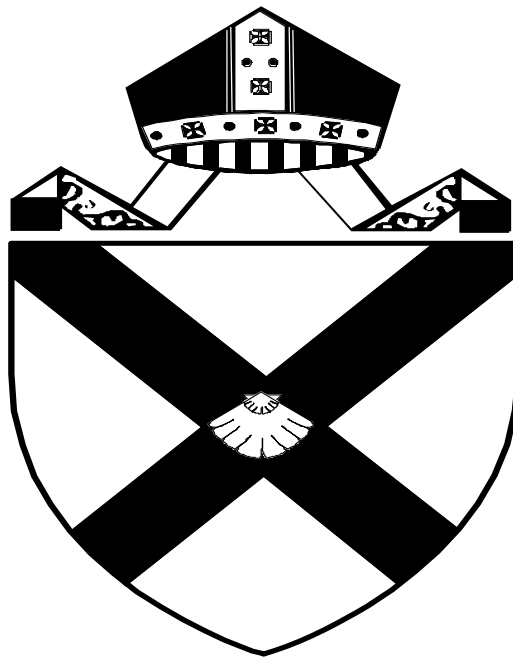


# STATUTORY INSPECTION of ANGLICAN SCHOOLS

## ROCHESTER DIOCESE

2011



**Sedleys Church of England Primary School**  
**Voluntary Controlled**

Church Street, Southfleet, Kent DA13 9NR

Unique Reference No:118595

Kent LA

Head Teacher: Alison Coppiters

Chair of Governors: Ian Brown

Incumbent: Rev. David Houston

Inspector: Jan Thompson (NS 92)

Inspection: 18 October 2011

## SUMMARY JUDGEMENT

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

Sedleys Church of England Primary School has improved since the last inspection and is now an outstanding Church school.

**GRADE 1: Outstanding**

### **SCHOOL CONTEXT**

Sedleys is a Voluntary Controlled Church of England Primary School situated in the Kent village of Southfleet, near Dartford. Founded in 1637 for the children of the village, it is the oldest Church of England Primary School belonging to the Rochester Diocesan Board of Education. The original school building is still in use and has recently been sympathetically extended. It is a small school of 94 pupils, half of whom come from Southfleet, the others travelling in from surrounding areas. Most pupils are White British. About five percent of pupils are from regular worshipping Church families and between 20 and 30 percent attend monthly parade services at church. Ofsted judged the school to be good.

### **ESTABLISHED STRENGTHS**

- The committed and effective Christian leadership of the headteacher, the vicar, the other Foundation Governor and a staff governor
- The strong links with St. Nicholas' Church within the local community
- The Mission Statement with its clearly explained Christian values
- Pupils' spiritual development

### **FOCUS FOR DEVELOPMENT**

- Enable pupils to develop a leadership role in Collective Worship.
- Consider appointing a link governor who might oversee a formal system of evaluating Collective Worship.

### **How well does the school, through its distinctive Christian character, meet the needs of all learners? Grade 1: Outstanding**

Responding to a recommendation at the last inspection, the school's core Christian values have been identified and explained in a new Mission Statement. These values underpin all aspects of school life. For example, 'caring for the created order' is reinforced in the curriculum through Geography and Science. 'Repentance and forgiveness' inform the school's behaviour policy and are explored in Religious Education (RE) and worship. 'Respecting all people' leads to very good relationships and behaviour at all levels in the school. It also motivates pupils in their concern for others in the wider world and their support for charities. Some parents said they chose this school because 'it is rooted in morals and beliefs'. The first Christian value speaks of 'celebrating the spiritual dimension of being human' and spiritual development is particularly strong in this school. It is developed through worship, links with the church and RE. The environment of the school is also well used in this respect. Interactive prayer displays in the main corridor and the classrooms are used enthusiastically by pupils. They also appreciate the quiet outdoor area in the playground, indicated by a large cross. The way the school responded to the recent unexpected death of a colleague bore witness to the faith and mutual support within this close community.

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

### **Grade 1: Outstanding**

Pupils enjoy Collective Worship and participate well, especially with the singing. However, they do not have enough opportunities to take a leadership role. They behave reverently and value the quiet reflection time to think about the message of the act of worship. Worship has a strong impact on pupils' spiritual growth. They say that it helps them to feel closer to God and makes them feel peaceful. They know that 'it is a chance to talk to God', to pray for themselves and for others. Older pupils and adults value the opportunity for prayer in a busy day. Another older pupil said, 'When I came to this school I didn't really pray, but now I do.' Another pupil spoke of valuing the quiet prayers at the end of the day and that she thinks about them when she gets home. Pupils have a very good experience of Anglican worship, since the vicar leads Collective Worship once a week in the adjacent church. All pupils enjoy this and like seeing the vicar there. Pupils from Years 5/6 attend a mid-week Holy Communion service six times a year, which prepares them to celebrate the Eucharist in the Cathedral at the annual Church Schools Festival. Worship is well organised by the headteacher, using the Canterbury Diocesan scheme. This is based on the Bible and follows the Church's Year. The school celebrates special festivals in the church. A significant number of pupils also attend Sunday worship once a month, when they parade in their school uniforms. These services focus on special occasions like Harvest, St Nicholas' Day and Pentecost. All staff attend daily Collective Worship and all teachers take turns in leading it. Teachers have been monitored by the headteacher. She has also gathered comments on worship from pupils and parents and an annual development plan is shared with the governing body. However, a regular system of evaluation has not yet been established.

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

It has been just two years since the last inspection, but during that time the advice from the last inspection has been heeded and initiatives have had time to take root and bear fruit. More parents are attending church at the parade services because their children want to go, and some pupils who have gone on to secondary school are coming back to church. In this way the good relationship between school and church has been strengthened and is making an impact in the community. A small team of committed Christians has worked hard to develop this school as an outstanding church school and the governing body is in the process of seeking Voluntary Aided status. The headteacher and vicar, who until recently was the chair of governors, have led this, being well supported by staff and governors. The development of a new Mission Statement has enabled everyone to engage with the school's core Christian values. This has been promoted to parents in a new, attractive prospectus and website that draws attention to its Church of England foundation and says that it is unashamedly a Christian school. The headteacher has been involved in Kent Local Authority schemes to encourage new headships in small church schools. She has also supported some new headteachers in church schools locally. Sedley's joined with other local church schools in March this year for the National RE Celebrations, held at St. George's CE Secondary School.