



## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

### Southborough (Voluntary Controlled) Church of England School

Broomhill Park Road  
Southborough  
Kent  
TN4 0JY

**Diocese: Rochester**

Local authority: Kent

Dates of inspection: 25<sup>th</sup> June 2014

Date of last inspection: 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2009

School's unique reference number: 118712

Headteacher: Mrs Emma Savage

Inspector's name and number: Mr Steven Gallears

#### School context

Southborough is a much larger than average primary school with a roll of 433 pupils. There is a below average proportion of girls on the school roll compared to other schools. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM) places the school in the middle 20% nationally. The proportion of pupils from an ethnic minority background is average but the percentage with English as an additional language (EAL) is above average compared to other schools. The proportion of pupils who are on the Special Educational Needs (SEN) register at School Action is above average but at School Action Plus or with a Statement of SEN is well below average compared to other schools. The school is situated next to Christ Church, Southborough.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Southborough as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The core Christian values of the school are fully embedded and have a significant impact on the lives of pupils. These values are re-inforced in Religious Education (RE) and in Collective Worship.
- Collective Worship is inspirational and engaging. Many stakeholders, including pupils, are encouraged to play an active role in the planning, delivery and evaluation of Collective Worship.
- The headteacher has a clear vision for leading a Christian school and is ably supported by a dedicated and committed team who share this vision.

#### Areas to improve

- Plan for ways in which distinctive Christian values will continue to have a significant impact when the school expands in the coming years.
- Develop the strategic role of governors in developing the school as a Church school.

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

Pupils' attainment is good; behaviour and attendance are outstanding. This is due to the fact that each pupil is valued as a child of God. The whole person is considered. There is a palpable sense of community, it feels like a small family school. The school is welcoming, and caring. The school has chosen 6 core Christian values which are fully embedded. All stakeholders can clearly articulate what these are and how they influence their daily lives. They are explicitly represented on the school's website, in all major school policies and can be found prominently displayed throughout the school building. Values are transmitted throughout the school year in RE lessons and in Collective Worship. A pupil commented that the value of forgiveness helped him "to be kind towards people who are not nice to me". The pupils understand that the values are linked to Jesus' teachings. The school has yearly values and RE days for all year groups which help to shape their identity, significance and importance. In addition, each class captures the significant memories of the year (many relating to the core Christian values) which are shared with many stakeholders. Staff and pupils take great pride in these 'footprints' books and they provide an excellent reminder of how this school treats all its pupils as gifts from God that are unique and special. Charity forms a big part of school life. The school has excellent links with local, national and international projects, including a long-standing link with a school in Kenya. Pupils are proud of their school and several commented on the fact that the Christian nature of the school makes them feel this way. There are many opportunities for them to explore their spiritual, moral, social and cultural education (SMSC) and the diversity of beliefs in society. Projects about India and Africa support this and also provide opportunities for parents to be actively involved in this cultural journey. RE plays a significant role in shaping the Christian character of the school. In their exercise books, pupils regularly reflect upon and explore the school's Christian values and teachers encourage pupils to develop their understanding of Christianity and of other faiths. In lessons observed, pupils talked enthusiastically about RE and can relate their learning to their lives. They are challenged by the concepts explored in RE lessons.

### **The impact of Collective Worship on the school community is outstanding**

All pupils are actively engaged in and enjoy Collective Worship which inspires many of them. One pupil said that worship "helps us understand about God and how he connects with us in our daily lives". It helps many pupils to make decisions throughout the day. Pupils are given ample opportunities to be part of worship and to regularly plan class worship. They enjoy this and feel that worship is a relevant and significant part of their school life. An effective Collective Worship policy is in place and is regularly reviewed. This allows opportunities for all stakeholders to have an input into the planning, delivery and evaluation of worship. The school also benefits from numerous visitors from local, national and international organisations who come in and speak with the pupils and also from local Christian groups who deliver worship. The local church supports worship in the school and the parish clergy team and youth worker often lead worship. Worship is distinctly Anglican and the centrality of Christ is clear. Pupils feel comfortable with this structure. Pupils have a developing understanding of the Trinity. Prayer plays a prominent role in school life. In worship, pupils have opportunities for silent reflection as well as for more lively worship involving singing and thought provoking visual stimuli. A Year 2 pupil commented "our hands go together and we close our eyes to be peaceful when we pray". Prayer areas (linked to the school's core values) can be found in each classroom and they are regularly used by pupils. They enjoy time to pray and reflect and are allowed to do so at any time during the school day. One year 4 pupil commented "we pray anywhere at any time". There are several outdoor prayer spaces including a Key Stage 1 values 'mini garden' which was enthusiastically described.

### **The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church**

### **school is outstanding**

The head teacher, senior leaders and governors have a clear understanding of their school. The head teacher has a very clear vision of what a Christian school should be like and lives this out in her daily practice. The achievement and progress of students is tracked and there is a clear striving for all to reach their God-given potential. This Christian vision underpins everything. All leaders passionately care for the pupils at this school and are keen to celebrate the achievements of all. There is a focus not only on the academic education of the children but also on their character education. Effective, robust and insightful self-evaluation is in place and it serves to help all leaders to see what is needed to improve the school further. Areas for development from the last SIAS inspection have been fully addressed. There are excellent links with the local parish church. The school also has effective partnerships with other local Church of England and community schools. RE and Collective Worship provision exceed statutory requirements. The governors have benefitted from extensive training provided by the local authority, diocese and the school itself. They provide effective support and challenge to the head teacher and her senior leaders and they play a key role in the strategic development of the school. At present, this strategic role does not have a specific church school focus. The head teacher provides many opportunities for colleagues to develop their own practice through thoughtful, distributed leadership, supporting them for future leadership across church schools.

SIAMS report June 2014 Southborough CE Primary School TN4 0JY