

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### **The Pilgrim Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School**

Warwick Crescent,  
Borstal,  
Rochester,  
Kent  
ME1 3LF

**Diocese: Rochester**

Local authority: Kent

Dates of inspection: 11-12 January 2007

School's unique reference number: 118722

Headteacher: Justin Smith

Inspector's name and number: Ms Jan Thompson 92

#### **School context**

The Pilgrim Church of England Primary School is a new Voluntary Controlled school that opened in September 2005 after the closure of St. Matthew's Church of England (VC) Infant School and Borstal Manor, a community junior school. It is currently in the old Borstal Manor building, awaiting a new building on the same site. It has a Nursery attached. The school prides itself on serving the local community of Borstal; and the number of pupils is rising, standing at 165 at the time of the inspection. Less than 5% are from church families, but this figure too is rising as the school and church work together. Although most pupils enter the school with standards below or even well below average, they make good progress throughout school and attain broadly average standards in Year 6. Ofsted judged it to be a good school.

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

The Pilgrim Voluntary Controlled Church of England Primary School is, overall, a good Church school. It has made a good start as a Church school, in some difficult circumstances.

#### **Established strengths**

- The caring Christian ethos in which every individual matters.
- The very good contribution of Religious Education and Collective Worship to pupils' spiritual and moral development.
- The Christian commitment and very good leadership of the head teacher, supported by St. Matthew's Church.

#### **Focus for development**

- The Governing Body as a whole, and the Foundation Governors in particular, must take responsibility for the Christian aspects of the school and become involved in its self-evaluation.
- Develop pupils' experience and understanding of Anglican liturgical practices.

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

Tremendous care is taken of each individual and concern shown for their happiness and well being. Consequently, pupils enjoy school and achieve well. It is to the school's credit, as a Church school, that it places an emphasis on "endeavour as well as achievement." The excellent spiritual and moral development in Collective Worship and Religious Education supports the Christian values throughout the whole life of the school. Teachers and pupils speak openly about their faith and the value of prayer, and pupils like using the Bible and learning about Jesus. Pupils understand that supporting charities is important in a Church school because of the Bible teaching "Treat others as you wish to be treated." The head teacher is an excellent role model for relationships in school, which are very good at all

levels. Pupils work together very well and are considerate of each other. When asked about Christian behaviour around the school, their answers included being “friendly to people who are different”, kindness, helpfulness and politeness. Prominent symbols in the common areas of the school remind people of its Church status and there is a focus on worship/RE in every classroom that supports pupils’ spiritual development.

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

Daily Collective Worship occupies an important place in the life of the school, with the headteacher as co-ordinator and all pupils and teachers attending. Worship at other times of the day, however, is only done in some classes instead of being whole-school policy. Consistent planning is now established for daily Collective Worship, based on Christian values, with an emphasis on Biblical teaching. The Celebration at the end of each week is very clearly an act of worship and reinforces the Christian values of the school. Pupils behave very well during worship and sing well, so that there is an atmosphere of spiritual depth. They particularly enjoy Christian visitors, such as Family Trust and the representative from the parish church of St. Matthew’s. Pupils have a good understanding of the purpose of worship as being “To thank God for what he’s done for us” and “To learn things about Jesus.” Use of the Lord’s Prayer and links with the parish church, where the school celebrates the main Christian festivals, have begun to develop pupils’ understanding of Anglican faith and practice.

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

The head teacher is a committed and effective Christian leader who, through team-work with his staff, has established strong Christian values as the basis of this new school. He gives good support to Religious Education in the curriculum, treating it in many ways as a core subject. He has promoted good links between the school and St. Matthew’s Church, with the support of the three Foundation Governors, who attend this church. However, the Governing Body as a whole has not shouldered its responsibility for the Church aspects of the school and has had little to do with giving this direction or monitoring and evaluating it. Links with the parish are developing, even though it has been without a vicar since the school began. There are also good links with other local churches and the cathedral (which can be seen from the school). Parents are very pleased with the new school and like the fact that it is a Church school. They give very good support to the school services that are held in the church.

SIAS report January 2007 The Pilgrim CE VC Primary School Warwick Crescent, Borstal, Rochester, Kent