

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Charlton Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Barton Road
Dover,
Kent
CT16 2LX

Diocese: Canterbury

Local authority: Kent

Dates of inspection: Friday 6th May 2011

Date of last inspection: 12th, 14th and 18th December 2007

School's unique reference number: 118747

Headteacher: Mrs Carole Barrett

Inspector's name and number: Mrs Elizabeth Pettersen 557

School context

Charlton is a one form entry primary school serving the Buckland, St Radigund's and Tower Hamlets wards of Dover. The school is regularly oversubscribed. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The school has above the national average of pupils with special educational needs and / or disabilities. The number taking free school meals is lower than the national average as is the number from minority ethnic groups. The recent OFSTED report found that the overall effectiveness of the school was good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development was judged to be good.

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

Charlton Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School is an outstanding Church school

Established strengths

- The strong sense of family and care for all members of the school community which are embedded in the school's Christian ethos.
- The leadership of the Headteacher who demonstrates Christian values in her daily practice, in particular that of servanthood.
- The involvement of clergy in acts of worship and meeting the pastoral needs of all stakeholders.
- Opportunities for pupils to reflect on their faith in both acts of worship and Religious Education (RE).

Focus for development

- Involve all stakeholders in the self evaluation process, in particular members of the governing body.
- Ensure that key policies such as Behaviour make explicit reference to the specific Christian values that are a central part of the daily life of the school.
- Adopt a more rigorous and regular approach to monitoring individual acts of worship.
- In RE develop a consistent approach to marking throughout both Key Stages to provide pupils with feedback for future progress.

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

Charlton has a strong Christian ethos where Christian values of love and forgiveness permeate every aspect of daily life. Care for the individual is central to all relationships. As a result the Headteacher operates an open door policy for parents. Parents praise the strong sense of being part of a big family. They also comment on the care for each child and that each child matters. The pupils confirmed that they felt supported by all in the community,

and knew that adults would always take time to discuss their concerns. As a result they feel very safe in school. Pupils spoke warmly of their friendships as being one of the best parts of the school. Their care is reflected in the way they take on roles of responsibility such as Play Leaders. The impact of this is that the pupils are happy to raise funds for a wide range of charities including Love in a Box, Red Nose Day and Starlight. The pupils report that this “makes you feel like you’re loving someone.” They are thus prepared well for responsible citizenship. Display throughout the school reflects the Christian ethos. For example in the hall there are large collage displays of Bible stories plus a specific worship display on the theme of the week. Added to these clear Christian symbols, such as the cross, are visible. In every class a 3D display focuses on the value of each individual. In this way an inclusive approach is developed. Pupils’ spiritual and moral development is promoted well through worship and RE, for instance through giving them good opportunities to reflect on their faith. Further support for spiritual growth is provided by the Little Acorns, a Christian club. The clear Christian values seen in the school need to be mentioned more specifically in key school policies.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Pupils spoke with enthusiasm about the acts of worship in their different forms. They considered that the services held in church for key festivals clearly marked their school as a Church school. Prayers are a central part of the day, being said in class at the beginning and end of the day and at lunchtime. Prayer Books with prayers written by the pupils are seen in many classrooms. The pupils’ central role in acts of worship was demonstrated in the use of a special team of Worship Leaders. Their specific role is to provide feedback on school worship and to light the candle prior to times of reflection. Parents commented that their children particularly enjoyed the acting out of Bible stories in acts of worship. During the inspection pupils were fully involved in the act of worship in many ways. Pupils led actions to two hymns. All pupils were absorbed when a brief case with a security code was unlocked and something special was found inside. The theme for the act of worship was reflected in a hall display. This helped to reinforce the message that each child is unique and special to God. The Incumbent and other parish clergy make a strong contribution to school life. The use of liturgy and celebration of the Eucharist strengthen the school’s Anglican identity. Themes for worship are planned by the Headteacher who adapts the plans from the Diocese to meet the needs of the pupils. Evaluation of the worship takes place at the end of each term. A more careful regular review of worship involving different stakeholders will enhance the review process.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

RE is well led and managed by the subject co-ordinator. She is enthusiastic in her role and has a clear idea of the development areas for this subject. During staff INSET she has highlighted the need to mark work reflectively which was seen in some books. The area for development from the last inspection focusing on creating more opportunities to develop extended writing in RE, particularly in relation to AT2, has been met. In some classes, however, there is an over reliance on worksheets which is stifling creativity. The school is beginning to take a more creative approach to the teaching of RE. For example there was photographic evidence of drama work and in the Year 5 class there were some clay models of the crucifixion. This has enriched their learning experience. Whatever their faith background, pupils recognise the importance of studying a range of religions. Pupils make good progress in both attainment targets and standards are generally in line with those laid down in the current agreed syllabus. Pupils are involved in assessing their attainment using “I can” statements and are aware of the next steps for progress through these statements. It would help the pupils if marking provided formative comment on how to improve future work. Pupils are encouraged to be reflective in class. This was demonstrated very clearly in a Year 6 class where pupils were asked to reflect on their own uniqueness and that of God. For example one pupil wrote, “If God was a colour He would be white as white is everywhere, just like God”.

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

The Headteacher is totally committed to caring for the school and promoting the Christian ethos, which is rooted in values of loving kindness and forgiveness. She embraces this in her own personal practice demonstrating a servant style of leadership. This earns her the respect of all members of the community. Governors embrace the Christian ethos of the school, working closely with the staff to promote the school's Christian character. One Governor organises the Little Acorns Club. The Incumbent plays a key role in the spiritual development of staff, pupils and parents. His regular presence in school is valued by parents. There are also links with other Christian denominations in the local area which enrich the daily life of the school. The Headteacher has led the self evaluation process, and now needs to involve governors with this. Committed leadership of RE has ensured that recommendations in the last inspection have been followed through. The school makes very good use of Diocesan training for both staff and governors, helping them to develop and extend the skills needed in leading a Church school. Relationships with parents are very good due to the nurture provided by all leaders in the school. The school benefits from good links with other schools in the area which is enriching the leadership of the school as well as pupil learning. Added to this, Charlton is a central part of the community, singing at Age Concern for example. This contributes well to community cohesion locally. There are links with a school in Birmingham, but other national and international links are to be developed.

SIAS report May 2011 Charlton Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School Barton Road, Dover, Kent CT16 2LX