



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Keston Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School

Lakes Road,

Keston,

Bromley,

BR2 6BN.

Diocese: Rochester

Local authority: Bromley

Date of inspection: 3rd July 2014

Date of last inspection: June 2009

School's unique reference number: 101643

Headteacher: Mrs Julia Evison

Inspector's name and number: Mrs Pamela Draycott (161)

School context

The school is a smaller than average Church of England voluntary controlled primary school which serves Keston village and its surroundings. Numbers of pupils who speak English as an additional language, from minority ethnic backgrounds, with special educational needs or who receive pupil premium funding are well below the national average although the number is increasing slightly annually. Most pupils have a Christian heritage. Very few families are regular worshippers at the parish church but more children from school attend 'messy church'. There is a small, but growing, number whose family is from another religious background or who claim no religious affiliation. The school has very recently become part of an academy trust partnership (the Aquinas Trust).

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Keston Church of England primary school are good

- The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) has an accurate understanding of where the school is and what needs to be achieved to develop further its Christian service to its pupils.
- Worship is very well organised and led. Its contribution to the life of the school and to pupils' personal and spiritual development is well recognised and celebrated as a key aspect of the school's Christian ethos.

Areas to improve

- To work effectively within the Aquinas Trust partnership embedding the change of status into school life.
- To implement the plans for a School Worship Council to support pupils in having input into planning and evaluating worship.
- To ensure that Foundation Governors formally monitor the implementation and effectiveness of the school's Christian ethos and report on it regularly to the Local Governing Body.
- To enhance the school environment to support spiritual development by implementing plans to create a 'reflection garden' in the school grounds.

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

Learning is effective, underpinned by the school's inclusive and caring Christian ethos; pupils are nurtured very well both academically and personally. This means that the school achieves higher than national averages despite pupils coming into school with varying levels of ability. The gap between the attainment of different pupil groups is small relative to starting points, indicative of the school's inclusive Christian ethos. Pupil well-being is taken very seriously and the quality of relationships is outstanding which contributes extremely well to it being a happy place where

pupils enjoy learning. Consequently, they work hard and strive to achieve their best. One pupil said, “the school teaches us not to give up when things are difficult”. Endurance is one of the Christian values promoted by the school. The SLT articulates a clear understanding of how the school’s Christian foundation supports pupils’ achievement.

Opportunities for pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are wide-ranging and responded to very well by pupils. The worship programme and Religious Education (RE) contribute very effectively to these opportunities as do other curriculum areas and extra curricular activities. The RE curriculum has an appropriate balance of ‘learning about’ and ‘learning from’ religion, an issue identified as in need of improvement in the previous inspection. The school places emphasis on music and sport. Both areas enhance the school’s Christian ethos encapsulated in its ‘Golden Rules and Manners’ (for example, friendship, trust, hope). A pupil said that the school wanted her to “love others and treat them well because Jesus loved and cared for others”. Prayer and reflection contribute well to helping pupils develop spiritually and morally. The reflection area at the entrance to the school provides another effective opportunity for pupils, and indeed adults, to reflect on issues of concern. A part of the grounds is designated for a ‘reflection garden’ but these plans have not yet come to fruition. There is a range of opportunities provided for pupils to take responsibility for themselves and others, including fundraising for various charities and singing at a local home for senior citizens.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Worship takes place every school day with a programme of themes, linked to school priorities and to the Church year; it meets statutory requirements. The programme is co-ordinated well by a senior member of staff. A range of relevant Bible stories is presented and appropriate opportunities given for prayer or reflection. Pupils are given various experiences to help them to develop their understanding of what worship is and the importance of Jesus for Christians. Pupils engage well seeing it as important. They join in with the singing, reading and prayers appropriately and with enthusiasm. Pupils do not sufficiently contribute to the planning and monitoring of the worship programme. The range of opportunities to take part in worship at the parish church is extended for pupils in the band and the choir, some of whom have recently begun to play or sing periodically for services again.

The distinctively Christian worship programme provides opportunities for the Christian idea of God as ‘Trinity’ to be appropriately explored. Aspects of Anglican worship such as lighting candles, using versicles and responses and reciting the Lord’s Prayer are established and pupils respond well to these aspects of worship. In a ‘Wednesday worship’, ably led by the incumbent, pupils listened attentively and pupils from different year groups led the whole school in prayer, confidently and with meaning. Whilst these specifically Christian aspects of worship are evident, they are presented in a sensitive way which is inclusive of those of other faiths and of none.

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

In April 2014, the school joined the Aquinas Trust. This is acting as a catalyst for development. The relevance of the changes and their impact have begun to be felt by the SLT and by other teaching and support staff through mutual support and the sharing of expertise. This has not yet begun to impact directly on pupils or their parents. A focus from the previous inspection was for Foundation Governors to be actively involved in effectively promoting and developing the Christian aspects of the school. They now evaluate the worship programme and have begun to address the school’s ethos and values. They do not feed this back effectively to the Local Governing Body. Parents are happy with the support their children are given, seeing the school as a good school that cares for the individual based on Christian values. They say that staff are approachable and deal with any issues promptly. One parent, whose child has special needs, said that the school accepted and cared for her child really well and that it was part of the school’s Christian ethos and mission to do so.

Religious Education is well led and managed by a senior leader. It effectively expresses and supports the school’s inclusive Christian ethos. Teachers assess pupils’ work regularly and supportively but there are too few examples of marking which shows pupils what they need to do to improve their work. The links between RE and worship are productive but there is some confusion about what is shared and what is different about the two areas.

The incumbent has changed since the previous inspection with the present vicar developing even stronger links between parish and school. Relationships with the Diocese are good. There are good relationships with the local community, with the school taking an active part in many social, musical and sporting events held locally and further afield.