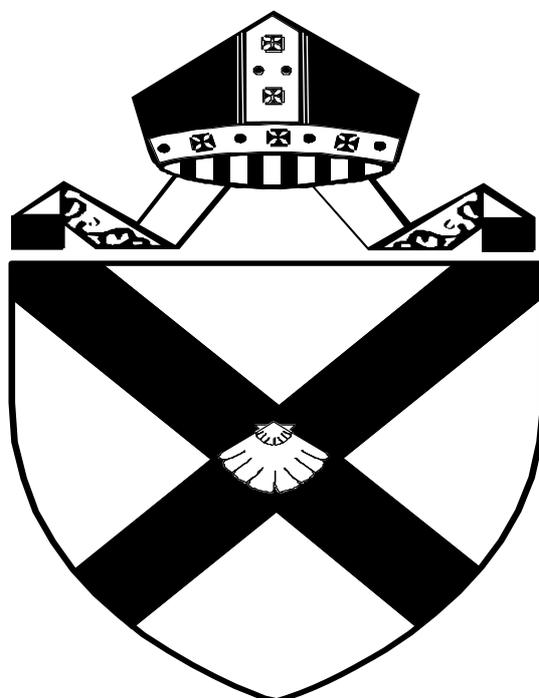


STATUTORY INSPECTION of ANGLICAN SCHOOLS

ROCHESTER DIOCESE

2011



**Stone St.Mary's Church of
England Primary School**

Hayes Road,Horns Cross, Greenhithe Kent DA9 9EF

Voluntary Controlled

Kent LA

Unique Reference No: 118596

Head Teacher: Mrs. Susan Taylor

Chairman of Governors: Mr Alaric Bonthron

Incumbent: Rev. Kenneth Clarke

Inspector: Ms Jan Thompson N.S.No.92

Inspection: 7th January 2011

SUMMARY JUDGEMENT

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

Stone St. Mary's Church of England Primary School has gone from strength to strength and is now an outstanding Church school.

Overall Grade 1: OUTSTANDING

SCHOOL CONTEXT

Stone St. Mary's Church of England Primary School is a Voluntary Controlled school occupying spacious, well cared-for modern buildings set in extensive grounds. It is a popular school, serving its local area of mixed housing. Its 332 pupils are largely White British, with around 27% from minority ethnic backgrounds. Only about 7% of pupils are from regular worshipping Church families. Ofsted gave the school an overall 'Satisfactory' grade, but recognised many good features and its good capacity to continue to improve.

ESTABLISHED STRENGTHS

- The Christian values that permeate all aspects of school life.
- The effective spiritual leadership of the Headteacher and Rector.
- The Anglican influence on Collective Worship, particularly the Eucharistic worship.
- Use of the school environment for spiritual development, particularly the Reflection Garden.
- The good leadership of Religious Education (RE).

FOCUS FOR DEVELOPMENT

- Continue to implement and reinforce the school's improvement plan to further strengthen the Christian aspects of the school.

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

It is appropriate that the school badge is a lantern because this school is a beacon of joy, love and hope in its local community. Pupils are encouraged to be 'a shining light' in their behaviour towards others and in their care for the natural world. For example, they give of their time and pocket-money to charities, saying that they are following in the footsteps of Jesus who "tried to help everyone." Through the initiative of the school council, pupils have now taken on the commitment of sponsoring a Muslim child in Jerusalem, through a Christian charity. Recognising each individual as a unique child of God, staff treat pupils and parents with respect, kindness and patience and thereby act as good role-models to the pupils. The school places great emphasis on respecting differences and pupils say that they "learn to love each other for who we are." RE makes a good contribution to their understanding of other faiths and cultures. It also supports their moral and spiritual development by relating what they learn to their own lives. For example, they explored the importance of forgiving others when studying Jesus' parable of the Unforgiving Servant. Pupils behave well in RE lessons and work well with each other. Pupils' spiritual development is particularly well supported by the school environment. They make good use of the interactive prayer-stations in their classrooms and around the school. They also appreciate the attractive Reflection Garden in the heart of the school, decorated with Christian prayer-flags. Pupils like to go there to be quiet and know that it is a special place to pray to God.

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

Grade 1: OUTSTANDING

Pupils respond very well to Collective Worship. They behave with reverence, making good use of silent reflection time at the beginning and end of worship, which is supported by inspiring PowerPoint presentations. They describe much of the worship as 'fun' and participate enthusiastically in a variety of ways. They readily write their own prayers to be used in worship and older pupils often lead their own worship in their classrooms. Pupils and staff derive inspiration from Collective Worship. For example, pupils like meditative songs, such as 'Peace is flowing like a river' and 'Be still, for the presence of the Lord is moving in this place.' They can explain the meaning of the words and recognise that songs are a good way to praise God. Collective Worship also reinforces Christian values, supporting pupils' moral development. This is because the Bible teaching is related to their own lives and helps them to act in a Christian way. Pupils become familiar with a variety of Anglican worship and respond well to this. Of particular note are the Eucharist services that are celebrated six times a year. Pupils commented on the impact of the priest's blessing over them at the end of the service. They also enjoy the Rector's regular weekly acts of worship and their visits to the church five times a year for special services. Worship is clearly at the heart of this school and much time and effort goes into producing high quality experiences for everyone. The school is always looking for fresh ways of involving pupils in the Church's Year, such as ashing on Ash Wednesday, the blessing and distribution of palms on Palm Sunday, the stations of the cross set up in the hall at Easter, and a 'Christmas Journey' around the school.

How effective are the leadership and management of the school as a church school? Grade 1: OUTSTANDING

The spiritual leadership of the headteacher is outstanding, and she is very well supported in this by the Rector. Under their clear and steady direction over a number of years, all stakeholders have become united in their support for the school's Christian values and appreciative of their impact on pupils' personal development. Parents are left in no doubt as to the Christian nature of the school and some are now choosing the school for this reason. Numbers have risen considerably and the school is now oversubscribed in Reception and Key Stage 1. Parents comment on the happy, friendly atmosphere and link this to the school's Christian values. A 'Values and Vision' day at the beginning of each school year reinforces these values and inducts new staff into the Christian ethos of the school. Regular monitoring, involving staff, parents and pupils, has led to a very good understanding of the impact that is being made throughout the school. This in turn informs the school improvement plan and leads to a steady process of development. The governing body is fully involved in this and supportive of the church nature of the school. It has successfully addressed the Focus for Development from the last inspection. Also, RE is treated as a core subject and is very well led. Use of monitoring and assessment contributes to pupils' good progress. The chair of governors is aware of succession planning issues and the headteacher has been personally involved in local authority/diocesan initiatives to promote church schools. The partnership with St.Mary's Church remains very strong. The church supports the school, mainly through the Rector, Foundation Governors and some parishioners. The school advertises church services and events and provides artwork for the church, such as Easter Gardens produced by each class. A popular annual barbeque brings together members of the school, church and local community and raises money for local appeals.