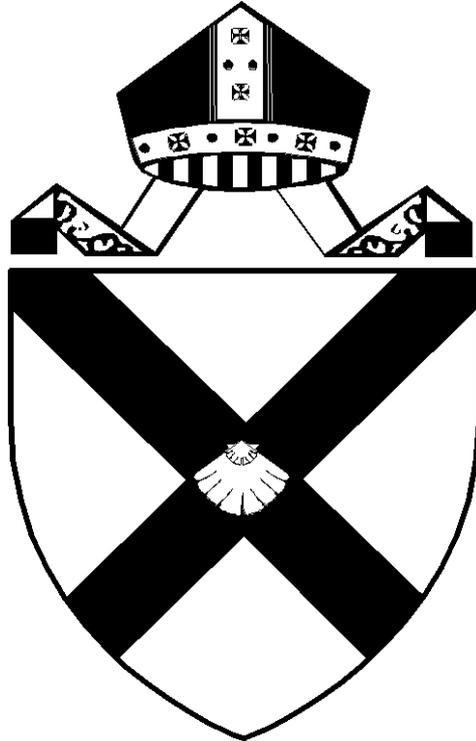


ROCHESTER DIOCESE

2012



Chiddingstone Church of England School

Chiddingstone, Edenbridge, Kent TN8 7AH

Unique Reference No: 118599

Head Teacher: Rachel Streatfeild

Chair of Governors: John Coldman

Incumbent: Rev. Martin Beaumont

Inspector: Anne-Marie Trustram (NS 635)

Inspection: 21 June 2012

Chiddingstone Church of England School

Chiddingstone
Edenbridge
Kent
TN8 7AH

Diocese: Rochester

Date of inspection: 21 June 2012
Date of last inspection: 29 - 30 January 2007
School's unique reference number: 118599
Headteacher: Rachel Streatfeild
Inspector's name and number: Anne-Marie Trustram 635

School context

Situated in a small Kent village, Chiddingstone Church of England School is a smaller than average sized primary school with 193 pupils on roll. It became an Academy in December 2011, having previously been Voluntary Controlled. The headteacher was Acting from September 2011 and was appointed substantive headteacher in June 2012. There are close relationships with the local parish church and the school currently holds a 'Highly Commended' Bishop's certificate as a distinctive Church school. About 40 per cent of school families are regular worshippers at the parish church. The school received an 'outstanding' OfSTED report in 2007.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Chiddingstone Church of England School as a Church of England school are outstanding.

Chiddingstone Church of England School is an outstanding church school with a very strong Christian ethos that underpins school life.

Established strengths

- The way in which Religious Education (RE) and collective worship impact on pupils' daily lives.
- The inspirational leadership of the RE and collective worship leader.
- The mutually supportive links between the school, the village and the parish church.
- The commitment of the governors and the leadership team to lead a school based on Christian values.

Focus for development

- To identify and articulate the school's distinctive Christian values in its prospectus and website and to clarify them with all stakeholders.
- To implement a formal governor monitoring programme for RE and collective worship.

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

Chiddingstone Church of England School is a school where pupils are nurtured as unique individuals who are loved by God. It is a calm, happy school where pupils are encouraged to develop self confidence and consideration for others. As a result, their behaviour is exemplary. The Christian ethos of the school manifestly enhances pupils' spiritual development. They are able to clearly articulate the impact of the school's Christian teaching on their own lives. Following a lesson on David and Goliath, one pupil said, 'Even if you're small, you can still be big.' Pupils say RE helps them to think about God and 'how special He is'. Both parents and pupils value the strong sense of 'community'. One parent referred to the bond between school and church by saying, 'It is very easy to assume that one is an extension of the other.' Pupils are learning to see themselves as global citizens in a world where God values all human beings. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural values are developed in pupils through all areas of the

curriculum. They are frequently involved in fund raising activities for different charities and they see this as a Christian response to meeting the needs of others. In its pursuit of excellence, the school ensures that pupils are not only engaged in opportunities to achieve their educational potential, but that their spiritual nurturing is fundamental to the school's mission. This view was reinforced by parents in their questionnaires. The school environment makes a major contribution to the spiritual development of all pupils through imaginative RE displays and interactive reflection areas where pupils can contribute their own thoughts and prayers. Pupils say that they value the opportunity to express their concerns as well as their praises through prayer.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding.

Pupils speak enthusiastically about collective worship. They frequently take an active part in daily worship and on special occasions. They are given opportunities to develop leadership roles by planning and leading worship. It is evident that collective worship is at the heart of the school day. The major festivals are celebrated including Harvest, Christmas, Easter and Pentecost. Prayers are said by pupils at mealtimes and at the end of the day. They have opportunities to write their own prayers which are offered up as part of whole school worship. Pupils are confident in leading their own extemporaneous prayers. They demonstrate an intuitive understanding of the purpose and value of worship. Consequently, they can readily articulate their feelings about prayer. As one pupil said, 'When you say a prayer, there is nothing blocking it because God is everywhere.' In one act of worship celebrating self-worth, one pupil said. 'Just because someone is good at something, it doesn't mean that they are a better person. We're all treated the same by God because basically He is a father and if you have siblings your father treats you all the same.' Worship is made demonstrably Anglican by the use of responses and Christian artefacts, including a lighted candle. Acts of worship are co-ordinated by the worship leader whose inspirational and creative approach nurtures the spiritual awakening in pupils. This was exemplified by one pupil who said, 'You are like the sheep and God is the shepherd. If He was to lose you, (like if you lost your belief) He would take as long as it takes to find you.'

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

The new headteacher is committed to leading a Church school and is particularly well supported in this by the member of staff who leads RE and worship. She is looking forward to receiving Diocesan training for new headteachers of Church schools. The governors are strongly committed to leading a Christian school. They recognise that there is a need to be more explicit with the wider community about the school's distinctive Christian values. The display of these values in the main reception area makes a convincing statement about the school. However, the school prospectus and website are not sufficiently explicit in promoting the school as a Church school and in their declaration and ownership of Christian values. There were no key areas for improvement in the last inspection but reference was made to improving the school's brochure. The subject leader generously supports all staff with her expertise, which leads to high standards in RE. Guidance ensures that all pupils visit a variety of faith communities before they leave primary school. Year 6 pupils attend the Diocesan Church Schools' Festival, where they can experience a Eucharist. Parents, staff and governors value the role of the new incumbent and his commitment to working with the school. Community cohesion is seen as a collective responsibility and pupils are encouraged to take part in local church services and parish events. The school is proactive in establishing links with other churches, including the Salvation Army and the Catholic Church. Through these links, pupils experience the wider church community with its similarities and differences. Both governors and staff have been involved in the self-evaluation process but they have not identified the need to implement a formal monitoring programme of RE and worship by governors. This is an area for development for the school. Parents and pupils have been consulted on their views about RE and worship in the school. It is clear from their comments that they feel that the nurturing environment of the school and the church enables their children to flourish as individuals as their faith is developing.