

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### **Chevening St Botolph's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School**

Chevening Road,  
Chipstead,  
Sevenoaks,  
Kent  
TN13 2SA

**Diocese: Rochester**

Local authority: Kent

Dates of inspection: 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2008

School's unique reference number: 118715

Headteacher: Miss Ruth Bowers

Inspector's name and number: Mrs Julia Watts N.S.No.466

#### **School context**

Chevening (St Botolph's) is a Voluntary Aided Church of England Primary school in a small Kent village about 2 miles from Sevenoaks. It is an over-subscribed one-form entry school with a wide catchment area. Most pupils come from worshipping Christian homes. Standards on entry are average and are well above average by the end of Year 6. Ofsted judged it to be a good school with outstanding personal development.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Chevening St Botolph's as a Church of England school are outstanding**

Chevening (St Botolph's) Church of England Primary school is an outstanding church school.

#### **Established strengths**

- The committed Christian leadership of the headteacher and Foundation Governors.
- The caring, family atmosphere amongst pupils, parents and staff.
- The quality of display and environment of the school that promotes Christian spiritual development and provides pupils with a safe and secure place in which to learn and grow.

#### **Focus for development**

- To develop rigorous assessment and monitoring procedures in Religious Education (RE).
- To use more creative resources in Collective Worship.

#### **The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is outstanding at meeting the needs of all learners**

Chevening (St. Botolph's) promotes Christian values and spiritual development and as a result pupils are secure, happy and well-behaved. They are very proud of their school, especially the caring family atmosphere. Pupils understand the meaning and significance of faith and so look after one another as Jesus taught. They value the importance of being listened to by staff and say they know that their opinions matter. In this school, pupils know that it is important to look after God's world, as that is what God wants. The school environment provides excellent opportunities for pupils to care for and reflect on the beauty of creation. Creative displays of children's work are of a high quality and support learning in Religious Education (RE). Collective Worship displays encourage learners to reflect on their unique contribution to the school community. Pupils make excellent progress in spiritual and moral awareness and can link their behaviour and decisions to biblical ideas. Adults in the school have very good supportive relationships with one another and this is reflected in their interaction with the pupils.

### **The impact of collective worship on the school community is good**

Collective Worship has a central place in school life and has a very positive impact on pupils, who speak very enthusiastically about it. They enjoy worship times and value the opportunities to participate and pray together. They say lighting the candle helps them to think about what God has done for them. Singing is lively and enhances the worshipful atmosphere. Pupils can relate the Christian teaching from Collective Worship to their own lives. However, further opportunities for spiritual development are limited by the resources used and the standardised approach. Both pupils and parents enjoy their special services in the church which celebrate major Christian festivals throughout the year, including Pentecost and St. Botolph's Day. These services are well attended by parents. The headteacher as Worship coordinator, works closely with the Rector to ensure that Collective Worship always has strong biblical and Anglican elements. Pupils therefore know the Lord's Prayer and a range of other Anglican prayers and greetings. Each class enjoys a prayer time before the end of the day and Grace before lunch.

### **The effectiveness of the religious education is good**

Overall, pupils reach standards in RE as high or better than in other core subjects. Progress in RE is secure across the school due to good questioning and creative task setting. In the best cases, assessment is well used to guide teachers' planning, but this is not consistently applied. Pupils enjoy RE, show a positive attitude and are confident to share their own ideas and beliefs. Younger pupils can recall key Bible stories and older pupils are able to interpret Jesus' sayings and derive meaning for their own attitudes and behaviour. Pupils' learning in RE enables them to grow morally and spiritually. This is because there are strong opportunities for pupils to relate their learning to themselves when studying Christianity. Knowledge and understanding of other religions is weaker because teachers are not as confident in this area. RE is recognised by the school as important. Adequate time is given to RE although teaching resources for other religions are limited.

### **The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school is outstanding**

The school has a cohesive and inclusive family feel because the headteacher and senior managers are very committed and clear about their Christian vision. The school is well managed and supported by its Foundation Governors. The governors' meetings are always opened with prayer and the school makes the most of the opportunities to develop the links with the local church. The Rector, as well as being Chair of Governors, makes a valued contribution to the worship and pastoral care of the school. He regularly shares school news with the congregation in Sunday services. Staff and pupils are involved in the schools' improvement planning and self evaluation as a church school, which is accurate and thorough. RE and Worship have a high profile and are well-resourced and budgeted for. Staff are well-supported and feel confident and comfortable with the school's Christian ethos and are encouraged to express their faith. Parents are extremely pleased with the school and feel their opinions are valued. Many see the status of church school as adding to their children's education and appreciate the strong moral foundation.