

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### **Reculver Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School**

Hillborough

Herne Bay

CT6 6TA

#### **Diocese of Canterbury**

Kent LEA

Date of previous inspection: 12<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> March 2002

Inspected on 24<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup> September 2007

URN 118656

Headteacher: Mrs Gill Burgess

Inspector: Mrs Pamela Eccles (NS number 17)

#### **School context**

Reculver Voluntary Controlled Church of England Primary School is a larger than average school of 499 pupils. The school is a designated unit for visually impaired pupils and the proportion of pupils with complex needs is high. Many pupils travel considerable distances to come to school. An increasing number of children with learning or behavioural needs join the school later than their peers.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Reculver as a Church of England school are outstanding**

Reculver Voluntary Controlled Church of England Primary School is an Outstanding Church school. That every child matters is integral to policy and practice in all areas of school life.

#### **Established strengths**

- The outstanding quality of pastoral care, guidance and support afforded to all pupils within the context of the school's Christian foundation
- Worship as a vital and fundamental aspect of life within a Church School
- The very strong partnership between the school and the adjacent church which impacts deeply on the spiritual development of adults and pupils

#### **Focus for development**

- The school entrance and reception hall should display more prominent symbols denoting Church school status
- Classrooms should develop RE displays and encourage pupils to commit their written prayers to a prayer box

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

The strong Christian ethos permeates the school and Christian values are evident in relationships between adults and pupils and between children and children, especially between those pupils with a visual impairment. Pupils and staff work collaboratively and cooperatively and demonstrate mutual sympathy and support. Strong pastoral networks have been developed between staff. Parents are positive about the school; they feel valued and welcomed into school, saying that staff listen to them and are sensitive to any concerns they might have. Pupils say that they enjoy coming to school where they know they are safe, that their teachers care for them and that they are all known by name. They are proud of their Church school status because "this means we keep God with us", and enjoy learning about Christianity and other world faiths. Children were eager to share their thoughts and feelings over the recent blessing of the new school building when every room, corridor and stairway were blessed and sprinkled with holy water. The blessing was led by the incumbent and pupils undertook much of the ceremony. The social, moral, spiritual and cultural development of pupils is nourished and developed by the school's Christian character, which

is reflected in the cross-curricular approach to learning and within all dealings with pupils. There are vibrant displays throughout the school, although dedicated RE displays do not feature within classrooms. More prominent symbols within the school entrance and reception areas would enhance the Church school status. There is a very strong culture of charitable giving within the school for local, national and international charities, of which "Love in a Box" is a very strong focus.

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

Worship, attended by all staff, is of vital importance in the life of the school. Through a period of reflection, it contributes significantly to the spiritual development of both pupils and staff. Worship, distinctively Anglican in format and approach, is exceptionally well planned, monitored and evaluated by the two co-ordinators. Working collaboratively, they ensure that it meets the needs of learners of differing faiths, backgrounds and abilities. Tactile resources are provided for visually impaired pupils to ensure that worship is fully inclusive. Pupils say they enjoy praying together and learning about Jesus. Pupils show respect for each other and for other beliefs and cultures, and SMSC is enhanced at every opportunity. There are excellent links with the parish and clergy: a Bible is given by the church congregation to every Year 6 child when they leave the school. Last year this included a copy of the Koran to a Muslim pupil.

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

The headteacher articulates a positive Christian vision for the school, ensuring that all policies and practice are firmly rooted in the overriding belief that every child matters. Collective Worship and RE are integral to the School Improvement Plan, so that the school's Christian foundation is explicit within all aspects of school life. The strongly focussed Governing Body ably supports and challenges the headteacher, and the incumbent and foundation governors provide effective and supportive pastoral and spiritual links between the church and its community. The PCC receive regular reports from "their school" and the school features regularly on the church prayer list. The school and churchyard are linked by a pathway and the incumbent rings the church bell for 9.00 am Matins, encouraging parents and carers to join in the life of the church. Constructive self evaluation demonstrates the strength of this school as a highly inclusive Church school. Effective recruitment and induction procedures have been established to maintain and develop the school's Christian character.