

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Sedley's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Church Street,
Southfleet,
Kent
DA13 9NR

Diocese: Rochester

LA: Kent

Dates of inspection: 19, 21 June 2006

Date of last inspection: 2000

School's Unique reference number: 118595

Headteacher: Mrs. A. Coppiters

Inspector's name and number: Mrs. P.J. Eccles

School context

Sedley's is a Voluntary Controlled Church of England Primary school. It is a smaller than average school of 83 pupils, serving a rural community, with the majority of pupils from white British families. Between 10 and 15 families attend church on a regular basis. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is above average, whilst the percentage with statements of educational need is average. Pupils make satisfactory progress from Reception onwards and by the end of Year 6 attain average standards. A major building project will commence shortly to accommodate Foundation Stage pupils who are currently taught in an air raid shelter.

Summary Judgement

Sedley's is a good Church of England school, with examples of excellent practice. Overall Grade 2: GOOD

Established strengths

- The strong sense of community and the caring and inclusive ethos of the school.
- The positive impact of Collective Worship on pupils, developing their faith and spirituality.
- The excellent leadership demonstrated by the Head Teacher.

Focus for development

- Further develop the link between school and the parish church.
- Appoint Foundation Governors to fully involve them in all aspects of the school's self-evaluation as a Church school.

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

Grade 2: Good

The school, through its distinctive Christian character, makes good provision for the needs of all its pupils, with some outstanding features. Pupil and parent interviews confirm the school's Mission Statement that Christian values and spiritual development are promoted through the experiences offered to all pupils. Parents say that the Head Teacher and staff always listen to them and that the school is like an extended family. The children say they enjoy coming to school because they know everyone, they feel safe and no-one is bullied. All pupils subscribe to the school's code of conduct, which emphasises the importance of caring both for each other and the school. The school buildings, although limited, are well maintained and are bright and welcoming, with the best possible use made of available space. There are stimulating displays and visual signs of Christianity throughout the building. A large cross at the school entrance denotes a church school. The strong Christian ethos, implicit within all aspects of the curriculum, supports the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils. Each classroom has an R.E. display and a table of artefacts, books, and prayers written by the pupils. Christianity is the major component of Religious Education; but other world faiths are also taught, which helps pupils to develop knowledge and understanding of other cultures. Children respond

positively to a wide range of charitable appeals and the school welcomes many visitors who speak to the pupils about national and international concerns.

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

Grade 2: Good

Worship is attended and valued by both pupils and staff, including two teachers of other faiths. It permeates throughout the daily life of the school and is a key element in its Christian witness. It is consistently and recognisably Christian, within the Anglican tradition. Currently the parish is without an incumbent. During this time, a positive contribution to worship has been made by the priest of a neighbouring parish, which has been well received by pupils and staff. A candle is lit for the duration of worship. A calm, prayerful ethos pervades worship, with pupils entering quietly to music. There is a good balance of hymns, prayers and a Bible reading. A period of reflection towards the end of worship enables pupils to focus on what they have heard. Pupils say that worship is an enjoyable part of the day and they like to pray together for their friends and families, as well as children less fortunate than themselves. They also pray together at lunchtime; and class prayers are said at the end of the day.

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

Grade 2: Good

The Head Teacher's vision for this Church school is to keep the school at the heart of the community and to continue to develop very close links with the parish church and the Diocese. The school attends the annual Rochester Church Schools' Festival and the governing body affirms and supports the links between the school, the parish and the Diocese. The Head Teacher sets an excellent example and is well supported by the staff, who work as a close team and uphold the school's Mission Statement. The school follows the local Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education (RE), and the subject is well managed and resourced. Planning is well developed and pupils make clear progress, with cross-curricular links identified and taught. The Head Teacher, as subject-leader, monitors RE and gives constructive feedback. There are no Foundation Governors at present to act as a critical friend to the Head Teacher and to monitor and evaluate the school's worship. During this time when there has been no incumbent it has been difficult to maintain the relationship between the parish church and the school. The Head Teacher recognises that this factor is preventing the school from moving forward in terms of leadership and guidance within a spiritual dimension. However, she has had her delivery of Collective Worship monitored by an external adviser and has addressed the developmental points that were raised. The school is at the heart of the community and there is a firm interaction between the school and the church, whereby the church at times becomes an extension of school buildings and Junior Church is held in the school. Pupils talk knowledgeably about the church and enjoy the monthly Parade Service when the school banner is paraded. They attend major Christian festivals in the church; and important school services are also held there. School self evaluation is well established and involves staff and governors.

SIAS report June 2006 Sedley's Church of England Primary School, Church Street, Southfleet, Kent DA13 9NR