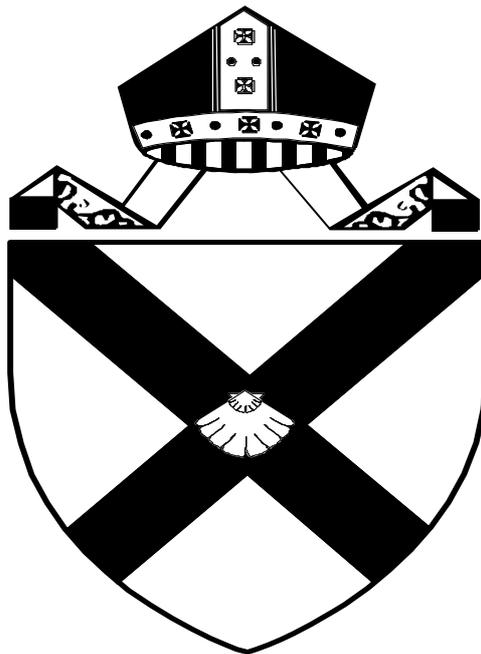


STATUTORY INSPECTION of ANGLICAN SCHOOLS

ROCHESTER DIOCESE

2009



**Trottiscliffe Church of England
Primary School**

Voluntary Controlled

Church Lane, Trottiscliffe, West Malling,
Kent ME19 5EB

Unique Reference No: 118630
Kent LA

Head Teacher: Mrs. Stella Sudds

Chair of Governors: Mrs. Ann Kemp

Rector: Rev. Jeremy Cross

Inspector: Ms Jan Thompson NS No. 92

Inspection: 6th October 2009

SUMMARY JUDGEMENT

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

Overall Grade 3: Satisfactory

Trottiscliffe Voluntary Controlled Church of England Primary School in Kent is a satisfactory church school.

SCHOOL CONTEXT

Trottiscliffe Church of England Primary School is a small Voluntary Controlled school situated in a beautiful Kent village close to West Malling. It has 64 pupils on roll, a quarter of whom come from the village of Trottiscliffe, with others travelling in from surrounding areas. Almost all are from White British families, at least ten percent of whom regularly attend Church. Ofsted found the school to be satisfactory overall, with some good elements, such as pupils' personal development.

ESTABLISHED STRENGTHS

- The caring attitudes and very good relationships in the school.
- The strong links with the church.

FOCUS FOR DEVELOPMENT

- The Governing Body, as a whole, should manage the school's on-going self-evaluation process as a church school.
- It should develop a shared Christian vision for the school, with clearly identified Christian values.
- It should give priority to monitoring and evaluating Collective Worship, involving pupils in this process.
- It should develop the school environment to promote pupils' Christian spiritual and moral development.

How well does the school, through its distinctive Christian character, meet the needs of all learners? Grade 2: Good

Trottiscliffe is a small, friendly school with a family atmosphere, where pupils are happy and enjoy learning. There is a very caring Christian ethos in which pupils are surrounded by love and learn to love others. This is seen particularly in the care taken of younger pupils by older ones, promoted by the 'Buddy' system in the school. It is also seen in the excellent relationships throughout the school. The Rector articulated this Christian vision as stemming from God's love for us; but the distinctive Christian values of the school have not been explored and made explicit, despite attention being drawn to the need for this in the previous report. Religious Education (RE) promotes the spiritual and moral development of pupils well. In RE, teachers' questioning skills encourage pupils to think deeply about religious issues. The scheme of work to support the Local Agreed Syllabus, from Canterbury Diocese, ensures a good balance between learning information about religions and relating it to pupils' own lives. Collective Worship contributes well to pupils' moral development. At the time of the inspection, a series of acts of worship on the Fruit of the Spirit helped pupils to reflect on their behaviour towards others. Pupils engage well in charitable work, such as bringing in Harvest gifts for a local needy community. However, they do not readily relate this to Jesus' teaching to help others. The younger pupils had contributed to a prominent display in their classroom on the Fruit of the Spirit, but otherwise little use is made of the school environment to deepen pupils' understanding of Christianity and to encourage reflection and prayerfulness.

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

Grade 3: Satisfactory

Harvest Festival took place in the village church on the day of the inspection. The pupils enjoyed the walk through the fields to the church and each class participated with confidence in the service. Many parents turned out to support their children and to take part in the celebration. The four school services attended in the church each year help pupils to feel at home in an Anglican church and the Rector ensures that these are genuine acts of worship. The Rector or the church Reader also take one of the daily acts of worship in school every week. The worship themes, taken from Canterbury Diocese, are appropriate for church schools because they follow the church calendar and are based on the Bible. Pupils also know the Lord's Prayer and use it frequently. The school doesn't take part in the annual Church Schools' Festival in Rochester Cathedral and doesn't wish its pupils to have experience of the Eucharist, but they have taken pupils on a visit to the Cathedral. The school has not yet asked for pupils' views about their Collective Worship, despite this being in the last report. This has prevented developments taking place to engage pupils better in worship and to have a greater impact on their spiritual development. Pupils interviewed by the inspector gave a mixed reaction. There were elements of the worship that they enjoyed, such as the calming music at the beginning and the opportunity to sing out. One pupil commented on the importance of the prayer at the end of each assembly, "because we can be thankful to God." Good developments since the last inspection are that now all staff attend daily Collective Worship and also a data projector has been installed in the hall, allowing for the use of images for presentations.

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

The headteacher and governors have not addressed the recommendations from the last inspection two and a half years ago and have not made enough use of advice and support offered by the Diocese. They have not yet engaged with distinctive Christian values in developing a Christian vision for the school although, in discussion, staff can articulate how the school's Christian ethos influences attitudes and behaviour. The whole governing body has not yet become involved with the self-evaluation process of the school as a church school. This has been done by the headteacher and Foundation Governors (the Rector and Reader, who is also the vice-chair of governors), but with little formal monitoring or involvement of other stakeholders. RE has featured in the school development plan, with the result that the new Agreed Syllabus has been effectively put in place, but assessment procedures have only just been introduced. Strong links with the church continue to enhance the religious life of the school, particularly through the work of the Foundation Governors. A number of other governors are also church members and the governing body is proud of its church school. The headteacher is supporting her deputy in working towards her National Professional Qualification for Headship.