



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Whitwick St John the Baptist Church of England Primary School

Parsonwood Hill
Whitwick
Leicestershire
LE67 5AT

Previous SIAMS grade: satisfactory

Current inspection grade: good

Diocese: Leicester

Local authority: Leicestershire

Dates of inspection: 17 November 2015

Date of last inspection: 30 May 2012

School's unique reference number: 120171

Headteacher: Christine Killip

Inspector's name and number: Sheila Grice (165)

School context

Whitwick is a large village on the outskirts of Coalville in North-West Leicestershire. Whitwick St John the Baptist Church of England Primary School is larger than the average sized primary school. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage and very few pupils speak English as an additional language. There are a higher proportion of pupils with disabilities or special educational needs than the national average. There are currently 346 pupils on roll.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Whitwick St John the Baptist Church of England Primary School as a Church of England school are good

- Christian values are now embedded, resulting in learners having a good understanding of how these values impact on their own achievement and behaviour.
- Excellent relationships exist between staff and pupils based on distinctively Christian values.
- Children's behaviour and attitudes are excellent as a result of the school's Christian character and high level of care shown throughout school.

Areas to improve

- Establish a rigorous system of self-evaluation as a church school, involving children, staff & governors, in order to secure future improvement.
- Increase opportunities for learners to plan and lead worship in order to further enhance the quality of worship.
- Develop children's understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit through direct teaching on a regular basis.

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

Whitwick St John the Baptist is a warm, welcoming school where pupils and adults feel valued and cared for within a family atmosphere of care and compassion. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 have improved and both progress and standards are now good. Pastoral care is excellent, particularly for those children experiencing emotional or behavioural difficulties. Six Christian values, including compassion and trust, are clearly expressed by all members of the school community. By relating the values back to Jesus through storytelling, adults reinforce the Christian distinctiveness of these values. The weekly 'reflection time' throughout school further deepens children's understanding of how the values make a difference in their lives. The Christian value of compassion (which the children relate to the story of the Good Samaritan) can be seen in action through the way children relate to each other showing a good level of care and understanding. The wealth of high quality displays in classes and around school affirm that this is a church school. The stained glass window and Values Tree in the hall provide further stimulus for reflection by children and adults. Each class has an area for reflection and many classes have a prayer box or prayer book. One Year 6 teacher had responded to the children's concerns over the recent terrorist attacks in Paris by inviting the children to write their own prayers which were used at the end of the day. Children's cultural awareness and understanding is developing well and children respect the diversity and difference within other faith communities. Religious education (RE) makes a significant contribution towards children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and children value the opportunity to learn what other people believe and find RE helps them in their own life choices. However, there is not yet a clearly understood definition of spirituality which is understood by most adults.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is satisfactory

Staff and children can articulate the importance of collective worship in the life of the school and staff say that it provides, 'an oasis of calm in a busy environment'. Collective worship is now planned around the Christian values and full account is taken of the Christian calendar. St John the Baptist parish church is used to celebrate special assemblies at key points in the school year and parents particularly value the links with the parish church. Children have some understanding of local Anglican practice and different Christian traditions in worship and they know the importance of the bible, prayer and singing in church services. The children particularly enjoy assemblies led by the Open the Book team which are, 'really fun and teach us about God and people in the Bible'. Children's attitude towards collective worship is very positive and they especially enjoy singing songs which are uplifting and closely linked to the theme. Prayer and reflection are an integral part of worship although there are few opportunities for children to lead prayers in collective worship at present. The use of 'Welcomers' at the start of each assembly is helping children to develop an awareness of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. However the significance of this has not been made explicit to the children so their understanding of the Trinity and its importance to Christians is only just developing. There are some opportunities for children to take part in worship, through class assemblies and as welcomers, however increased opportunities would further enhance the quality of worship. The weekly 'reflection time' in class helps children think more deeply about the assemblies and the relevance in their lives. Some feedback on collective worship is gathered from children through the weekly reflections, however there is no regular formal monitoring and evaluation by staff and children which identifies where improvement is needed.

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

Leaders confidently describe the impact of the school's Christian values on children and on the life of the school and they provide good role models for the children. Children's learning, through the curriculum, is linked to the Christian values so that children have a greater understanding of the relevance of these values on their lives. Collective worship, RE and the

curriculum all contribute towards children's excellent behaviour and attitudes and also towards the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. Leadership of RE has changed frequently in the last three years but effective monitoring has ensured that the profile of RE has been raised across school. The newly appointed leader of RE has been well supported in her role and is well placed to continue to bring about improvements. Parents contribute fully to school life and they speak very positively about the Christian ethos of the school which encourages their children to be respectful and caring to others. One parent explained how the school provides an extension of family life at home and how her child displays the Fruit of the Spirit in everyday life as a direct result of attending this school. The foundation governor is fully involved in the life of the school and actively contributes to the self-evaluation of RE, collective worship and children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. He is currently undertaking training through the diocese in order to be more effective in his role within school. There are close links with the local parish church, despite there having been no vicar in post for some time. The relationship with the parish church has been strengthened through the continued involvement of the Open the Book team and the active role in school of the foundation governor. The majority of issues from the previous SIAMS inspection have been successfully addressed, as a result staff now attend worship more frequently and collective worship is seen as an important part of the school day. Leadership & management has been strengthened through the involvement of the foundation governor taking an active role in monitoring and reporting to the governing body. However, there is currently no formal monitoring of the school's distinctive Christian character or collective worship which forms part of the whole school cycle of self-review.

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