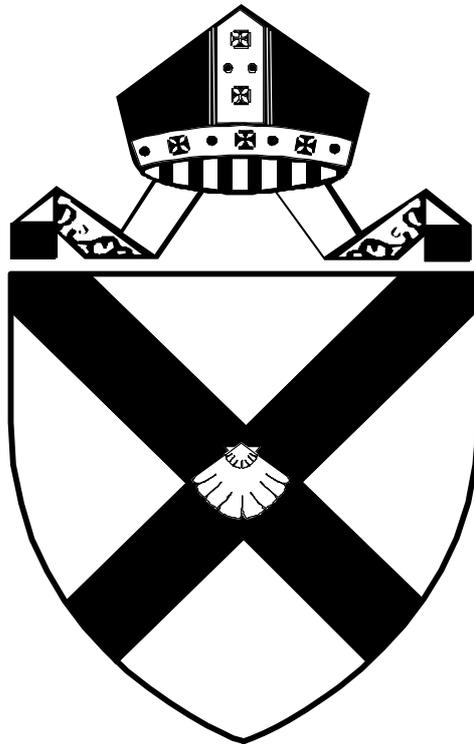


# STATUTORY INSPECTION of ANGLICAN SCHOOLS

## ROCHESTER DIOCESE

2009



**Christ Church Church of England  
Voluntary Aided Primary School**  
Lesney Park Road, Erith, Kent DA8 3DG  
Bexley LA

Unique Reference No: 134358  
Headteacher: Ms Beverley Gardner  
Chair of Governors: Revd John Draycott  
Incumbent: Revd John Draycott  
Inspector: Mr. John Viner NS No.144  
Inspection: 16 October 2009

## **SUMMARY JUDGEMENT**

### **How distinctive and effective is the school as a Church school?**

Christ Church Church of England Primary School is a good and improving Church school.

**Overall judgement: Grade 2: GOOD**

### **SCHOOL CONTEXT**

Christ Church is a large Voluntary Aided Church of England Primary School of 265 pupils, serving the parish of Christ Church Erith. Its pupils are drawn from the local area and reflect an increasingly ethnically diverse community. There is an above average number of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities and an above average number of pupils who speak English as an additional language. Approximately 30% of pupils attend a Christian church, a third of these attending the parish church. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are around the national average. OFSTED recently judged the school's overall effectiveness as good.

### **ESTABLISHED STRENGTHS**

- The headteacher and governors provide clear, decisive Christian leadership.
- Christian values are at the heart of the school and provide a foundation for its continuing improvement.
- Collective Worship is a central part of the school's life.
- Religious Education (RE) makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual development.

### **FOCUS FOR DEVELOPMENT**

- Improve current arrangements for evaluating Collective Worship so that improvements can be well planned.
- Create more consistent opportunities for pupils' personal prayer.
- Improve the focus for worship in the hall so that it contributes to a sense of reverence.
- Complete the review of Religious Education and implement the resultant improvements in the curriculum and its assessment.

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

Since the last inspection, the school's leaders have ensured that Christian values, such as friendship, trust, compassion and forgiveness, are at the heart of the school and provide a foundation for its work. The school's mission is now well summarised as, 'God's children, your children, our children, creatively learning together.' Both parents and pupils confirm that the school is very much a learning community where the good relationships between and among adults and learners ensure that pupils feel safe, valued and special. One parent commented that the sense of community was built into the lessons and that pupils 'love and respect each other'. Parents agree that they can often see the impact of the values the school teaches, such as peace and friendship, reflected in their children's behaviour at home. The spiritual and moral development of all pupils is good. They learn that all are created in God's image and so learn to apply compassion and justice. This helps them develop into thoughtful young people who care for their world and is seen in their commitment to good causes, both locally and globally. Pupils say that there is little unpleasant behaviour and that, when conflict arises, it is dealt with speedily in a spirit of forgiveness and reconciliation. The school environment is well used to promote its Christian distinctiveness. There are lively displays with a Christian theme and each classroom has its own reflection and prayer area. In some classes the invitation for pupils to pray is supported by a box where they can put their prayers and pupils say they would all like this opportunity.

**What is the impact of Collective Worship on the school community? Grade 2: Good.**

Worship is central to school life. It takes place each day and is attended by all staff and pupils. Pupils know that it is a special time and most say that they like the opportunity to speak and listen to God. Pupils of all faiths and of none are affirmed by worship. They say how much they like the many opportunities for them to take part. These include the times when they are chosen to write and then read a prayer. Sometimes their prayers display great perception, for example when a pupil thanked God 'for making us unique and for the school that helps to improve our talents.' Through worship pupils understand the importance of prayer; they know the school prayer by heart and like to pray at lunchtime and at the end of the day. They especially like the lively Christian songs, which they sing enthusiastically. Parents appreciate being able to attend class assemblies and the times when worship takes place in church. Worship is carefully planned and well led by both teachers and leaders from the parish church. The good church links have improved the Anglican nature of worship since the last inspection and the Vicar now plays a key role in its evaluation. However, evaluation is not formally structured to lead to planned improvements. Worship lacks a clear visual focus and, because it is still regarded as 'assembly', opportunities to make it a time of reverence are sometimes missed.

**How effective is Religious Education? Grade 2: Good**

Since the last inspection, teaching and learning have improved in RE so that pupils make good progress and reach average standards. There is a broad and balanced programme of study so that RE makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral development. Teachers make learning fun and approach lessons in practical ways that help pupils to see its relevance to their lives. Pupils say that they enjoy RE because it is interesting to learn about Christianity and other faiths and some say that they would like to have even more RE time. Most pupils learn and practise tolerance and understanding of others' religions and beliefs. Parents recognise this and say that their children talk with interest about what they have learned in RE. They say they get a really good view of world faiths that helps them to develop as rounded individuals. RE is well led by a knowledgeable subject leader who has done much to ensure that it is well-resourced and enriched by visits to places of worship. Teachers carry out regular and effective assessments so that they know how well pupils are doing. Both the syllabus and its assessment are undergoing a thorough review that will enable the school even better to match the programme of study to the needs of the pupils.

**How effective are the leadership and management of the school as a Church school? Grade 1: Outstanding**

The steady improvements in Christ Church's Christian character and distinctiveness result from the clear Christian vision that is articulated by the headteacher and shared with the governors. They have embarked on a far-reaching analysis of the school's Christian identity that has embraced all stakeholders: staff, pupils, parents, governors and the local community. As a result the school's leaders promote and declare an explicit Christian vision so that all stakeholders understand it and know that it provides the school's foundations. The process for keeping the school's identity under review is both outstanding and exemplary. Parents value and trust the school leaders and say they are always available to them. Foundation governors know their school well. They play an effective and proactive role in both challenging and supporting the headteacher and key staff. The headteacher and governors have a clear understanding of the future leadership needs of the school. They are taking effective steps to secure succession plans for the school and wider Church school community. The relationship with the parish church is outstanding. The many good links include pupils taking part in a Sunday service and the support of parish staff for RE and worship. Parents respect and value the Vicar and some families have joined the church through their association with the school. Under the leadership of the headteacher, key staff and governors, Christ Church continues to develop as a shining example of Christian distinctiveness through the good education and spiritual development of its pupils.