

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

St Alphege Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Oxford Street

Whitstable

Kent

CT5 1DA

Diocese: Canterbury

Local authority: Kent

Dates of inspection: 07/08 November 2006

School's unique reference number: 118659

Headteacher: Sue Evans

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

School context

St. Alphege Voluntary Controlled Church of England Infant School is a large school of 188 pupils drawn from the town centre of Whitstable and the surrounding housing estates. The roll is falling due to the increasing number of second homes being purchased within the town, but a new purpose built nursery is due to open later in the term. The number of pupils with learning difficulties is above average, and there is a small, but increasing, number of children for whom English is a second language. Standards are significantly below average when pupils enter school in the Reception Year, but are in line with the national average by the end of Year 2.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St. Alphege as a Church of England school are good

St. Alphege Voluntary Controlled Infant School is a good church school with some areas of outstanding practice which well reflect its Christian status. The Christian values of care, love, forgiveness and respect for all are exemplified in the Mission Statement and underpin attitudes and relationships throughout the school.

Overall Grade 2 GOOD

Established strengths

- The high level of pastoral support given to pupils and parents
- The high degree of inclusivity so that all children know themselves to be loved and valued as individuals
- The quality of display around the school which promotes the spiritual and moral development of all pupils
- The impact of Collective Worship as a shared experience which contributes to pupils' self-esteem and the development of their spiritual and moral awareness.

Focus for development

- To further develop the relationship between the school and the Whitstable Team Ministry
- To ensure all stakeholders are involved in School Self-Evaluation
- To further develop the spirituality of a church school by the introduction of a school prayer.

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

Grade 1 Outstanding

The school's Mission Statement is fully reflected in action, characterised by the strong relationships between all members of the school community based on Christian care, concern for others and forgiveness. Because of the culture of praise and reward throughout the school all children know themselves to be special and valued and that "tomorrow is another day". Parents speak highly of the school and are grateful for the high level of pastoral

support offered to children and their families. The R.E. curriculum, based on the Kent Agreed Syllabus, makes excellent provision for the spiritual and moral development of pupils. The school is warmly welcoming, clean and tidy and the vibrant displays such as the recent work on Harvest Festival contribute well to the school's ethos. There is a very strong emphasis on charity work, such as the financial support for the young child in Africa and service to the community.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Grade 2 Good

Collective Worship plays an important part in the daily life of the school and is attended by all members of staff who act as positive role models to pupils. It has a strong Christian focus, and the regular services held in the church are valued by both pupils and parents. Older pupils undertake areas of responsibility during worship which impacts strongly on the community ethos and raises individual levels of self-esteem. Pupils enter quietly to music and a lighted candle signifies worship has begun and enables participants to focus clearly on the theme for the week. Children participate fully and sing with obvious enjoyment. A period of prayer and reflection contributes well to pupils' developing morality and spirituality. This could be further enhanced by the introduction of a specific school prayer. Worship is very well planned and resourced by the subject leader, and the high degree of inclusivity ensures that pupils are sensitive to the beliefs and traditions of other faiths.

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

Grade 2 Good

The quality of leadership by the headteacher and subject manager for Collective Worship and R.E. contributes significantly to the success of the school as a church school. Its Christian purpose is clearly expressed in its Mission Statement, and each classroom displays a simplified version developed by the pupils. There is an effective partnership between the headteacher and the chairman of governors. Monitoring and evaluation systems are well developed by the governing body and subject leaders, and the R.E. subject leader in turn monitors the delivery of worship by the headteacher. The school's self-evaluation has been undertaken principally by the headteacher and subject leader for R.E. and Collective Worship and provides an accurate assessment of school development. There is now a need to involve governors and other stakeholders in this process. The school council, represented by pupils from each class, take their responsibilities seriously and make a positive contribution to the life of the school. The Whitstable Team Ministry is currently undergoing a period of significant change. It is envisaged that this will bring increased opportunities for the clergy to contribute to the life of the school.