

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

All Saints Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Magpie Hall Road,
CHATHAM
Kent ME4 5JY

Diocese: Canterbury

LA: Medway

Dates of inspection: 15th – 16th June 2006

Date of last inspection:

School's Unique reference number: 118639

Headteacher: Mr. Stuart Kay

Inspector's name and number: Ms. Jan Thompson. N.S.no.92

School context

All Saints is a Voluntary Controlled Church of England primary school. It is a relatively large, oversubscribed school of just over 300 pupils. In a socially disadvantaged area, it provides an outstanding education for all types of pupils. Standards are below average on entry, and improve in the core subjects throughout the school to above average on leaving. The school benefits from an impressive new building (not yet two years old), alongside its original Victorian building, which has been refurbished. Just under a quarter of pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds, bringing a variety of religions into the school. About 10% of pupils are from regular worshipping church families, but many more attend church-related activities and special services.

Summary Judgement

All Saints Church of England Primary School in Chatham is a good church school with good capacity to improve further. Overall Grade 2: GOOD

Established strengths

- The Christian ethos underpins the whole life of the school.
- Pupils value Collective Worship and understand its purpose.
- The Head Teacher has provided sustained Christian leadership in this school for many years.
- There are strong and productive links between the parish church, the school and the local community.

Focus for development

- The school's Mission Statement and prospectus should reflect the school's Christian purpose.
- All teachers should attend daily Collective Worship (as recommended in the last report).
- The self-evaluation process of the school as a church school now needs to be developed to involve all stakeholders.

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

Grade 1: OUTSTANDING

The school places great importance on the value of each individual. Every child matters and is given opportunities and encouragement for all-round development and fulfilment. Although the school's documentation lacks clear statements on its Christian motivation, parents have no hesitation in linking the school's ethos with Christianity. They spoke of their children gaining a firm foundation and learning to be respectful and considerate of others. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Relationships are very good at all levels in the school, with adults being good role-models to the pupils. Both adults and pupils are happy, friendly and confident in this close and supportive community.

Pupils are enthusiastic about raising money for charities and are able to relate this to

religious ideas. One pupil spoke of us all being God's people, who should therefore care for each other in need. Collective Worship and Religious Education both contribute well to pupils' moral and spiritual development. Pupils particularly appreciate studying religions other than Christianity, in order to understand and respect their neighbours.

There are some notable Christian displays around the school. However, the school did not take the opportunities afforded by its new entrance and hall to display a visual Christian focus in these significant areas, despite some intentions to do so.

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

Grade 2: GOOD

The importance of daily Collective Worship is seen in its careful planning by the co-ordinator and in the role of its link governor who monitors the standards of worship as well as giving some active support. The worship is rightly Christian, planned on weekly themes and around the major Christian festivals. There is a good use of Biblical material, particularly by the Vicar and Christian members of staff, who develop the themes with a lot of knowledge and understanding. It is a pity, however, that clergy only lead worship twice a month (once for each key stage). Collective Worship is well prepared and engages the pupils well by relating the teaching to their lives and with some active participation. All teachers lead Collective Worship at some time; but full teacher attendance only happens once a week. Pupils understand the religious meaning of worship, and they value the opportunity it gives them to start each day with prayer and to learn about God. Older pupils spoke appreciatively of the use of silence, which they find peaceful and relaxing. Pupils' spiritual development is also enhanced by their excellent standard of singing and their wide repertoire of religious songs. There are no withdrawals from Collective Worship: families from religions other than Christianity value the fact that religion is taken seriously.

How effective are the leadership and management of the school as a church school?

Grade 2: GOOD

The Head Teacher has provided the school with committed Christian leadership for many years. He attends the parish church and forms part of the strong link between school, church and the local community. The Governing Body is fully supportive of the Church of England status of the school, with the Foundation Governors being actively involved in the life of the school. There are good links with the Diocese. For example, the school usually takes part in the annual Lenten Pilgrimage in the cathedral for Key Stage 1 and the Church Schools Festival for upper Key Stage 2. The Head Teacher attends the termly meetings of the Medway Anglican Schools Headteachers, which designs and organises the Lenten Pilgrimage.

Religious Education is well managed and lessons well prepared. But the unit choices have led to a very multifaith syllabus, rather than putting as much emphasis on Christianity as the Medway Agreed Syllabus allows.

Documentation, including the Mission Statement and prospectus, does not do justice to the Christian nature of the school and could be used to promote it better. Formal self-evaluation as a Church school has only just begun and has not yet involved the whole Governing Body with all staff, pupils and parents. But the Head Teacher has a sound evaluation of the school's grades, he knows how and where to make improvements and has already begun this process.

SIAS report June 2006 All Saints Church of England Primary School, Magpie Hall Road, CHATHAM, Kent ME4 5JY