



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Deal Parochial VA Church of England Primary School

Gladstone Road, Walmer

Deal

CT14 7ER

Previous SIAMS grade: Outstanding

Current inspection grade: Outstanding

Diocese: Canterbury

Local authority: Kent

Dates of inspection: 3 March 2016

Date of last inspection: 16 April 2011

School's unique reference number: 118746

Headteacher: Justine Brown

Inspector's name and number: Canon Linda Burton NS462

School context

Deal Parochial is a one form entry school of 210 pupils. It serves three parishes within the town on Deal. The majority of pupils are of white British heritage. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils has risen since the last inspection and is currently 24%. Compared to the national average, a high proportion of pupils (14%) are on the register of special needs. Progress of pupils is good, and the gap between the progress of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils is closing. The headteacher was new in post in September 2014.

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

- Christian values are the heart of school life and shape, support and sustain achievement at every level
- Strong, insightful and effective leadership enables all pupils to be the best that they can be
- In religious education (RE), strong leadership, excellent teaching and a broad range of creative activities enable all pupils to achieve well
- The passionate commitment of governors towards the school's distinctively Christian vision impacts positively on their decision-making and plans for the future
- Collective worship is engaging and inspirational, offering opportunities for pupils to participate and reflect on the Christian messages they encounter.

Areas to improve

- Complete the process of embedding the school's redefined specific Christian values in all aspects of the school's daily life
- Embed more fully into the collective worship programme the creative work undertaken in the school's 'Lighting the Candle' programme of activities.

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

Parochial has a clear and well-established Christian ethos which forms the bedrock of its decision-making and priorities for the future. Its Christian values of forgiveness, courage, trust, friendship and respect are lived out here through its everyday actions. Relationships within the school reflect the love of Jesus. Every member of the community is equally valued. As a result pupils feel happy and safe in the school and behaviour across the school is excellent. Loving concern and effective support are very apparent in the school and these enable all pupils to be the best that they can be. Parents (some of whom live out of catchment and deliberately send their children to Parochial) confirmed this, saying ‘the school has a real family and community feeling. Overall, pupil progress is good and attendance rates are good. Motivated by the ideal of ‘working for Jesus all of the time’, the school provides unstinting support to a number of disadvantaged pupils who have experienced a wide range of challenges. This enables them to flourish and to make the most of the many learning opportunities presented to them. As a result the school is increasingly successful in narrowing the achievement gap for disadvantaged pupils. The school curriculum strongly promotes spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. On inspection day Key Stage 1 and 2 pupils were inspired by the activities led by a group of nine visiting scientists in the school. The rich extra-curricular programme enables pupils to feel valued and experience success in diverse areas of school life. Exceptional music provision gives pupils a wealth of opportunities. A good example of this was the Year 6 musical, ‘Street Child’, based on the life of Thomas Barnardo and written by the school’s music teacher. All pupils were involved in the whole school community’s recent review and redefinition of its Christian identity. The impact of these redefined Christian values is, at present, limited, because they are not yet completely embedded in all aspects of the school’s daily life. Opportunities for prayer are offered in worship, at lunchtime, at the end of the day and in class reflection areas. Such opportunities provide further support for the pupils’ spiritual and moral development.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

The daily act of collective worship is at the heart of the school’s ethos. Through whole school participation, the Christian faith is brought to life and cohesive links are provided between the school’s values, biblical teaching and pupils’ behaviour and attitudes. Feedback from pupils, staff, governors and parents is very positive about this area of school life and the impact it has on their own lives. Developmental work has been undertaken since the last inspection and the headteacher has significantly increased collaborative work among the three parishes and the school which serves them all. Members of their clergy regularly lead collective worship in school. In the course of the school year services to mark significant Christian festivals are held in each of the three churches. These are very well attended by parents. Collaborative work has been undertaken in the school by all three clergy to develop pupils’ understanding of central Christian beliefs and practices. As a result of this, pupils experience the richness and breadth of Anglican practice and traditions, and are given opportunities to appreciate the impact faith can have on life. Collective worship is planned in accordance with the diocesan framework. It always includes biblical material and Christian teaching. It follows a four-fold structure and reflects Anglican liturgical practice. In the outstanding act of worship during the inspection pupils explored the ‘awesome’, in their own lives, in the Genesis creation stories and in the universe. They learned about scientific achievements and celebrated the work of God ‘Our Supreme Scientist’. Pupils actively participated in reading, singing, conversation, reflection, answering questions and saying prayers. Two extra-curricular groups enhance pupil involvement in collective worship. The longstanding Lighthouse group explores Bible stories in an active way. More recently, a ‘Lighting the Candle’ group has been formed; this group has begun to lead worship. Both groups are for upper key stage 2 pupils and are very well attended. A clear system of monitoring and evaluation of collective worship has been developed which involves governors and other members of the school community in addition to local headteachers. There is evidence that this has led to further

development of collective worship.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

Religious education is a core subject in the school and it has a high profile. Pupils show a highly positive perception and enjoyment of RE; parental feedback indicates much satisfaction with curriculum content and progress. The RE curriculum is rich and varied, enabling pupils to acquire a thorough knowledge and understanding of Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith, in addition to helping develop their appreciation of other world faiths. RE makes a major contribution to the Christian ethos of the school. Standards of progress and attainment in RE are comparable with other core subjects. The RE leader is passionate about her subject and is effective in her role, enthusing her colleagues. Imaginative and varied teaching and learning strategies are embedded in this curriculum area including dedicated RE days, visits and visitors. As a result of their autumn term visit to the synagogue, Key Stage 2 pupils' knowledge and understanding of Jewish worship was enhanced and considerable impact was made on their appreciation of Judaism. Pupils have a secure level of knowledge and understanding of Christianity as a world faith and are able to make links between it and other world faiths. Pupils are confident in discussing beliefs and values and the impact they can have on lives. They enjoy RE and are able to respond positively and thoughtfully to its challenging issues and questions. Through this, RE makes an important contribution to pupils' spiritual development. The school and Deal 'Hub' headteachers judge the majority of teaching to be outstanding and never less than consistently good. The two lessons observed during this inspection verified this judgement. Teaching is confident and secure, while learning allows pupils to think for themselves and to be creative. Substantial curriculum development has occurred since the last inspection, reflecting the new materials for RE produced by Canterbury Diocese. Formal assessment procedures are in place with regular monitoring from the RE leader and input from governors. These processes have led directly, via a well-focussed action plan, to improvements in assessment practices in RE, as evidenced by the pupils' work and teachers' marking seen in exercise books. Prayer stations, organised by the RE leader and linked to seasons in the Church's year, enable pupils to engage with important aspects of the Christian faith.

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

The headteacher articulates a keen understanding of faith in practice. Her strong and visionary Christian leadership is well supported by all members of her leadership team. This ensures that the school's Christian character has an impact on the achievement and well-being of everyone within the school community. All issues for development from the previous inspection have been successfully addressed. Governors have a range of complementary skills and are an essential part of the leadership team. A range of evidence confirms their ability to support and challenge, their skills in strategic planning and in evaluation of school effectiveness. It also confirms their tenacity in ensuring that decisions will only be taken if the outcomes are in accordance with the Christian ethos of the school and will make a positive difference to the lives of pupils. The headteacher and two governors have participated in a research project organised by the diocese and a local university about how Christian values are embedded in schools. This has strengthened the school community's review and redefinition of its Christian values. The RE leader is involved in work with the Diocese, leads the RE co-ordinators group in the local church primary school group and Christian ethos development working parties. Statutory requirements for RE and worship are met. Effective and mutually supportive partnerships with other local church primary schools are well established. There is a wealth of parental involvement in the life of the school across a wide span of areas of school life. There is also much involvement by the wider community in the life of the school, including two major projects in the current school year.

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