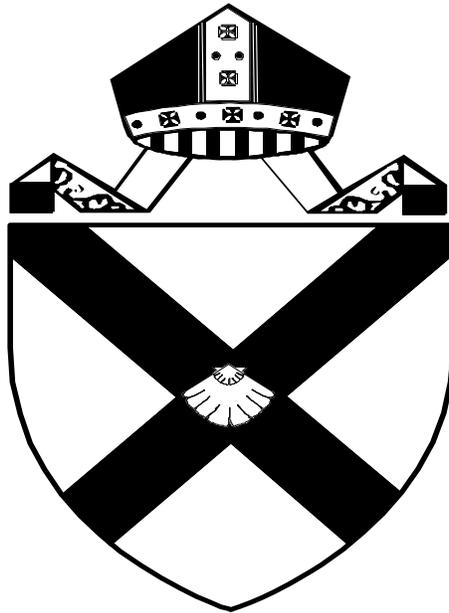


STATUTORY INSPECTION of ANGLICAN SCHOOLS

ROCHESTER DIOCESE

2010



St.Peter's Church of England

Primary School

Voluntary Controlled

Mount Pleasant, AYLESFORD

Kent ME20 7BE

Unique Reference No: 118617

Kent LA

Head Teacher: Mr. Simon Temple

Chair of Governors: Mrs. Linda Sharpe

Vicar: Revd. Chris Van Straaten

Inspector: Ms Jan Thompson NS No. 92

Inspection: 10th December 2010

SUMMARY JUDGEMENT

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

Overall Grade 3: Satisfactory

St. Peter's Voluntary Controlled Church of England Primary School in Aylesford is a satisfactory church school.

SCHOOL CONTEXT

St. Peter's Church of England Primary School is a Voluntary Controlled school situated in the historic Kent village of Aylesford, near Maidstone. Under the present headteacher, the learning environment has been improved and extended, and numbers on roll have risen from 103 to 132 since the last Section 48 inspection in July 2006. The school has worked hard to raise standards during this time, and the recent Ofsted report judged the school to be satisfactory and improving with some good features, including a 'strong ethos of care.' Almost all pupils are from White British families and an average number have special needs/disabilities. About ten percent attend church on Sundays.

ESTABLISHED STRENGTHS

- Pupils have a good understanding of morality based on Christian teaching.
- Pupils enjoy Collective Worship.
- Good links exist between the parish church and the school.

FOCUS FOR DEVELOPMENT

- The school environment should be used much more to promote pupils' spiritual development.
- The scheme and policy statement for Collective Worship should be rewritten to be more distinctively Christian and Anglican.
- Collective Worship should focus more on pupils' spiritual development.
- The governing body should manage the school's on-going self evaluation process as a church school.

How well does the school, through its distinctive Christian character, meet the needs of all learners? Grade 3: Satisfactory

St. Peter's in Aylesford is proud of its Christian ethos which is seen by many as the reason why it is a friendly, caring school where everyone looks after each other. The headteacher says that behaviour is based on the 'Christian model of compassion, forgiveness, humility, tolerance and integrity' and that 'We look for the angel in every child'. Collective Worship teaches pupils to 'put Jesus first,' and Religious Education (RE) makes links between morality and Christian teaching. For example, Reception pupils link their class Golden Rules with how God wants them to behave and Year 1 pupils learn to look after God's creation. RE also contributes well to pupils' spiritual development, such as in a Year 4/5 class on Christingle that included a time for reflection on the candle and 'How Jesus can be a light in your world.' However, pupils do not readily see the importance of studying other religions as a means of understanding their neighbours in the UK. All classrooms still display a large wooden cross (made by the headteacher) with the school prayer and the traditional prayer 'God be in my head'. However, pupils' spiritual development is limited as there are few opportunities for creative expressions of prayer.

What is the impact of collective worship on the school community?

Grade 3: Satisfactory

Pupils enjoy Collective Worship, particularly when it is fun. They respond well to question and answer sessions, but do not take a leadership role in worship. They like repeating the two school prayers in Collective Worship, and this has some impact on their beliefs, but they do not use any other set prayers or responses. Collective Worship has a stronger impact on pupils' moral development than their spiritual development, and it is always related to their lives. They say they learn 'how to be kinder and more helpful.' The Vicar also uses moral themes, although he does ask religious questions and includes clear Christian teaching. However, little has been done to develop the Anglican character of daily Collective Worship, apart from the four annual festivals held in the nearby church of St. Peter's. Some parents have commented that they would like their children to learn the Lord's Prayer and sing religious songs in daily worship. Year 6 pupils have not yet attended the annual Church Schools Festival in Rochester, so they have not yet taken part in a Eucharist in the Cathedral church. Diocesan advice about worship at the last inspection has made little impact, such as advice about more reflection in worship and a focal point in the hall for worship. Although all worship is broadly Christian, the scheme does not focus sufficiently on the seasons and festivals of the Church's year and does not include enough Bible teaching. The weekly class-based Collective Worship has not been monitored and evaluated by staff and pupils, as recommended at the last inspection, and pupils in most classes do not regard it as worship.

How effective are the leadership and management of the school as a church school? Grade 3: Satisfactory

Little development and improvement has taken place since the last inspection over four years ago. Although the Foundation Governors have done some monitoring and evaluation, the governing body as a whole has not given due consideration to diocesan advice in the last inspection report. It has not included all stakeholders in the self-evaluation process, only sending out a parent questionnaire after the date of this inspection was known. Links with the local church remain good, through the support of the Foundation Governors and the commitment of the Vicar. He leads Collective Worship once a fortnight and has also taught some RE lessons. A number of pupils are in the church choir and about twelve are regular church attenders. The school supports special Sundays, such as 'Back to Church Sunday' this year in which the headteacher and a group of pupils took part. Parents approve of the Christian ethos of the school and the close community links between school and church. Religious Education has an important place in the school's creative curriculum as the lead subject for Social Values. Standards of attainment and progress are satisfactory. The subject leader is new and has not yet had time to train or to monitor the subject and to ensure that the new agreed syllabus is being fully delivered.