



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Hawkhurst Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Fowlers Park
Rye Road
Hawkhurst
Cranbrook
Kent TN18 4JJ

Previous SIAS grade: Good

Current inspection grade: Good

Diocese: Canterbury

Local authority: Kent

Dates of inspection: 13 July 2016

Date of last inspection: 22 June 2011

School's unique reference number: 118602

Headteacher: Mrs Elizabeth Hatcher

Inspector's name and number: Mrs Elizabeth Pettersen 557

School context

Hawkhurst School is a one form entry primary school with a roll of 194 pupils. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils receiving a free school meal is average. The numbers of pupils who are special needs is average. Attainment for pupils is at the national expected level.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Hawkhurst Primary School as a Church of England school are good

- The Christian values of forgiveness, friendship, fellowship, endurance and reverence impact on the care of all members of the school community.
- The leadership of the head teacher, supported by the governing body, sustains a nurturing church school ethos where there is a focus on progress and well-being for all.
- Prayer is central to the school day with pupils understanding how prayer meets their personal needs and symbolises their daily walk with God.

Areas to improve

- Involve pupils in the evaluation of the impact of worship.
- Differentiate activities and tasks in religious education (RE) to meet the needs of all learners.
- Strengthen the partnership with other local church schools to support the development of church school distinctiveness.

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

Christian values of forgiveness, friendship, fellowship, reverence and endurance underpin all activities within Hawkhurst School. Pupils are loved and cared for unconditionally by all adults ensuring that pupils feel safe and secure within their environment. All abilities are nurtured in both their emotional and academic well-being so that they make expected progress in the majority of areas. The work of the Family Liaison Officer with many families has increased confidence in the schools care of pupils. The impact of this is that attendance is good. One parent stated that the school had gone “beyond the call of duty for my family”. Pupils consider that friendship is one of the strengths of their school. They say that the teaching of values through the example of Jesus and different Bible stories helps them learn how to be kind to everyone. Peer mediators on the playground assist pupils in resolving any friendship issues. Pupils know that forgiveness is an important part of being a good friend. Christian values are developed through the teaching of RE. For example the story of the Prodigal Son was used to illustrate the importance of forgiving and forgetting. Pupils’ reverence for others was demonstrated in their regular fund raising for national and international causes. They have recently raised funds for Children in Need , Barnados, NSPCC and for Tear Fund for example. The school led local Women’s World Day of Prayer celebrations in 2016 highlighting the needs of children in Cuba. A Barnabas Day on the theme of “Where in the World?” further highlighted the global nature of Christianity. The school has thus met the key issue from the last inspection to extend pupils understanding of wider global society.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

All pupils consider that collective worship is a special time of day when they gather together as a community. Pupils like to hear the Bible stories but are not able to discuss on a consistent basis the implications of the stories for their personal life. Pupils are involved in setting up the worship, managing the music and reading prayers. They enjoy times when they act out a story or help with artefacts to illustrate a point. All pupils sing with enthusiasm which enriches the worship. Thus the key issue from the last inspection to involve pupils in worship has been met. A candle and a cross, as well as greetings and words to close the worship, clearly demonstrate Anglican links. Key Christian festivals are celebrated in school or in the local church. The school uses the diocesan themes for worship. These have been adapted by the vicar and members of the leadership team to make them relevant to the needs of the school. Some pupils find it peaceful to have the worship at the conclusion of the day. It was seen during the inspection that this did not allow time for the pupils to develop the themes and ideas beyond the worship within the class and wider school environment. This limits the impact of the worship. Worship is regularly monitored by other members of staff and a governor. There are few opportunities for pupils to be involved in evaluating the worship. Pupils show a good understanding of the Trinity, being able to compare it to the parts of everyday objects such as an egg. All pupils were familiar with the saying that “God is above us. Jesus is by our side. The Holy Spirit is within us.” The school environment, both inside and outside, provides areas for reflection and prayer. A Secret Garden provides an area of calm and tranquillity for personal reflection in the day. Each classroom has a prayer corner and pupils regularly visit these to add their own prayers to a prayer book. Within the prayer corners pupils are encouraged to pray for the world and others. In this way opportunities to be nurtured spiritually are integral to pupil development. During worship there are times for stillness which meets a requirement from the last inspection. Pupils show an ability to pray spontaneously in front of the class and whole school. The vicar is a regular visitor to the school leading worship as well as offering pastoral support to all in the school community. He has prepared pupils for their first communion and also holds regular “Bread of Fellowship” services for older pupils. These build on a sense of reverence and fellowship within the school.

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

The headteacher models in her daily conduct the Christian values that the school embraces. One governor stated that she, “Releases the gifts of her teachers” both in their personal and professional lives. The self-evaluation process has been very thorough involving governors

and school staff so that the school knows its strengths and weaknesses. The school is a central part of the life of the local church. Members of the school community are participants in the planning of the family service in church each month. Pupils greet the congregation, read prayers and display their art work during the service. In this way many families join the monthly service. The work of the school is featured each month in the parish magazine. This impacts on the involvement of local community members in the school. Some hear children read and others run a choir. The school is currently working with a group of church schools. This has supported the monitoring of different areas of the curriculum and the development of the senior leadership team, but not the development of RE or church distinctiveness. Pupils say that they enjoy RE and in particular the opportunities that they are given to use drama and role play. They have been enthused by the teaching on different religions which has helped them gain a better understanding of our diverse world. RE book scrutiny has not been carried out on a regular basis. A recent book scrutiny has shown that there is a lack of differentiation of activities and thus the opportunities for the more able are limited. There is tracking of pupil progress in place for RE and marking often shows developmental comments for further improvement. School leaders are aware that the RE leader has not attended diocesan training. Pupils have been encouraged to think more deeply in conversations with the vicar. For example they have asked, "How was the world made" and "How do we know that God is real?" At present pupils do not use philosophical questions to nurture their understanding of different faiths.

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