

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### **Leybourne Ss Peter & Paul Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School**

Rectory Lane North,  
Leybourne,  
West Malling,  
Kent  
ME19 5HD

**Diocese: Rochester**

Local authority: Kent

Dates of inspection: 7<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> November 2006

School's unique reference number: 118727

Headteacher: Mrs V.Dunnet

Inspector's name and number: Revd.D.Bastide N.S.No.418

#### **School context**

Leybourne Ss. Peter and Paul Church of England Primary School is a one-form entry school of 211 pupils, most of whom live in the village of Leybourne in Kent. The school is very successful and is regularly oversubscribed. The original buildings date from Victorian times and over the years additions have been made, culminating in a new Reception classroom in 1999. About 25% of pupils are from active Church families, and a few pupils are from other religions.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Leybourne Ss.Peter and Paul as a Church of England school are outstanding**

Leybourne Ss.Peter and Paul Voluntary Aided Church of England Primary School, is an outstanding church school.

#### **Established strengths**

- A very strong Christian ethos pervading every corner of the school
- A very strong relationship with the parish church
- A commitment to continuous improvement

#### **Focus for development**

- Review the scheme of work for Religious Education.
- Develop a portfolio of levelled work in Religious Education.

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

The school is very clear about its strong Christian character, which is shared by the whole school community. Reference to it permeates the school's documentation and it is demonstrated in displays throughout the school building. The school has a very strong focus upon meeting the needs of all its pupils by providing a happy atmosphere and an environment in which each individual's contribution and talents are nurtured, encouraged and valued. Staff members have high expectations of themselves and of their pupils. This results in high levels of academic achievement, coupled with an equal concern for pupils' emotional and social development. The school shows great sensitivity in meeting the particular needs of its pupils whose background is a religion other than Christianity. Relationships within the school are exceptionally good at all levels. The 'buddy' system is effective and also the work with the youngest pupils in the playground by a group of Year 6 pupils who have been trained as play leaders. Overwhelmingly children are proud of their school and love attending. One child who had attended other schools described this school as a kind and friendly place.

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

Prayer is central to the life of the school: pupils say a mid-day grace and prayers at the end of the school day; and there is a prayer requests box in a prominent position. At the core is daily collective worship, which makes a particularly important contribution to the spiritual, moral and social development of pupils. Acts of worship are imaginative and well planned and delivered. Themes are drawn up through discussion between the Head Teacher and the governor with responsibility for collective worship and selected for their relevance to the pupils. These include major Christian festivals, which are celebrated in the church. Collective worship is a dignified affair. Pupils enter the school hall in a calm, thoughtful and reverent way to the background of appropriate music. Hymns are very well sung, both accompanied and unaccompanied; prayers are said purposefully and pupils listen and respond well. The vast majority of pupils value collective worship and see the relevance of the themes. There is a distinctly Anglican feel to the worship. A large candle, a colourful lectern-fall and a crucifix provide visual focuses. Hymns and prayers are learned – for example the children say the Grace together while holding hands. Traditional Anglican practices such as ashing on Ash Wednesday are performed. Pupils are familiar with the Eucharist, which is celebrated in Key Stage 2. Worship is evaluated with relevant parties, including pupils, and an annual report is presented to the governors. Collective worship figures in the School Improvement Plan.

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

Religious Education (RE) is strong in the school and makes an important contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. Standards of attainment are good and pupils make good progress. The school follows the Rochester Diocesan Syllabus. Lessons observed were good or better and all were well planned with clear learning outcomes. Both sides of RE are evident, with a commendable strength in relating the material to pupils' own lives as well as teaching knowledge and understanding of religion. All the lessons provided opportunities for discussion, reflection and action and good use was made of other curriculum areas. Teachers used good questioning techniques to provoke thinking. Pupils' subject knowledge, especially of Christianity, is good and many of them can use religious vocabulary well to discuss religious ideas. Most pupils enjoy the subject.

The Head Teacher, herself a former RE subject leader, is acting in the role during the maternity leave of the post holder. She supports teachers well, monitors RE thoroughly and has a detailed knowledge of the subject in the school. Teachers are confident in their teaching but there is a general feeling that the diocesan syllabus is constraining them in meeting their perceived needs of the pupils. An example of this is the absence of work on faiths other than Christianity in Year 6. The school is using the QCA levels for assessing pupils' work and it now proposes on to develop a levelled portfolio of pupil's work

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

The Head Teacher and the governors provide an exceptional level of leadership. The Head Teacher is an inspirational leader with a very clear vision of how this Church school can develop and improve, a vision which is shared by her senior management team and the whole staff. The school is very efficiently managed. The Christian purpose of the school is laid out very clearly in all the school's documentation, including the prospectus. Parents and pupils are very well aware of this and support it overwhelmingly. The governors are fully behind the school and act as an effective critical friend. One of the Foundation Governors, who has a specialist knowledge of RE, is designated the RE and Collective Worship governor, so she is able to provide particular support and challenge. There is a very close relationship with the parish church. The new parish priest is already establishing himself effectively through leading collective worship, contributing to RE lessons and getting to know the pupils and staff. The church as a whole is very supportive and proud of the school.