

St George's Church of England Primary School, Great Bromley

Brook Street
Colchester
Essex
CO7 7HX

Diocese: Chelmsford

LEA: Essex
Date of inspection: 10th January 2012
Date of last inspection: 20th March 2009
School's Unique reference number: 115085

Name of Headteacher: Julie O'Mara

Inspector's name with National Society Inspector's number: Mrs Rosemary Morgan (64

School Context

St George's Church of England Primary School serves the local areas of Great and Little Bromley and other villages within the Tendring area. All pupils are of White British heritage. There is a below average proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals and a below average number of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils are taught in four mixed-age classes. The school has close links with the nearby church of St George's, Great Bromley.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St George's as a Church of England Primary School are good.

St George's is a good church school. Christian values underpin the school's work and stakeholders feel their views are listened to and their contributions recognised and valued. Led by a headteacher who has a secure understanding of its strengths and areas for development, the school is committed to a culture of continuous improvement.

Established Strengths

- Visionary leadership from the headteacher who is focused on the school's development and on further cultivating the special qualities of this church school.
- Learners show a real respect for one another and a shared concern for those in need.
- Christian values underpin the school's work and pupils feel safe, happy and supported.
- School and church are working together in a growing partnership which is nurturing the school's distinctiveness.

Focus for Development

- To continue to develop the use of self-evaluation as a tool to monitor and evaluate the impact of the school's distinctive character in all aspects of school life.
- To promote the spiritual development of learners by implementing plans to create areas and experiences within the school environment where pupils can reflect, wonder and contemplate.
- To provide opportunities for pupils to refine their citizenship skills through independent learning, decision making and higher levels of personal responsibility.

The School through its distinctive Christian character is good at meeting the needs of all learners.

The school is a welcoming, supportive, family community, appreciated by parents, visitors and external agencies. There is positive recognition by adults and children of the impact of gospel values both within the school and the wider community. A pupil talked of the visits to a local

Cheshire Home and another of entertaining the 'Friendship Club' (a group for older residents). Pupils are thoughtful and solicitous of one another's welfare, evidenced by the way in which they fulfil their roles as 'Big Friends' and peer mediators. Relationships are strong at all levels and parents talk of *'the readiness to go the extra mile'* demonstrated through the range of after school clubs that are offered and pupils comment *"your opinion is always listened to"*. School Council members have a mature understanding of their contribution to school life highlighting changes that they have initiated. They recognise the democratic process, describing their approach to the governing body to bring about a change to school uniform and highlighting the importance of both *'talking things through'* and of possible budgetary implications. Displays are enriching, evidencing aspects of the Christian faith and its values and the school's link with the Ghana partnership. RE makes a positive contribution to pupils spiritual moral social and cultural development. This is seen in the way pupils' recognise the relevance of learning about other faiths, one pupil referring to an item of world news emphasising the importance of tolerance and understanding. The school environment already makes some contribution to the pupils' spiritual development and recent plans to create designated garden areas with a focus on reflection and wonder will enhance this further.

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

Collective worship is perceived by staff and pupils as centrally important to the life of the school. Pupils are attentive, keen to participate and sing with enthusiasm. They recognise the relevance of the wooden cross and candle as focal points to their worship. Year 6 pupils prepare the hall for worship and welcome their peers. Worship themes are now planned on a half termly basis; pupils engage with this liking the longer consistent focus. Pupils are able to make connections between worship themes and their everyday experiences saying *"I remembered to keep going when my maths was hard"* and *"I run faster because I keep practising"*. Local clergy, staff and the incumbent lead worship and Christian festivals and themes are integrated into the annual programme. Parents appreciate their involvement in worship through the notification of themes in the fortnightly newsletter and the link to the "Talking Homework" tasks. As recommended in the previous inspection the incumbent is leading worship focusing on learning about aspects of the Eucharist service. These acts of worship enable pupils to develop an understanding of patterns of liturgy. This developing understanding is demonstrated in the way that pupils talk about links to services in church and of their use of the response "The Lord be with you". Prayer has a place of importance in the life of the school. It is a focus at the end of worship; year 6 pupils lead the prayer at the start of lunch and the headteacher has recently introduced a school prayer which is displayed throughout the school. A next step could be to clearly focus prayer upon the personal implications of worship themes.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a Church School is good.

The headteacher is providing strong leadership demonstrating a very clear grasp of the qualities which make a good church school. The recent 'Vision Day' provided an excellent opportunity for all staff and governors to revisit the school's mission statement and aims with the focus on the on-going commitment to continuous improvement. This experience was valued by all participants and has facilitated ownership and relevant discussion of the processes for accountability and quality evaluation. Parents are appreciative of staff approachability at all levels and of the opportunities to involve themselves in school life such as providing support for reading activities and as class helpers. Links with the church are increasingly strong with the active involvement of the incumbent in school worship and through visits to and services in the church, as well as with recent pupil participation in the 'Messy Church' organised locally. A recommendation of the last inspection has been addressed, in that meaningful links have been established with a community in Ghana. This has impacted on pupils' understanding and recognition of the differences and similarities of culture.