

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### **St. George's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School**

Old London Road,  
Wrotham,  
Kent  
TN15 7DL

**Diocese: Rochester**

Local authority: Kent

Dates of inspection: 28<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup> April 2008

School's unique reference number: 118635

Headteacher: Mr. David Jones

Inspector's name and number: Ms Jan Thompson (NS 92)

#### **School context**

St. George's Church of England Primary School is a Voluntary Controlled school in the Kent village of Wrotham, near Sevenoaks. In 1974, it moved from its original Victorian school building in the centre of the village to a modern building on a much more spacious site. Its 141 pupils are mostly White British, drawn mainly from the local community, which includes a large housing estate. About 8 per cent are from worshipping Church families. The school's caring ethos attracts a higher than average number of pupils with special educational needs. Ofsted judged the school to be outstanding, where pupils achieve exceptionally well to reach above average standards by the time they leave Year 6.

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

St. George's Church of England Primary School in Wrotham is an outstanding Church school, with the capacity to improve even further.

#### **Established strengths**

- The very effective and caring Christian ethos of the school.
- The enthusiastic teamwork of staff and governors, under the leadership of the headteacher, which supports the church aspects of this school.
- The excellent links with St. George's Church, particularly through the Rector's involvement with the school.

#### **Focus for development**

- The school's aims and mission statement should reflect the Church of England distinctiveness of the school.

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

Pupils make remarkable progress in this school because they feel secure and very well cared for. The staff 'go the extra mile' in terms of their hard work, good organisation and commitment to the pupils. All this is inspired by the school's Christian values of equality and the worth of each individual as a child of God. People treat each other with respect, resulting in good pupil behaviour and a happy, stable staff. Religious Education (RE) and Collective Worship make very good contributions to pupils' spiritual and moral development. RE relates the religious material well to pupils' own lives, such as when studying religious rules or inspirational people. Pupils are encouraged to think for themselves about beliefs; and some good RE displays around the school pose questions for pupils to think about. Pupils support charities enthusiastically and can understand that this is appropriate in a Church school "because Jesus used to help people and we want to be like him." Over £700 was raised by one class for Sport Relief as a result of an RE lesson on charity. The school building has

many lively displays, and among them are reminders of the school's Church status, dedicated to St. George. In every classroom there is a cross and a prayer-book written by the pupils and used in prayers at the end of the day.

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

Worship is important in the life of the school and includes prayers throughout the day. The scheme for daily Collective Worship is well planned by the Rector, following the Church's calendar and making good use of Bible stories. It is monitored and evaluated by a governors' worship sub-committee that draws on pupils' comments and reports to the whole governing body. In this way, improvements to worship are fed into the school improvement plan. The current focus is on the use of Powerpoint presentations and more pupil involvement. The quality of worship is good. Pupils behave well, respond well to questioning and particularly like the stories and Christian teaching. They have a good understanding of the purpose of worship and value the opportunity it gives them to pray to God and deepen their Christian beliefs. One pupil said 'We connect with God.' Pupils gain a good experience of Anglican worship through the use of a candle, the Lord's Prayer, set responses and the priest's blessing when she leads worship every Monday. This is reinforced by the monthly opportunity to go to the church for their Collective Worship, which pupils enjoy. They have not yet experienced the Eucharist, but they know about it from RE and Easter worship.

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

The teamwork in this school is exceptional. The headteacher and Rector are fully supported by the staff and governing body in strengthening the Christian aspects of the school. The church status is promoted in the school building and is also made clear to parents in the school brochure. However, the aims and mission statement are not yet distinctive of a Church school and do not clearly reflect the Christian motivation that underpins all that the school stands for. The school's self-evaluation of its Christian aspects is very thorough and involves pupils and parents. Improvements have taken place as a result of this process, such as a greater use of the church for school worship. Current areas for development are to improve the quality of Collective Worship. Parents may not choose the school for its Church status, but they appreciate the clear Christian teaching and the links with the church. The whole village community benefits from the very close links between church and school. An example of this is the monthly Monday morning school services held in the church, attended by some parents, governors and church members. The Rector was recently appointed chair of governors and has a very close working relationship with the school, summed up in this way in the school's self-evaluation document: "The local church is seen by all as an extension of the school building, and the parish priest as part of the school staff." The headteacher gives excellent support to Religious Education, which is very effectively led, resulting in very good teaching and learning. The school also makes good use of Diocesan advice.

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