

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### **St Olave's Church of England Grammar School**

Goddington Lane  
Orpington  
Kent  
BR6 9SH

#### **Diocese: Rochester**

Local authority: Kent  
Dates of inspection: 28 & 29 February 2012  
Date of last inspection: 22-24 November 2006  
School's unique reference number: 101676  
Headteacher: Mr A Onac  
Inspector's name and number: Mrs Tricia Martin NS 105

#### **School Context**

St Olave's Church of England Grammar School is a Voluntary Aided church school in the Diocese of Rochester. The school has a long history with its origins going back 450 years in the Diocese of Southwark. Its sister school is still situated there but St Olave's moved to new purpose built premises in Orpington in 1968. It is a very successful Grammar school with a very high achieving academic record. Its admission criteria are based upon academic ability. The school has 965 students on roll of which 40% come from faith backgrounds other than Christianity or none.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Olave's Grammar school as a Church of England school are good**

The students at this school are exceptionally well behaved and considerate of others. School life is based on Biblical principles which are not clearly defined but their impact is seen in good relationships at all levels.

#### **Established strengths**

- Excellent behaviour of students
- The courtesy and respect shown and shared between all members of the school community
- The work of the Chaplain

#### **Focus for development**

- Provide a daily act of collective worship for all students
- With the aid of all stakeholders, including governors, monitor and evaluate worship termly
- Increase the time allocated to Religious Education in Key Stages (KS) 3 and 4 and for statutory RE in the 6<sup>th</sup> form.
- Re-balance the content of Years 7 & 8 Religious Education curriculum in favour of Christianity
- Include the Chaplain within the School Leadership Team to enable to him to have a greater impact on the life of the school
- Involve the governors and staff in Church school distinctiveness training

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

The impact of the school's values is evident in the excellent behaviour of the students, and the courtesy and care of all members of its community. The school does not perceive its values to be distinctively Christian, referring instead to 'shared' values and values from 'Christianity and other faiths'. Students have the opportunity to explore Christian spirituality through the Eucharist, Friday Forums and worship opportunities. Its impact is limited by the low student attendance at the first two of these activities. The choral scholarship to the Savoy Choir offered by the school enhances the spirituality of a small number of students. However,

music and the creative arts play a large part in the life of the school and offer further opportunities for the spiritual development of all students. Moral development is evident through the high expectations of the school and its traditions. The students are given an excellent range of extra-curricular opportunities and are encouraged to take part in a range of them. Raising money for charity, as well as using their time and talents for the benefit of others, is an important aspect of school life. Consequently, students are developing as good citizens. For example, older students have the opportunity to take part in World Challenge, gaining experience of other cultures and giving of their time to local community projects. Relationships in the school are supportive and are based on equality. There is very little in the way of Christian symbols around the school. However, the design of the school, incorporating a quadrangle reminiscent of cloisters and the presence of a Chapel, are reminders of its Christian foundation.

### **The impact of collective worship on the school community is satisfactory**

The school has made some progress towards providing a daily act of collective worship, as recommended in the previous inspection, through the introduction of the 'Thought for the Day' programme. This takes place on the days during the week in which there is no whole school act of worship. The programme has been provided by the Chaplain who demonstrates his commitment to Anglican worship in the school through weekly whole school acts of worship and a weekly celebration of the Eucharist. Although open to all, it is attended by a small percentage of students and staff. His weekly prayer meeting and termly 'Roast the Reverend' question and answer sessions enable students to explore the Christian faith. His input into the school is good. His 'Thought for the Day' programme is well thought out and linked to scripture. Consequently form tutors are provided with Biblical resources to enable them to engage their students in 'Thought for the Day' discussions, reflection and prayer. However, worship is inconsistent because, during the inspection, it was found that a significant number of tutor groups did not participate in 'Thought for the Day'. Worship plans provide evidence that for thirteen weeks of the year (one third of the school year), no acts of worship or 'Thought for the Day' themes were or are planned. Those students who attend the weekly Eucharist are familiar with Anglican tradition and practice. Other students' experience is limited to the Chaplain's weekly act of worship and Christian festivals celebrated by the school.

### **The effectiveness of the religious education is good**

Standards in Religious Education (RE) are excellent especially considering that the subject is given well beneath the recommended curriculum time allocation. Teaching and learning at Key Stages 4 and 5 is outstanding. In KS3, teaching and learning is satisfactory. The department has only one full time specialist teacher. Consequently the majority of teaching in Years 7 and 8 is delivered by a non-specialist teacher from a different faculty. This, together with the lack of recommended time curriculum time for RE, contributes to the low profile of the subject in the school. GCSE is commenced in Year 9 (KS3) and only taught through Years 9 and 10 with students in Year 11 receiving no RE entitlement. The course studied is the half course GCSE. The current sixth form has only six students studying A/S level RE and all of these students have entered the sixth form at St Olave's from other schools. Sixth form statutory RE falls well below the recommendation of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. A new Head of Department has been appointed who has already identified the need for change in course content, in examination board at A level and in the need to provide the full GCSE course in RE. She is aware that the profile of the subject must be raised and has requested an increase in curriculum time. Students perceive RE as being "less important to their whole education than other subjects." RE contributes to the spiritual development of students in lessons where students are given the opportunity to reflect, discuss and debate with their peers. This is not consistent across all Key Stages. RE makes a good contribution to the understanding of other faiths and cultures and, consequently, to community cohesion. However, KS3 RE is heavily weighted towards other faiths and does not appropriately reflect the Christian tradition of the school. It is a subject which has the potential to excel at all levels of school life if it receives appropriate support from the senior leadership team.

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

St Olave's does not have a mission or vision statement. There is little evidence to suggest that there has been any engagement with distinctive Christian values or that there is a common understanding of these amongst stakeholders. The school leadership speaks rather of 'shared' values. The ethos of the school and the self-evaluation of the school as a church school have not been on the agenda of governors' meetings, and governors have not contributed to the Church school self-evaluation toolkit. Although the school completed the self-evaluation toolkit, their comments and judgements illustrate that Diocesan training would assist in informing the accuracy of their judgements. Questions pertaining to the SIAS inspection are not included in parental or student surveys. Key policies, such as the behaviour policy, are not linked to key Christian values. However, the school prospectus states that St Olave's is a Church of England school. The leadership and management identify the appointment of a part-time Chaplain as evidence of commitment to their Anglican foundation. The Chaplain's role would be enhanced if he was invited to attend appropriate senior leadership team meetings. At present, the Chaplain is not on the governing body. The senior leadership team has undertaken the Woodard course on leading a Church school but this does not embrace the understanding of a Church school from a Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Framework perspective. Relationships with the Church are satisfactory and are facilitated through the Chaplain. Relationships with the wider community are generally good.

SIAS report February 2012 St Olave's Church of England Grammar School, Orpington BR6 9SH