



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Whittlebury Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

High Street
Whittlebury
Northamptonshire
NN12 8XH

Previous SIAMS grade: Outstanding

Current inspection grade: Good

Diocese: Peterborough

Local authority: Northamptonshire
Date of inspection: 23 June 2015
Date of last inspection: 12 July 2010
School's unique reference number: 122003
Headteacher: Eliza Hollis
Inspector's name and number: Kathy Orchard 640

School context

This is a much smaller-than-average primary school that became part of the Forest Federation of three schools in September 2012. The schools share an Executive Headteacher and governing body. Each school has an Assistant Headteacher who is responsible for the leadership and management on a day to day basis. The proportion of the pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding is below average. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage and none speaks English as an additional language. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is average. There is a high level of pupil inward mobility.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Whittlebury CE Primary school as a Church of England school are good

- The headteacher has a passionately held Christian commitment which drives the agenda of continuous school improvement with the active support of parents, staff and governors.
- The focus on each child as an individual within an inclusive and supportive Christian environment develops positive attitudes amongst pupils who become confident, independent learners.
- The school's Christian values permeate all aspects of school life and have a significant impact on the lives of the pupils and result in very good behaviour and excellent relationships.

Areas to improve

- Develop the monitoring and evaluation of the school's work as a church school so that it is more systematic and rigorous involving active participation by pupils, parents, governors and staff.
- Involve pupils in planning and leading acts of worship rather than as a response to adult plans.
- Ensure that pupils develop an awareness and understanding of the significance of the Holy

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

The school's distinctive Christian values are the foundation for the Christian ethos. They not only form the basis of the whole curriculum but also nurture and enrich the whole school community where every child is supported to develop their potential. Distinct Christian values underpin the life and work of this school and have a major impact on the outstanding personal and spiritual development of the pupils. The bright secure atmosphere, which values pupils' achievements, encourages them to work effectively together and support each other. Pupils say that the Christian values are important to them and parents support the fact that they live them out in their daily lives. This results in no bullying and a school where adults listen to them and they feel safe, special and valued. Inward mobility to the school is high and this has an impact on standards. However, the caring nurturing environment where every child is unique and the emphasis is on the whole child ensures good progress is made from their starting points. Pupils enjoy coming to school and as a result attendance is good. The pupils say that religious education (RE) lessons are fun and they learn at the same time; this was evident in the lessons observed. They particularly enjoy more in-depth learning about the Christian values and the life of Jesus. Standards in RE are in line with the national average and the subject is given the same status as other core subjects. Spiritual moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development is good and there are many opportunities to promote this in collective worship, RE and throughout the curriculum. Pupils show respect for the diverse community they belong to, enriched by visits to other places of worship and by working with the other schools in the federation. This addresses a focus for development from the previous Section 48 inspection.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship makes a significant contribution to the school's Christian vision, values, ethos and pupils' SMSC development. Through its focus on Christian values and the teachings of Jesus there are many opportunities for discussion and reflection, which have a positive impact on pupils' spiritual development. Worship plays an important part in the life of the school community with pupils and staff recognising the value of this special time together. Pupils enjoy collective worship, and particularly enjoy taking part. They see it as an important part of being a church school and as a time to think and reflect on the school's values. The executive headteacher in her role as collective worship coordinator, and in discussion with staff and clergy, uses the Christian values programme as the structure around which the themes for collective worship are planned. In addition the major Christian festivals are celebrated. The school has identified the need to develop pupils' understanding of the liturgical year. Pupils also have some understanding of the Holy Trinity. However the school recognises that this needs to be more explicit so that pupils have more confidence and understanding when talking about this. There are numerous leaders of worship, including all teaching staff, various members of the clergy and visitors. This results in a variety of styles and delivery which contributes to the pupils' engagement in worship and understanding of Anglican traditions. This is further strengthened by regular services in the church and also joint services in the churches linked to the other schools in the federation. Pupils are able to participate in worship in a variety of ways including reading their own prayers. Their prayers are also shared at other times of the day such as lunchtimes and at the end of the day. They are also invited to lead prayers at the end of worship. They do this with confidence and understanding. Currently some pupils have opportunities to lead worship and plans are in place develop this further. Pupils regularly evaluate acts of worship. It is also monitored and evaluated by the collective worship coordinator. Governors attend worship regularly and give written feedback on its impact, but their involvement needs to be more systematic and rigorous.

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

school is good

The personal faith of the executive headteacher and her commitment to the education of the whole child provides a strong direction for the school which is fully supported by the staff and governors. All stakeholders are continually working to ensure the Christian vision is lived out on a day to day basis. It is evident on documentation, policies and the school prospectus. Highest levels of achievement possible for each individual child are a priority for everyone. The distinctiveness is visible as you enter the building and continues throughout with vibrant classrooms and communal spaces dedicated to the celebration of children's achievements. This creates the impression of being in a special place. It is evident from discussions with parents, governors, and the headteacher, and from observation of activities, that Christian values pervade the school. For instance in the kindness of the children towards each other and the absence of bullying. The executive headteacher provides clear and determined leadership with supportive staff and governors. The governors have a positive attitude towards the school as a whole and the church school status in particular. They feel that this gives the school its ethos exemplified in the positive behaviour of the children which results in a calm purposeful atmosphere that pervades all areas of the school. The school's self-evaluation is accurate. Governors monitor aspects of the school as a church school and are beginning to develop more formal systems of monitoring and evaluation to address church school issues. Statutory requirements for collective worship and RE are met. The RE coordinator leads the subject with knowledge and enthusiasm, and attends training offered by the diocese that is valuable for networking with other subject leaders and to ensure her own skills are kept up to date. The federation of the three schools is providing opportunities for staff development at all levels. In addition in-house and external training and access to diocesan training opportunities ensures succession for the future is strong. Regular services in St Mary's Church and involvement in community events such as the summer fete enrich the lives of learners and ensure that these important links are kept open

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