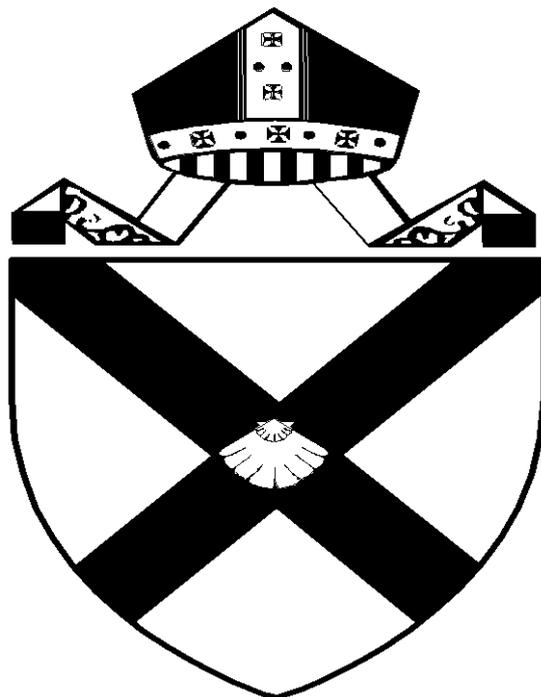


STATUTORY INSPECTION of ANGLICAN SCHOOLS

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2012



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Bishop Justus Church of England School

Magpie Hall Lane, Bromley

Kent BR2 8HZ

Secondary Academy

Bromley LA

Unique Reference No: 134666

Head Teacher: Mrs Kathy Griffiths

Chair of Governors: Mr Simon Parker

Inspector: Mr John Ross NS no 476

Inspection: 24 & 28 May 2012

Bishop Justus Church of England School

Magpie Hall Lane
Bromley
Kent
BR2 8HZ

Diocese:	Rochester
Local authority:	Bromley
Dates of inspection:	24 & 28 May 2012
Date of last inspection:	12 & 13 February 2009
School's unique reference number:	134666
Headteacher:	Kathy Griffiths
Inspector's name and number:	John Ross (NS no 476)

School context

Bishop Justus is a large Church of England secondary school, opened in 2004. There are 1086 students on roll, of which 185 are in the sixth form. Previously voluntary aided, it is now an academy. It has a music specialism. Accommodation is modern and state-of-the-art. Recent modifications include provision of a new chapel. An above average proportion of students are from ethnic minority backgrounds. 50% of the intake come from Christian backgrounds, with 50% gaining places through open admissions. The school holds many awards, including Healthy Schools and the Bishop's Commendation. The recent Ofsted report judged the overall effectiveness of the school as good, with students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development rated as a strength in all areas of provision.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Bishop Justus School as a Church of England school are outstanding

Bishop Justus was judged as an outstanding church school in the last denominational inspection. It is still outstanding but has made considerable progress since then, particularly in the development of its chaplaincy. Christian values are at its heart. Equality and inclusivity underpin everything. Every person is loved, valued and cared for. The school is successful in its mission to unlock and develop the God-given potential in every individual.

Established strengths

- The very strong Christian ethos, which permeates the life of the school.
- The inspirational and visionary Christian leadership provided by the headteacher, senior leadership team and governing body.
- The developing role of chaplaincy and its impact on school life.
- The positive impact of the music specialism on the Christian character of the school.

Focus for development

- Explore new ways of working with the chaplaincy team to expand its impact, influence and outreach.

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

The school's motto 'Through faith and learning' articulates the character of the school and encompasses its core values. The curriculum, ethos, policies and practice are all informed by Christian values. One student commented, 'Our ethos is at the heart of the school.' Whilst distinctly Anglican, the school is highly inclusive and welcomes people from all backgrounds and from all faiths and from none. 'Community' is a word frequently used by students, staff and parents to describe their school. A student said, 'It brings people together but you are still an individual.' Another, who said the school had supported her own faith journey, said, 'People can express their views [on faith] in a safe environment.' The school reaches out into the local, national and worldwide community, through prayer, activities, trips and extensive charitable fundraising. Students are encouraged to recognise and develop their leadership skills as they move through the school. The school has a strong culture of celebrating everyone's talents, for example through performance in music and the arts. The music specialism has had a major impact on church school distinctiveness. It has further enabled inclusivity, celebrating success and the building of students' self-esteem, through developing and supporting both the gifted and talented and the more 'hard to reach' students.

Pastoral care is particularly strong, and is provided through a rich support network. Significantly, students take great care in looking after one another. One said, 'Everyone helps you out, even if you don't know them.' The atmosphere around school is orderly, friendly and happy. Mindful of the gospels, the vulnerable are particularly well cared for and systems are in place to ensure that no one slips through the net. The principle of Christian redemption and forgiveness is built into the system of rewards and sanctions. Induction is very strong and special care is taken to make all new students feel secure and welcome. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding with excellent opportunities provided through the curriculum and through extra-curricular activities. Students have high career aspirations and clear plans on how to achieve them. The school buildings are new, accessible and well cared for. The new chapel is set in a central position and is in daily use, providing a place of stillness and reflection for all. This is a very positive response to a focus in the last inspection report.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship plays a central role in the life of the school and in the spiritual development of its community. Students are very positive about school worship and they are actively involved in its delivery and evaluation. It is distinctively Christian, with explicit elements of the Anglican liturgy, yet also inclusive. During the inspection, a Year 8 Eucharist to celebrate Pentecost showed wide student participation through music, readings, prayers, liturgical dance and student crucifer and acolytes. There was a highly respectful atmosphere throughout. Most students joined in the responses. The majority received communion and most others received a blessing. Music is important in collective worship and the school's specialism has enabled this to develop. Within the Eucharist observed, a music group drawn from the year group led instrumental music and singing with confidence. There are regular Eucharists for every year group, a weekly voluntary Eucharist and extra celebrations to mark the major Christian festivals. This is a significant development since the last inspection.

Collective worship takes many forms including whole year group, house worship, tutor group worship and events in church, such as on major festivals. Tutor group worship contains corporate responses and prayers and is led by students. Time for silence and reflection is used effectively in the many forms of worship, for example silent reflection on a lighted candle for All Souls. There are regular Bible readings included in weekly worship plans. The chaplain has worked hard to create a worship programme, which is clear, user-friendly and diverse. The notes provide a liturgical structure for tutors and students to lead worship, but this also offers flexibility to worship leaders. Students are now increasingly involved in the planning of worship and there is an intention to develop this further. There is a prayer room made available to Muslim students and staff and special diets are catered for. There are plans to widen the chaplaincy team, through external support and developing internal volunteers. This will help to broaden worship so that it represents more fully the complete spectrum of the Anglican tradition and will increase the impact and outreach work of the chaplaincy.

The effectiveness of the Religious Education is outstanding

This is a highly successful department which has maintained its strong position since the last inspection. Religious Education (RE) is taught with passion by a highly qualified and dedicated team of specialists. Standards are high at GCSE and have been maintained over the last three years. Attainment compares favourably with other core subjects within the school and with national norms. All students take GCSE full course RE. In 2011, 84% achieved A*-C grades, and 38% achieved A*-A. Since the last inspection, A-level has been introduced and is already popular. In 2011, 21 candidates were entered with 100% passing at grades A-D, 50% achieving A-B. Teaching displays confidence, high levels of subject expertise, enthusiasm, challenge and high expectations. It stimulates students' active participation and makes a strong contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Students are very positive towards the subject. Their work displays high levels of originality, imagination, creativity and personal reflection. They take pride in their work and there are attractive displays in every classroom. Data indicates that students of all abilities and backgrounds make outstanding progress across all Key Stages.

There is a full range of teaching and learning strategies used across all age groups. Activities include the study of religion through film, art and song, class debates, individual and group work, extended writing and Buddhist style meditation. In the sixth form, core RE is very popular. Whole RE conference days, beginning with a Eucharist, continue with high quality debate on religious, moral and philosophical issues, involving students, staff and visiting speakers. Students said, 'It's really interesting,' and, 'Everyone's opinion is valued and respected.' Commenting on sharing the personal experiences of others, one said, 'Sometimes it can be emotional.' RE receives strong support from the school's senior leadership and is itself well led. The department is well resourced and there is good time allocation for the subject. RE makes a major contribution to the school's outreach, particularly to local Church primary schools. There is a regular and successful RE celebration day, hosted by Bishop Justus School, which draws in pupils from local church primary schools.

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

The headteacher, senior leadership team and governing body have a clear vision regarding the Christian character of the school. The school's prospectus and open evening make a clear statement about the school's religious foundation and how this impacts on practice. The chaplain, recently appointed at the time of the last inspection, has been transformational in building the Christian ethos and sharing the Christian story within the school and beyond. Self-evaluation is accurate and very thorough. Governors are active in monitoring the school's effectiveness as a church school and holding its leaders to account. They receive regular reports from the headteacher on RE and collective worship. Foundation governors are closely connected with the school's Christian character, for example as link governors to the RE department. The new appointment of an assistant headteacher responsible for ethos and values, with oversight of worship, RE and chaplaincy, is a strong statement of intent.

The school enjoys excellent relationships with parents and carers who are very positive. Their comments included, 'The school cares for the whole person, no matter what their background,' and, 'There is a family atmosphere where everyone gets looked after.' Another simply said, 'We were really pleased when this new church school opened.' The school reaches out to parents who are harder to reach, for example by going to meet them in their own local community. There are regular opportunities for staff to worship together and pray, including a staff Eucharist each term. There are strong links with local churches and deaneries. Relationships with the diocese are close and supportive. Links with the local church primary schools are very well developed through the Bromley Church Schools Partnership. The school is developing future Christian leaders and provides opportunities for its staff to develop and grow, as well as offering training to other church schools. All issues from the previous inspection have been successfully addressed and significant further progress has been made. All statutory requirements are met. Bishop Justus is still a young school but it is now growing to maturity as a very successful church school. Capacity for further improvement remains outstanding.