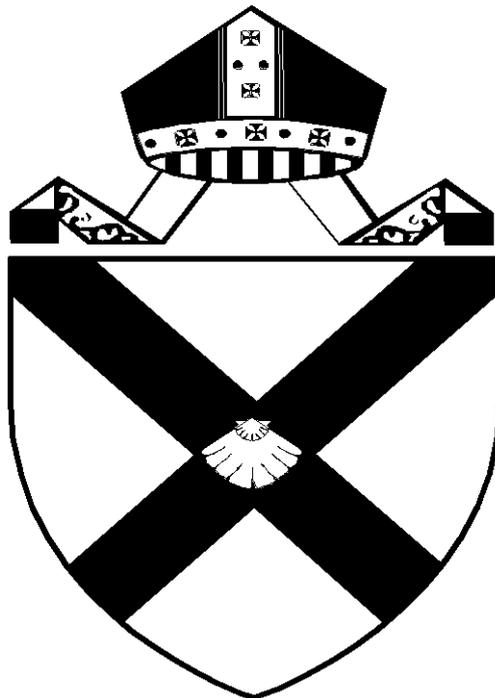


**STATUTORY INSPECTION of ANGLICAN SCHOOLS**

***ROCHESTER DIOCESE***

**2012**



**St. John's  
Church of England Primary School  
Voluntary Controlled**

Bayham Road, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 3XD

Unique Reference No: 118606

Kent LA

Head Teacher: Sally Quirk

Chair of Governors: Edward Oatley

Incumbent: Interregnum

Inspector: Jan Thompson (No.92)

Inspection: 19 April 2012

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### **St. John's Sevenoaks Voluntary Controlled CE Primary School**

Bayham Road, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 3XD

**Diocese: Rochester**

Local authority: Kent

Dates of inspection: 19 April 2012

Date of last inspection: 15 January 2009

School's unique reference number: 118606

Headteacher: Sally Quirk

Inspector's name and number: Jan Thompson (No 92)

#### **School context**

St. John's Church of England Primary School is a small but growing school in Sevenoaks. It has doubled in size since the last inspection and now numbers 128 pupils, drawn from a wide range of socio-economic groups. Pupils are mostly White British, a small number of whom are from church going families, and almost 20% are from Polish Catholic backgrounds. A high percentage of pupils are entitled to free school meals and a high percentage have special educational needs. The headteacher retired after the last inspection and the school was led by an executive headteacher and a head of school. This arrangement ended in March 2011 when the head of school became the acting headteacher and has since been appointed the substantive head. The school has been without an incumbent for the past 15 months, when the Vicar and Curate left to join the Ordinariate. Ofsted recognised the rapid improvement that the school has made and judged it to be good.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St. John's CE Primary School as a Church of England school are good.**

St. John's has made good progress since the last inspection, particularly in engaging with Christian values and in improving Religious Education (RE). It is now a securely good church school with potential for further improvement.

#### **Established strengths**

- The impact of Christian values on the whole life of the school
- Careful planning and delivery of collective worship, linked to the school's Christian values
- The good standard of RE, supporting good spiritual and moral development
- Very strong support from the parish Church of St. John the Baptist

#### **Focus for development**

- Enable pupils from Year 3 upwards to lead and evaluate collective worship.
- Strengthen the Anglican character of collective worship.
- Regularise the use of the Diocesan RE Syllabus.

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

The school's core Christian values of compassion, forgiveness and respect/reverence have had a noticeable impact on pupil behaviour and ultimately on their all-round achievement. Parents recognise the caring nature of this church school, where every child is precious to God and where staff are friendly, open and always willing to 'go the extra mile'. Both collective worship and RE make very good contributions to pupils' spiritual and moral development. They encourage pupils to reflect, to question and to relate what they have learnt to their own lives. Parents say that their children talk about these things at home. One said, 'My daughter asks questions (big ones) which have been mentioned at school.' The school is very welcoming. For example, many mothers came into school on the day after Mothering Sunday to have lunch with their children. Pupils also go out into the community, such as when the choir sings at an old people's home. They also get involved in fund-raising events in Sevenoaks, such as Christian Aid Week, and know that Jesus taught us to love our neighbours. In response to an issue at the last inspection, there are now attractive, interactive reflection areas in all classrooms, although the younger pupils seem to enjoy using these more than those in Years 5 and 6. At the time of the inspection, these all focused on forgiveness, to link with collective worship.

**The impact of collective worship on the school community is good.**

Pupils enjoy worship and engage with it enthusiastically and reverently. Year 6 pupils in particular take a leading role by setting up the hall for worship and often helping with the youngest pupils. During the inspection, they acted out the Bible story of Zacchaeus. For their Easter service, a Year 6 girl chose to sing a solo while two others danced. Pupils have not yet been asked to evaluate acts of worship. Pupils of all ages appreciate the different elements of worship and know that worship is a way to connect with God and to praise Him. They come to understand the Bible better through collective worship and can relate Christian teachings to their own lives. For example, one pupil said it helped her to feel thankful for what she had and not to be greedy. Pupils attend worship in the church once a week, making them familiar with some Anglo-Catholic practices and symbolism. In the past, Year 6 pupils always served at a mid-week Eucharist, and Eucharists were also celebrated by the school three times a year. Unfortunately, this has not continued since the parish priest left, nor are liturgical greetings and responses used in daily worship, as they were at the time of the last inspection. Worship is important at this school. A parent who is the curate at another church in Sevenoaks has given support, and led the Easter service in school. Collective worship is carefully linked to Christian values, supported by an attractive display at the front of the hall where worship takes place. The main daily worship takes place at the beginning of the afternoon, and prayers are said in classrooms at the beginning and end of the day, as well as Grace before lunch.

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

The governing body has addressed the issues from the last inspection, with governors now more involved in the church aspects of the school through good communication from a team of key governors and senior leaders. Parents and pupils have also been asked to help evaluate the school as a church school. A values and vision session, led by diocesan officers for staff and governors, helped them to focus on the distinctiveness of the school as a church school and on Christian values. This has been developed since then by identifying a range of values to be explored over three years, which feed into the curriculum in Personal and Social Education as well as in RE. The school website makes clear the Christian nature of the school and has a link to the website of St. John the Baptist Church. Parents are increasingly becoming involved in the Christian life of the school, such as by attendance at festivals. Some are now making a positive choice of this school because it is a church school. RE is well led by a teacher new to the school and the introduction of the Diocesan RE Syllabus has helped to raise standards. However, this has not yet been properly adopted. The church has continued to give very good support to the school, even in the absence of a parish priest and curate. Pupils use the church for some of their acts of worship and RE lessons, and members of the congregation support the school in a variety of ways.