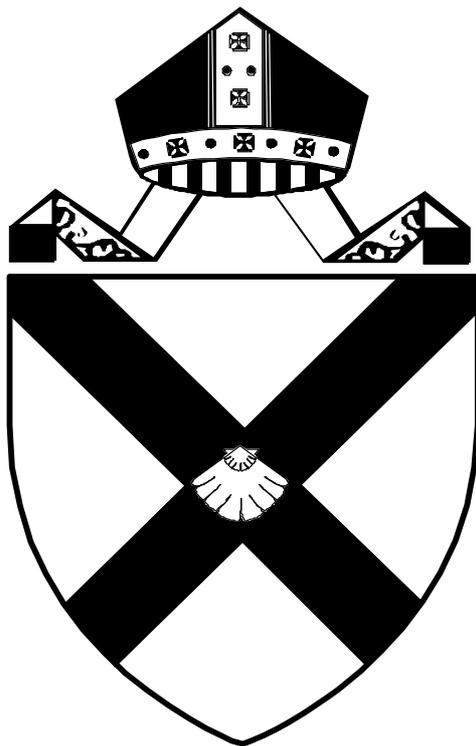


STATUTORY INSPECTION of ANGLICAN SCHOOLS

ROCHESTER DIOCESE

2009



**Speldhurst Church of England Primary School,
Langton Road, Speldhurst, Kent TN3 0NP
Voluntary Aided**

Kent LA

Unique Reference No: 118607

Headteacher: Mrs A McGlew

Chair of Governors: Mr A Scott

Incumbent: Rev D Wren

Inspector: Mrs J Watts 466

Inspection: June 29th 2009

SUMMARY JUDGEMENT

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

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

Overall Grade: 2 GOOD.

SCHOOL CONTEXT

Speldhurst Church of England Primary School is a Voluntary Aided school with 137 pupils. It is set close to the parish Church in a small village, just outside Tunbridge Wells. The school has retained its charming Victorian building as well as having a large new hall and infant building. There are very few pupils from an ethnic minority heritage or English as an additional language. Although the number of pupils with additional educational needs is slightly below average, this number fluctuates across the school and is above average in some year groups. About 25% of pupils are from worshipping Christian families. Ofsted recently judged the school to be good.

ESTABLISHED STRENGTHS

- The excellent Christian leadership and commitment of the headteacher.
- The mutually supportive links with the Rector and the parish Church.
- The impact of the school's Christian ethos on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

FOCUS FOR DEVELOPMENT

- Firmly embed the new Diocesan Syllabus in order to raise standards further in Religious Education (RE).
- Ensure consistency of standards in written work in upper Key Stage 2 RE.
- Formally review collective worship and link this to school improvement planning.

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

Speldhurst CE Primary School has a distinctive Christian character. The prospectus says that the school 'cares for and nurtures our children using the characteristics of Christ as an example' and as a result, pupils are confident of God's love for them as unique individuals. The school has a very strong sense of family and community due to excellent relationships between staff, parents and pupils. The Christian values of honesty, truth and forgiveness are evident in this school, and many of the ordinary day-to-day decisions taken by staff and pupils are made in the light of them. Pupils say that they enjoy fund-raising for charity because, 'Christians should help each other because everyone is important to God'. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity is excellent, especially of Jesus' teachings, which they can apply to their own behaviour and attitudes. Pupils' spiritual development is supported by the good Bible teaching in collective worship and the Climbers and Explorers clubs run by the Church after school. An interesting display in the hall helps pupils to remember what the focus is for Collective Worship, and the prayer box is well used.

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

Grade 1: Outstanding

Collective Worship has a central place in school life and has a very positive impact on pupils, who speak enthusiastically about it. They say that the Bible stories help them to learn how to live their lives, and that 'stories like Jonah help me to know about God's forgiveness'. Older pupils enjoy worship times and value the opportunities to participate and lead worship assembly. Younger pupils say lighting the candle helps them to think and remember Jesus being with them. Singing is lively and enhances the worshipful atmosphere. All teachers attend Collective Worship daily. Both pupils and parents enjoy their special services in the church which celebrate major Christian festivals throughout the year. These services are well attended by parents. The headteacher, as worship coordinator, works with the Rector to ensure that Collective Worship always has biblical and Anglican elements. Consequently, pupils' knowledge and understanding of the Church's year and the Lord's Prayer is excellent. Good quality acts of Collective Worship have been maintained at this school. However, Collective Worship is not yet formally monitored to ascertain what pupils get out of it and how they would improve it.

How effective is Religious Education in the school?

Grade 3 - Satisfactory

Most learners reach standards in RE as high or better than in other core subjects. Although progress in RE is secure in Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2, there is insufficient recorded evidence to demonstrate the levels of learning observed during the inspection. Lessons are at least good: the recent introduction of the new Diocesan Syllabus has brought about an immediate and effective improvement in teaching and learning in RE. Assessment is used to guide teachers' planning but it is not always consistent across both key stages. Pupils enjoy RE and they show a very positive attitude towards it, because 'learning about people is always interesting'. Younger pupils can recall key Bible stories and older pupils are able to interpret Jesus' sayings and derive meaning for their own attitudes and behaviour. Pupils' learning in RE enables them to grow morally and spiritually. Although opportunities for teaching and learning from religion have not been as strong as those in learning about religion, the school has taken steps to address this and this area is improving quickly. RE is recognised by the school as important and the subject leader has been given time and resources to make the improvements needed.

How effective are the leadership and management of the school as a church school. Grade 2: Good

This school has greatly improved as a Church school since the last inspection and has an outstanding capacity for further improvement. The headteacher has a well-founded Christian vision for developing this school and is well supported by the Rector and Governing Body. The self-evaluation of many of the Church aspects of the school is embedded in school improvement planning, and the school's own foci for development are accurate. This is because the headteacher, staff and governors have responded very constructively to the development points in the last report. The school has involved parents and pupils in its self evaluation and this has led to a greater sense of partnership and involvement. The relationship with the parish Church is excellent and mutually supportive, and there are effective pastoral and spiritual links between them. This results in pupils having a strong sense of being part of the Church community. Parents speak very positively about the school and many say that they are very happy with its Christian nature.