

REPORT TO THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 6th MAY 2021

Bentley Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

After the previous Annual Parish Meeting on 18th April 2019 the school continued developing along the lines recommended during the Ofsted inspection of 2018, by continuing to improve the academic standards of all the children and ensuring that disadvantaged children and those with special needs made consistently strong progress. The distinctive Christian ethos of the school was made more explicit as required by the previous church inspection [SIAMS] and links with the parish church congregation and the Rector, the Rev'd Annette Shannon, resulted in more shared activities, including some in the church building, and visits to the school to participate in assemblies and special events. Mrs Jane Day joined the governing body as a foundation governor bringing church representation up to the expected number. The performance of pupils representing the school in sports competitions and other events frequently compared very favourably with teams from much larger schools.

And then.....!

The pandemic at first necessitated school closure except for vulnerable children and those of key workers. Learning continued online at home guided and resourced by the teaching staff, who were also having to teach the children present in school. That proved to be a difficult double role made harder by the requirements of enhanced health and safety regulations. Children at school now work, play, eat and meet socially in three 'bubbles' corresponding to the three class groups and their teachers and the assistants may not socialise outside the group they teach. All the teachers have agreed to use the rapid type of COVID test twice a week. Families know to keep children away from school if they are suspected of infection. Drop off and collection of pupils is also socially distanced and phased to keep the class groups apart. All this has proved worthwhile as attendance rates remain high now that attendance at school has become the norm again. The number on roll remains at 60 but there is the possibility of a fall in the intake next year, **leaving one or two vacancies so please mention this to possible prospective parents** as any fall would squeeze our finances at this difficult time.

Within the constraints caused by the pandemic the school continues to do well and online links with the church have substituted for the normal shared events. The children continue to develop as confident, successful and responsible people able to face the challenges of the future. Please follow their progress by reading the regular articles in the ***Bentley Bugle*** and ***In Touch***.

Don Mehen, Foundation Governor