

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### Frittenden Church of England Primary School

Frittenden, Cranbrook, Kent TN17 2DD

**Diocese:** Canterbury

**Local authority:** Kent

**Date of inspection:** 5<sup>th</sup> March 2013

**Date of last inspection:** 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2008

**School's unique reference number** 118701

**Acting Headteacher:** Mrs Tracy Thomas

**Inspector's name and number:** Mrs Elizabeth Caudwell (639)

#### School context

Frittenden is a smaller than average, voluntary controlled primary school whose pupils are mainly from White British backgrounds. Pupils are drawn from nearby and from a number of surrounding villages. The proportions of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or with special needs and/or disabilities are lower than those found nationally.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Frittenden as a Church of England school are good

The school's strong Christian ethos creates a caring family atmosphere and ensures that all members of the school community feel welcomed and included.

#### Established strengths

- Committed leadership by the acting headteacher, staff and governors is ensuring not only continuity but a clearly articulated vision for the future development of this Church school.
- Well-understood Christian values such as trust and care have a positive impact on pupils' personal and spiritual development.
- A strong partnership and support from St. Mary's Church result in the school and parish church together forming a focal point for the village.

#### Focus for development

- Continue work with staff, governors and other stakeholders to adopt a shared mission statement incorporating explicit Christian values. Embed the statement into documentation and the school environment.
- Promote succession planning by providing staff training in Religious Education (RE) to enhance subject leadership and to increase confidence in assessment procedures.
- With governors and senior staff, develop the use of the SIAMS Toolkit to show the impact of new initiatives and to assess the progress made.

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

The school's Christian foundation is apparent on entry to the school through the prominent display of a wooden cross. The school prospectus mentions a 'strong Christian ethos' but this is not yet incorporated into an agreed mission statement, which would set out the Christian vision for the school. The majority of parents see the school's foundation as very important and praise the way in which Christian values are promoted, thus 'reinforcing Christian behaviours and attitudes' in their children. Parents and staff speak positively of strong relationships, particularly apparent between all ages of pupils, which create a welcoming and supportive family atmosphere. This is underpinned by the staff's care for individual needs. For example the support and family liaison work provided by two staff trained as counsellors promotes very good personal and social development. Pupils are prepared to become responsible citizens through a partner system where older and younger pupils share progress in achieving targets. Pupils across the school participate in fund-raising for charities, such as Jeans for Genes and Children in Need and pupils' views are heard through representatives on the school council. The school environment makes a good contribution towards pupils' spiritual development through reflective areas in each classroom and the recently introduced prayer board where pupils' individual prayer contributions are displayed. RE displays also support this development. For example in Key Stage 1 work on The Creation pupils posted questions such as 'How was God made?'. RE is effectively

taught and linked with other curriculum subjects. Pupils say that they enjoy learning in a variety of ways, such as through drama, ICT, or visits to places of worship. Pupil attainment in RE is above average. Moral development is promoted through pupils' study of parables and plans are in place to link the Christian values to selected parables special to the ethos of the school.

### **The impact of collective worship on the school community is good**

Pupils are enthusiastic about collective worship and welcome the growing opportunities to be involved in leading daily worship. The aspect for development concerning prayer from the last SIAS inspection has been addressed. Pupils are eager to write prayers which will be selected to be used in worship and also to lead grace before lunch each day. There are collections of prayers in each classroom for use in class or key stage worship, enabling worship to be tailored to the needs of particular groups. In the whole school worship observed pupils entered the hall quietly and were quickly focussed on the lighted candle, showing reverence for the occasion. Displays, such as one promoting awe and wonder with pictures of the natural world enhance the focal point for worship. Plans are in place to provide a large painted cross in the newly completed school hall, which will strengthen further pupils' appreciation of Christian symbols. Pupils can explain the themes used for worship and how these are based on a range of Christian values such as trust. As a result pupils demonstrate a good understanding of Christian values as shown through the teaching of Jesus and can explain the difference this makes to their lives. Pupils say that following worship they 'feel refreshed' and appreciate the opportunity to be reminded of familiar Bible stories. Anglican tradition is fostered through response prayers, such as 'Jesus You are the Light of the World' and through the singing of hymns. Worship is held in a variety of settings, and is led by the acting headteacher, staff, and in the absence of an incumbent, the lay reader. Pupils' experience of worship is broadened through other visiting leaders from the local church. Parents appreciate the worship they attend in church saying this 'brings the school, parents and community together'. Worship is soon to be further developed by holding services in church twice per week, providing increased opportunities for parental attendance. Worship is planned by the acting headteacher as CW coordinator using the Diocesan themes. Some informal opportunities for evaluation and gathering of feedback on collective worship from stakeholders exist and these are now being drawn together into a formal monitoring programme led by the foundation governor.

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

The acting headteacher, staff, governors and church members are providing very effective leadership during a period of change in both the school and the church. Issues from the last SIAS inspection are being addressed in an imaginative way and through joint staff and governor training opportunities a long term vision for the school is being established. In this, senior leaders are being supported by the Diocese and are working in collaboration with other local Church schools. The SIAS Toolkit has been carefully completed by school staff and shows a range of provision to support the school's Christian foundation, along with identified areas for development. This work is now beginning to be shared with members of the governing body and a programme for monitoring the effectiveness of RE and collective worship is being drawn up. Parental and pupils' views on Frittenden as a Church of England School have recently been sought through questionnaires, which makes the school well placed to incorporate feedback from stakeholders in its future evaluation procedures. The school has rightly addressed succession planning as an area for development. Leadership in RE is effective, and the subject leader has identified further work on assessment and moderation of pupils' work as a focus for development. Specific training in RE subject leadership has not yet been made available. The provision of this would greatly enhance staff leadership and management skills. The school plays an important part in the life of the community, for example in supporting a local residential home and in joining with nearby schools in an annual music festival. The parish church and its PCC works closely with the school, for example in sharing information for newsletters, sending families invitations to church services and through donating a bible to Year 6 pupils when they leave the primary school. The school is twinned with another in London and there are plans to extend global links through contact with a school in another part of the world in order to enhance community cohesion further.