



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

### Yardley Gobion Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

School Lane  
Yardley Gobion  
Towcester  
Northamptonshire  
NN12 7UL

**Previous SIAMS grade: Good**

**Diocese: Peterborough**

Local authority: Northamptonshire

Date of inspection: 21 January 2015

Date of last inspection: December 2009

School's unique reference number: 122007

Headteacher: Carolyn Gleeson

Inspector's name and number: John Weaver 402

#### School context

This rural school serves a community in south Northamptonshire. Most pupils are of white British heritage. About 25% of the pupils come from outside the village as their parents choose the school because of its Christian ethos. The number of pupils receiving support for additional and special needs is below the national average. A strong link between the school and St. Leonard's church has developed in recent years.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Yardley Gobion as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The head teacher's strong Christian faith informs her leadership of the school, ensuring that the distinctive Christian character of the school is at the centre of all its work.
- The school's behaviour policy, based on the school's distinctive Christian values, is very effective in enabling the pupils to make the right choices.
- There is a strong Christian commitment to ensure that everyone recognises their own self-worth resulting in high levels of individual success.
- Pupils take strong positive responsibility for initiating charitable fundraising because they have absorbed the Christian values taught in the school.

#### Areas to improve

- Give more regular opportunities for the pupils to be involved in the leadership and planning of collective worship to further enhance their spirituality.
- Increase the range of stakeholders involved in monitoring and evaluating collective worship to ensure its on-going impact and development in the life of the school.

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

The contribution of the distinctive Christian character to the success of this school is crucial. It firmly underpins pupils' attitudes, behaviour and self-belief. Christian values are incorporated in the whole curriculum and the way in which it is taught. Each term a different Christian value forms a strong focus, being effectively incorporated into the teaching of core subjects as well as religious education (RE). Through these the children have studied perseverance, truthfulness, responsibility, thankfulness, forgiveness, peace and hope in depth. Perseverance leads directly to the pupils' outstanding achievement. Academic standards are well above the national average and the majority of pupils make rapid progress in their learning, especially in writing. Attendance levels are already very high and still improving. Pupil self-confidence is high. They are taught that 'making mistakes is OK'. They know that all staff, both teaching and support, are committed to helping them as much as possible individually. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education (SMSC) is outstanding. The pupils can clearly articulate the relevance of the school's Christian values to their daily lives. SMSC development is founded on well-planned opportunities for reflection on situations that occur as they learn. As a result they have become accustomed to thinking about difficult questions and speculating on possible solutions. In response to a television programme about dirty water, a Year 1 child initiated a successful fund-raising project for the charity 'Water-Aid'. Relationships are excellent. The school's behaviour code is firmly rooted in its Christian character. Pupils know how they should behave towards one another and the vast majority do so without question. Newcomers joining the school benefit from the practical expression of the school's Christian values in the support they receive from their peers. The pupils have a high level of understanding of and respect for diverse communities. This is due to their involvement in two successive 'Comenius' projects, which gave them first-hand experience of life in different countries. The school has a policy of using members of different faiths as first-hand educators. An example of this can be found in the way a Comenius teaching assistant shared her understanding of the similarities between her own Muslim faith and Christianity with the children. Because of this, the pupils' understanding of the main beliefs of world faiths at the appropriate level is very clear. RE makes a strong contribution to the Christian character of the school. It is well taught throughout and attainment and progress are above national expectations. The pupils benefit from many extra-curricular activities. Despite the smallness of the school, the pupils, both boys and girls, have been regional cricket champions. They have also achieved success in music. Both underline once again the influence of the Christian value of perseverance.

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

Pupils and adults respond well in collective worship due to the careful planning and good, distributed leadership. Children are able to talk about how different acts of collective worship have made them change, showing good evidence of impact. An act of worship about the first world war in 2014 is still fresh in the pupils' minds. Collective worship planning starts with the Christian value for that particular term. This ensures that collective worship is distinctively Christian. The subject matter for individual acts of worship is predominantly biblical. The person of Jesus figures strongly in worship, so the pupils understand his importance. They are developing an understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, but as yet find this more difficult to describe. The vicar is a regular member of the worship-leading team, as are all teachers. Pupils understand different ways of worshipping because they use the church regularly. They have a good knowledge of Anglican practice through celebrating major festivals in church. Their good knowledge of Christianity in action is gained through celebrating Saints days and learning about well-known exemplars. A school Eucharist has been celebrated recently on occasion, attracting support from the parents. Prayer is given a high priority in both collective worship and in the school in general. A prayer tree in the hall is well-used by the pupils, whose prayers are also made into books. As a result, pupils are confident both in making up their own prayers and in articulating them publicly. They pray frequently about events in the news that have affected them. Leadership and management of collective worship is good. Senior staff and governors' monitoring and evaluation of collective worship ensures that development planning has an evidential base. Collective worship is not outstanding because pupil involvement in planning and leading this area is relatively undeveloped and the range of stakeholders involved in monitoring and evaluation could be widened.

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

Christian values permeate the school and are central to its being. They impact strongly on all areas of the school day. The head teacher leads from the front with conviction. Her philosophy is fully supported within the school and by parents and carers. Both the head teacher and governors express a clear vision of Christianity in action in the school. This has directly led to high academic standards and exceptional personal development and behaviour. The teaching staff is very stable, many having been at the school since their qualification. The vicar acts as chaplain to the school community, providing valued pastoral support in times of need. Since the previous inspection school leaders and governors have been through a continuous process of development and evaluation. The governors have provided a high level of support and challenge. This has ensured that the creation of a school based firmly on distinctive Christian values is now very secure. All areas from the previous inspection have been successfully addressed. Arrangements for RE and collective worship exceed statutory requirements. School leaders understand the future development needs of the school as a church school and have taken some action to ensure that this is in place. A very effective partnership between the school and St. Leonard's Church has led to a range of co-operative events and initiatives which have enriched the pupils and parents/carers. A Pentecost workshop organised by church leaders for the school enabled everyone to learn from activities around the coming of the Holy Spirit to the first disciples. The school, with the full support of the vicar, has recently initiated the celebration of the Eucharist in school. An increasing number of parents are attending this celebration. There is a strong partnership with the Diocese, from which practical and prayerful support has recently been much valued.

SIAMS report January 2015 Yardley Gobion CEVC Primary, Northants NN12 7UL