

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Nonington Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Church Street

Nonington

Dover

Kent

CT15 4LB

Diocese: Canterbury

Local authority: Kent LEA

Dates of inspection: 22nd & 23rd May 2008

Date of last inspection:

School's unique reference number: 118688

Headteacher: Mrs Marilyn Thorn

Inspector's name and number: Mrs Pamela Eccles (NS number 17)

School context

Nonington Voluntary Controlled Church of England Primary School is a small school of 59 pupils serving the rural village of Nonington and surrounding villages. The majority are of white British ethnicity and the number of pupils for whom English is an additional language is low. There is high pupil mobility and the level of those with learning difficulties is above the national average, although there are no statements of educational need.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Nonington as a Church of England school are outstanding

Nonington Voluntary Controlled Church of England Primary School is a good Church school with some areas of outstanding practice which well reflect its Christian status.

Established strengths

- The outstanding acts of Collective Worship which deeply impact on pupils' spirituality
- The strong emphasis on inclusion which is integral to the school's Christian ethos
- The very strong contribution made to the school's effectiveness as a Church school by the subject managers for Collective Worship and Religious Education

Focus for development

- To make greater use of the school's external environment so that it more fully reflects its Church school status
- To ensure that the ongoing development of the school's Christian foundation becomes more explicit through inclusion within the School Improvement Plan
- To take advantage of the National Society and other Christian agencies to support the ongoing evaluation of the school as a Church school

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

This is a school where Christian values of love, tolerance and forgiveness are implicit in all areas of school life and where the school vision is prominently displayed throughout the school and in classrooms. That every child matters is fundamental to the school's philosophy contained within its Inclusion Policy, and is evidenced by total commitment to effective inclusion practice. The school uses its unique Christian character to nurture the development of SMSC within all aspects of the formal and informal curriculum. Collaborative teamwork from a mutually supportive staff further reflects total commitment to the well-being and all round development of every pupil. Learners feel valued, special and safe, and are enabled to use their strong pupil voice very effectively. This was noted during the recent Headteacher

interviews, when School Councillors met the candidates informally and were able to ask some quite searching questions. Pupils make good progress in spiritual awareness and value prayer as part of their school day, in worship, at midday and Candle Time at the end of the day. Parents of all faiths and none appreciate the school's Christian ethos and know that their views are valued and respected. Each classroom has a Reflection Area where pupils are encouraged and enabled to focus on faith and their own personal development. A strong emphasis on charitable giving permeates the school's ethos, and at the time of the inspection Christian Aid Week culminated in a non-uniform day. Further development of the external environment would enhance pupils' spiritual awareness. The addition of a Christian cross on an external wall would reinforce the school's Christian foundation.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Both the curate and the headteacher as subject manager, are deeply committed to developing pupil knowledge and understanding of the Anglican faith and enhancing spiritual growth at every opportunity. There is a strong partnership and impacts deeply upon all aspects of worship and the life of the school. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils is strongly enhanced by the daily act of worship. Pupils also worship each week in the church when the older pupils are partnered with the younger pupils for the short walk to church. In addition all major Christian festivals and important school occasions are celebrated in church. Parents are welcomed at all services and they value this immensely. A simplified version of the Anglican liturgy is used. This has been developed by the curate and the pupils and is appropriate to their needs and understanding. Pupils take an active role in church worship, which during the inspection focussed on the Eucharist. Their enjoyment of worship is obvious, whether in church or school. They sing sweetly and tunefully, and, aware that this is a special time in the life of the school, they remain well focussed and attentive. They make good use of the period of reflection. Children are encouraged to write prayers as part of the R.E. curriculum. These prayers are often written on a "leaf" and then offered to God in church. Afterwards the leaves are displayed on the Prayer Tree in the hall.

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

The school's Christian vision is explicit in all documentation. The headteacher, who leads by example, articulates this vision effectively. She is well supported by the school's governing body and the foundation governors in particular. This has resulted in positive pastoral and spiritual links between the church and the school. Staff and foundation governors have a strategic overview regarding Church school improvement which has resulted in a comprehensive school self evaluation. However information from the National Society and other Christian agencies would support the ongoing evaluation of the school as a Church school. Additionally, the school's Christian foundation should be made more explicit through inclusion within the School Improvement Plan. The effective R.E. subject manager has ensured that the syllabus has been fully implemented. Lesson plans and the evaluative comments from teachers indicate that the strong emphasis placed on learning from religion, impacts well on the development of SMSC within pupils. Their knowledge and understanding of other world faiths is reflected in pupils' awareness of individuality and the importance of self worth as citizens of the future. The school enjoys close links with village life and contributes to the Village Magazine which is edited by the curate.