

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### Hever Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Hever,  
Edenbridge,  
Kent  
TN8 7NH

**Diocese: Rochester**

LA: Kent

Dates of inspection: 15<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> May 2006

Date of last inspection: 2000

School's Unique reference number: 118718

Headteacher: Mrs. Lynette Watts

Inspector's name and number: Ms Jan Thompson (NS 92)

#### School context

Hever Church of England Primary School is a small Voluntary Aided school of 86 pupils. It is situated in the picturesque village of Hever in Kent, close to St. Peter's Church. Founded in Victorian times, the present building dates from the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Some pupils come from Hever, but most are from surrounding areas, with more than half from the nearby town of Edenbridge. Thirty five pupils are from church going families. The school's recent Ofsted report judged the school to be satisfactory overall.

#### Summary Judgement

Hever Voluntary Aided Church of England Primary School is, on balance, a good Church school. GRADE 2: GOOD

#### Established strengths

- School life is based on clearly defined Christian values.
- The Headteacher is a very committed Christian leader, fully supportive of Church school education.
- The Incumbent, who is also Chairman of Governors, works closely with the Headteacher to support the Christian education of the pupils.
- The new self-evaluation agenda has focused the leadership and management on an agenda of improvement as a Church school.

#### Focus for development

- More should be done to engage the older pupils in worship, such as: giving them some leadership role; having a greater variety of pupil groupings; and using visitors.
- There should be more opportunities for peacefulness and quiet reflection, both within collective worship and around the school, such as in classrooms.
- The Religious Education subject leader needs regular in-service-training to keep up to date with developments in the subject and to focus on raising standards.
- The governing body, in conjunction with the Rector, should consider developing the Anglican nature of the school further: by giving a greater focus to the major Christian festival of Pentecost; taking part in the Diocesan Church Schools Festival; and establishing a School Eucharist.

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

Grade 2: GOOD

Hever Church of England Primary School is a small friendly school where everyone knows each other by name. 'Golden Time' on Friday afternoons enables pupils of different ages to work together. As a school with an Eco award, pupils learn to appreciate their beautiful surroundings and to take responsibility for the environment and wild-life. This makes a strong contribution to their spiritual development, as does Collective Worship and Religious Education. Pupils raise large sums of money for charities, such as Christian Aid and Macmillan Cancer Relief, and are able to relate this to the example that Jesus set. Posters and displays relevant to the Christian nature of the school feature in the school entrance and the hall used for worship, but not in classrooms. The recent introduction of a box for prayer-requests has been well received by pupils. These are used by a small group of parents that meet once a month.

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

GOOD

Christian worship is very important in the life of the school, demonstrated by the fact that it is taken by the Head Teacher on four days a week, and by the Rector once a week. There may be advantages, however, in a greater variety of Collective Worship. The setting is carefully prepared and enhances the worship through the use of Anglican symbolism such as colours for different times of the Church's year, candles and a cross. Pupils face a large window, which frames the church spire. The Anglican flavour has recently been strengthened by the use of the opening greeting 'The Lord be with you', to which pupils respond with enthusiasm: 'And also with you.' Pupils generally behave well, and understand worship as a time when they can think about God, but they do not yet enjoy a sense of calm and stillness to aid quiet reflection. It is good that Collective worship always gives strong Christian guidance, which pupils recognize as helping them with their moral choices. It often involves Bible stories or Christian festivals; but Pentecost does not feature very strongly, in contrast to Christmas and Easter. The quality of worship is good, with good story-telling techniques that engage the younger pupils in particular. These pupils also appreciate the prayers that are said at lunchtimes and at the end of the school day. The governing body has not yet considered having a school Eucharist.

**How effective is the religious education?**

Grade 3: SATISFACTORY

The Rochester Syllabus for Religious Education (2001) is well implemented. It is used effectively for planning in Upper Key Stage 2, where pupils make good progress and achieve standards in line with the expectations of the syllabus. RE is popular throughout the school because most emphasis is given to the aspect of RE which relates the subject to pupils' own lives, and is often done creatively through drama and art. It therefore makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral development. However, the other side of RE – learning about religions – is not as well developed as it should be. Consequently, pupils' knowledge of religions and use of religious language is underdeveloped. This is particularly true of religions other than Christianity. The subject leader has not focused on raising standards in RE. Teachers do not use the level descriptions, which would help them to set challenging work, appropriate for different ages and abilities within the same class.

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

Grade 2: GOOD

The Head Teacher is a strong Christian leader, well-supported by the Incumbent, who is also Chairman of Governors. Most governors are church-goers, with the governing-body as a whole being very supportive of the school's Christian character. Its new prospectus sets out very clearly the Christian values of the school. The recent briefing by the Diocese on the new inspection of church schools has had a very beneficial effect on this school. It now has a programme for development, based on self-evaluation, which has already led to improvements. It recognizes the need to involve pupils and parents more in this process. Parents, both church-goers and others, appreciate the Christian ethos of the school and support the special school services in the church. There is a strong two-way partnership between school and church, but more use could be made of links with the Diocese.

SIAS report May 2006 Hever Church of England Primary School Hever, Edenbridge, Kent TN8 7NH