness and self-control. All these values affect every aspect of school life, resulting in a caring and welcoming Christian community. They are interpreted religiously in school documentation, for example 'Our hope is founded on God's faithfulness'. They are linked to Bible passages in Collective Worship and explored through the Religious Education (RE) syllabus. Pupils and parents have been involved in understanding the meaning of these values through homework. For example, a Year 5 pupil interpreted love as 'Our love for God and his love for us'. The same pupil said 'Jesus forgave us so we should forgive others' and forgiveness is at the heart of good relationships in the school. A parent who volunteers for lunchtime duty said she 'regularly sees Christian led values in action in the playground', particularly with older pupils looking out for the younger ones. Both RE and worship support pupils' spiritual and moral development in many ways. For example, staff comment on the depth of spirituality in what pupils say in RE, and worship helps pupils to relate Jesus' teaching to their own lives. Pupils express thanks for their privileged lifestyles and show concern for people less fortunate. For example, pupils in the knitting club made a blanket for a baby in Tanzania, after Bishop Jacob visited the school through their link with his diocese of Kibaigwa. Pupils have also supported the mother and baby refuge in Tunbridge Wells. The school environment, particularly the classroom Christian areas and the new spiritual garden, encourages pupils to pray. Some Year 2 pupils said of the new garden 'I feel safe and Jesus isn't here but in my heart' and 'If you're having troubles you can pray.'

The impact of Collective Worship on the school community is outstanding.

Many features of the school's worship are outstanding. Of particular note is the stunning singing, which pupils clearly enjoy and which leads them to understand the importance of praising God in worship. Pupils benefit from a variety of types of worship, including more meditative approaches and times of silence. They also appreciate the variety of people who lead their worship, especially the ministry team from the local church. All teachers take turns in leading worship and are much more involved in it than they were at the last inspection. Pupils too take leadership roles in worship, such as saying the greeting and doing the readings. Pupils of all ages are used to leading others in prayer. Year 6 pupils have also planned and delivered some whole acts of worship. A special feature of worship in this school is that each class has made its own cross and these are set up on the table at the front of the hall for each act of worship. This has the effect of making everyone feel included. Pupils' experience of Anglican tradition and practice has much improved since the last report. Each act of worship is introduced by a liturgical greeting to which the school responds. A candle is lit and pupils know that this represents Jesus as the 'Light of the world'. The worship always ends with pupils singing a beautiful setting of the Lord's Prayer. The school celebrates the Church's year and uses the four liturgical colours to indicate the Church seasons. Some of the special festivals, including Epiphany, Ash Wednesday and Pentecost, are celebrated in the beautiful, ancient church next door, giving an explicitly Anglican setting to the worship. Easter has been celebrated there for the past two years using interactive prayer stations. Staff commented on how moving it was to see pupils deep in prayer and reflection. Year 6 pupils have a Eucharist at their leaving service, for which they prepare thoroughly in their RE lessons. They also normally take part in the annual Church Schools Festival at Rochester Cathedral.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a Church school is outstanding.

Considerable improvement has taken place since the last inspection. Issues concerning worship have been successfully addressed from the last report. A new committee has been established on the governing body to oversee spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This has ensured good monitoring, careful evaluation and sound judgements of the Christian aspects of the school, with an action plan for future developments. The headteacher has been a particular catalyst for change, following Diocesan training for new headteachers. She and governors have also followed up ideas after visiting other outstanding Church schools. The whole school community has engaged enthusiastically with identifying, understanding, displaying and living out its distinctive Christian values. The school's website makes clear the Christian foundation of the school and its links with the church, and the governing body is improving the prospectus so that it reflects these aspects of the life of the school. Pupils understand the religious meaning of the school motto: 'Faith in our future' and know that the new hands added to the school badge indicate that they are in God's hands. However, the signage at the front of the school does not yet promote its Church status. The Christian nature of the school is made clear at staff appointments, with the result that staff are very supportive of this aspect of school life. A strong two-way partnership continues to exist between the school and the village church of St. Lawrence. This is most noticeable in the mutual support by committed adult Christians, as well as in using each other's buildings. The headteacher, for instance, attends the Sunday all-age worship in Bidborough each month, which encourages pupils to do the same. A number of pupils from non-church families have been baptised in the church as a result of their attendance at this school.

