

**Diocese of Canterbury**



**STATUTORY INSPECTION OF ANGLICAN SCHOOLS**

**Reculver Church of England Primary School  
Hillborough  
Herne Bay  
Kent  
CT6 6TA**

Diocese: Canterbury  
Local Authority: Kent  
Date of inspection: 6 September 2010  
Date of last inspection: 24/25 September 2007  
School's Unique Reference Number: 118656  
Headteacher: Gill Burgess  
Chairman of Governors: Tim Richardson-Perk  
Inspector's name and number: Tricia Martin, NS 105

## **SCHOOL CONTEXT**

Reculver Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School is a large school situated close to the town of Herne Bay. The vast majority of pupils come from white British background. The proportion of pupils with additional educational needs is above average. A high proportion of children have statements of educational needs, which is largely due to the school's specialist provision for pupils with visual impairment. The substantive headteacher has just returned to the school from a two-year secondment. The school has faced significant staff changes and staffing difficulties in recent years.

## **SUMMARY JUDGEMENT**

Reculver Church of England Primary School is a satisfactory Church school **GRADE 3 - SATISFACTORY**

## **ESTABLISHED STRENGTHS**

- Care for the children, particularly those with additional educational needs
- Strong, well informed collective worship and Religious Education subject leaders
- Good, established links with the local church
- Extensive range of extra-curricular activities provided for the children

## **FOCUS FOR DEVELOPMENT**

- Establish joint staff and governor training on the distinctiveness of Church schools
- Revise and update the collective worship (CW) policy and include monitoring, recording and evaluation of CW. Put in place teacher INSET for leading CW
- Develop the role of the Religious Education (RE) leader to include, training, assessment, data collection, analysis and monitoring of pupil progress
- Include all areas which fall into the remit of Church School Distinctiveness in the School Development Plan

## **How well does the school, through its distinctive Christian character, meet the needs of all learners? GRADE 4 - INADEQUATE**

Although the school has many good attributes, including the care it provides for its pupils, it also has significant weaknesses with regard to its distinctive Christian character. It is acknowledged that both the timing of the inspection (which is outside the control of the school), and the building improvement programme (which was due to have been completed), have impacted upon the findings of the inspection. This is for two reasons. Firstly, there is very little evidence available as a result of boxing documentation for removal during construction. Secondly, the timing at the start of a new school year means that pupils have very little work to show at this time. Christian values appear to be implicit in the school, for example in the Golden Rules which talk about kindness, trust and friendship but their interpretation is unclear. Positive relationships between all members of the school community are apparent. In one class for example, the care of a pupil with additional educational needs by the other pupils was thoughtful and mature. This is because staff provide good role models. Pupils feel safe as a consequence of procedures which have been developed in school. They particularly enjoy the weekly 'Celebration' assemblies which contribute to their self esteem. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility in the form of School Council

Member or Peer Mediator for example. They enjoy a wide range of extra-curricular activities. However, these features can be found in any school and cannot be assumed to be motivated by the love of Christ. It is because the school has not yet engaged with identifying and exploring the meaning of specifically *Christian* values that there is little evidence of their impact upon members of the school community. There is no common understanding of which Christian values are being promoted and how they are modelled and lived out. There are no apparent strategies in place to develop the *Christian* character of the school. The school has designed and built a delightful sensory garden to engage pupils. This makes a contribution to the spiritual development of pupils but lacks Christian focus. However, the school has the willingness to address these matters and the potential to become at least a good Church school.

**What is the impact of collective worship on the school community? GRADE 3 – SATISFACTORY**

The school has in place a strong collective worship leader who is well-informed and organized and provides support for staff leading worship. Worship takes place daily (as required of all schools) despite the disruption of the building work. The worship observed during the inspection was well-planned. Children were largely engaged with it because of thoughtful preparation. Opportunities were created for spiritual development through prayer and reflection. Children speak of their enjoyment of worship when it is led by visitors because it is 'different', 'fun' and 'creative'. The involvement of visitors develops their understanding of different types of worship. However, their experience of regular worship was not described as positively. Pupils are very clear as to what engages them and what loses their interest, but they have not had the opportunity to have their voice heard. Weekly and daily plans are kept by the worship leader but are adapted by members of staff. There is no record of what actually happens and how or if the material supplied is used. There is little monitoring of worship and no evaluation. There is no evidence of active pupil participation in planning and leading worship and therefore little progress is made in engaging pupils and using their talents to enhance worship. The policy for worship is significantly out-of-date and does not reflect current practice. Staff have received no recent training in leading worship. On the occasions when worship is followed up in class it has a greater impact. Pupils' understanding of the Anglican tradition and practice is enhanced by regular visits by clergy who provide good support for worship. However, the school has the capacity and willingness to make improvements and raise pupil engagement.

**How effective are the leadership and management of the school as a Church school? GRADE 4 - INADEQUATE**

The judgement of 'Inadequate' is specific to the leadership and management of Church school distinctiveness. The reason for the judgement of 'Inadequate' is because the school has not understood the rigours of Church school self-evaluation. Training offered has not been taken up. However, the school has been through a difficult period with staff and governor changes. The Headteacher has been on a two-year secondment. The Acting Headteacher has been under a good deal of pressure from outside agencies such as the Local Authority and Ofsted to focus on particular agendas. Consequently the focus of the school on its Christian character has not been treated as a priority. This can be seen in the way in which the Church school self-evaluation was undertaken without the involvement of other stakeholders. Areas for development from the last inspection have been partially addressed. Work on the entrance is being undertaken and a Christian focus planned. There was little evidence of RE displays and although it is very early in the school year, displays for other subject areas are in evidence. Leaders and

governors have not monitored collective worship or RE adequately or effectively. However, they have ensured that strong appointments have been made to the key positions of collective worship and RE leaders. The new RE leader is very enthusiastic and it is planned that she will be supported with relevant training. There is no evidence of succession planning for future Church school leadership. Collective Worship, Religious Education and Church school self evaluation do not appear in the School Development Plan. The supportive relationship between the school and the church has been maintained but not developed. There is a willingness on both sides to develop the relationship further and work is underway with the foundation governors to do this. It is because of this and the fact that the school has put in place strong, capable leaders for collective worship and Religious Education and that collective worship is 'satisfactory' that the overall grade for this inspection is 'Satisfactory'.

SIAS report September 2010 Reculver VC Primary School, Herne Bay CT6 6TA