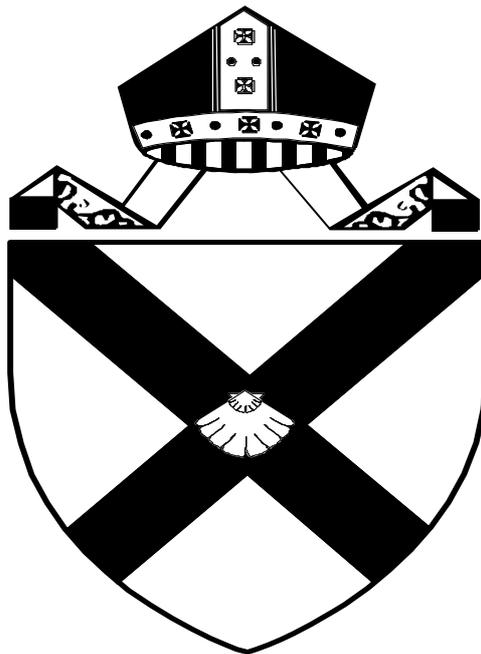


STATUTORY INSPECTION of ANGLICAN SCHOOLS

ROCHESTER DIOCESE

2011



Burham Church of England

Primary School

Voluntary Controlled

Bell Lane, Burham, Rochester,
Kent ME1 3SY

Unique Reference No:118620
Kent LA

Head Teacher: Mrs. Michelle Grima
Chair of Governors: Mrs. Eileen Smith
Incumbent: Rev. Jenny Bradshaw
Inspector: Ms Jan Thompson (NS 92)
Inspection: 5th July 2011

SUMMARY JUDGEMENT

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

Burham Church of England Primary School is a good Church school.

Grade 2: Good

SCHOOL CONTEXT

Burham is a Voluntary Controlled Church of England Primary School situated in the small Kent village of Burham, near Rochester. Founded by the curate of Burham in 1858, the school is now housed in a modern building further up the road. Its 118 pupils come from Burham and neighbouring towns and villages. They are mostly White British, with only about 10 per cent from regular worshipping Church families. The Rector works part-time and is parish priest to Burham and Wouldham, both of which have church schools. The head teacher was new in September 2010.

ESTABLISHED STRENGTHS

- The headteacher's Christian commitment and capacity to move the school forward as a Church school
- The impact of worship on pupils' spiritual development

FOCUS FOR DEVELOPMENT

- Clearly identify the school's fundamental Christian values.
- Ensure that the school's documentation promotes the distinctive Christian vision for the school. (This was a focus for development in the last report.)
- Enable pupils to take more leadership roles in Collective Worship.

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

Burham Church of England Primary School is a friendly, caring Christian community where pupils are happy, grow in self confidence and make steady progress across the school. The Rector explained that pupils are taught to be friendly even towards people they do not particularly like, following Jesus' teaching in the Parable of the Good Samaritan. Consequently, relationships in school are good at all levels and pupils behave well. The Christian character of the school continues to make a good contribution to pupils' moral development. For example, in a Year 4 Religious Education (RE) lesson on 1 Corinthians 13, pupils explored the meaning of Christian love and related it to their own lives. Pupils support charities and see this as appropriate in a church school. Some refer to 'WWJD' ('What would Jesus do?') as a guide to their behaviour. The last report encouraged a greater emphasis on spiritual development, and this is seen particularly in school worship. The school environment is also better used to promote spiritual development. For example, the hall displays make this space more conducive to worship. Pupils run their own prayer corner in the entrance area. Pupils also make good use of a prayer box and are pleased that the prayers are read out in Collective Worship. Worship displays in all classrooms are changed regularly and engage pupils well.

What is the impact of Collective Worship on the school community?

Grade 2: Good

Pupils behave respectfully during Collective Worship and pray with reverence. They mostly like worship, particularly the Bible stories, although they also have ideas on how it can be improved. There are not yet enough regular opportunities for pupils to lead worship. As a result of the last report, there is now a much greater focus on developing the spiritual side of worship. For example, a period of reflection on the theme of the worship is introduced with the words, "Go to that quiet place within to think about ...", and this is followed by a prayer. Pupils now understand the divine nature of worship and see it as encouraging belief and reassuring them that God is with them and loves them. Pupils said that one element of a good act of worship is that it helps them learn about God. Pupils gain a good knowledge and understanding of Anglican practice because worship follows the seasons and festivals of the Church's Year. A significant new development is the introduction of a school Eucharist that will take place three times a year. Parents are invited to attend and they go up with their children to receive a blessing. Year 6 pupils also experience a Eucharist in Rochester Cathedral at the Church Schools Festival and younger pupils take part in the Lenten Festival there. The headteacher ensures that worship is important in the school. She currently plans and leads most of the worship herself and all staff now attend. Teachers also lead class prayers at lunchtime and at the end of the school day. Following advice at the last inspection, pupils' views on worship are monitored and are taken into consideration.

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

The governing body continues to be supportive of the church nature of this school and is led by one of the few Foundation Governors. They specifically sought a Christian headteacher when the role became vacant. They have continued to be involved in the school's self-evaluation as a church school and have included parents and pupils in their monitoring questionnaires, as recommended at the last inspection. They have not, however, taken time to focus on the fundamental Christian values underlying this school with the result that this is still not clear in school documentation and in some people's minds. The new headteacher is a regular church-goer and has taken seriously the recommendation in the last report to focus on pupils' spiritual development, with the result that the spiritual life of the school is now one of its strengths. She has successfully completed the Diocesan training for new headteachers and has gained from links with other successful church schools. Most parents welcome these developments. The RE subject leader is supported through in-service training, but good practice is not consistent across the school and standards overall are satisfactory. There is a strong link with the local church, through the Rector and her representative on the governing body. Parents are kept in touch with church services through the school newsletter and some mentioned the new 'Messy Church' that is attracting more children and their families.