



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

St. Lawrence Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Dog Lane
Napton-on-the Hill
Southam
Warwickshire CV47 8LU

Previous SIAMS grade: Outstanding

Current SIAMS grade: Outstanding

Diocese: Coventry

Local authority: Warwickshire

Date of inspection: 24 May 2016

Date of last inspection: July 2011

School's unique reference number: 130884

Headteacher: John Brine

Inspector's name and number: Alan Thornsby 137

School context

St. Lawrence Primary School is a smaller than average school serving the village of Napton-on-the-Hill and other surrounding villages. The majority of pupils are White British. Other pupils come from a range of ethnic minority backgrounds. The proportion of pupils eligible for additional government funding is below average. There are an average number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school has Early Years provision through a nursery unit (Little Lawrences) and a reception class.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St. Lawrence as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The inclusive and distinctive Christian character of the school results from the passion of the headteacher, staff and governors to ensure Christian service in a church school for all.
- Christian values securely underpin the practice and policy of the school and result in excellent relationships and attitudes to learning.
- Pupils make excellent academic and personal development as a result of the Christian ethos of the school.

Areas to improve

- Continue the cycles of review and action to identify further means of exploring and expressing the distinctive Christian character of the school.

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

The school has an inclusive and distinctive Christian character that permeates the life of the school. A number of values are identified in displays with Biblical references which securely underpin the daily life and practice of the school. Pupils understand the importance of Christian values because 'Christians follow them to be like Jesus'. They are, however, very certain that people of any faith can follow these because 'they are about respect and care for each other'. The actions and responses of pupils allows them to explain 'what would Jesus do?' because they have a good sense of right and wrong. They also understand the importance of learning from mistakes. Compassion, respect and love have a significant impact on the learning environment, in which adults are totally committed to provide the best for each individual. Attendance is good. Children recognise that teachers challenge and support their learning, and they respond by showing respect by listening and working hard. The inclusive nature of the school results in strong supportive relationships between adults and children. Children are confident and articulate. Consequently, behaviour and attitudes to learning are exemplary. They recognise the impact of the ethos that ensures that everyone is treated equally and enables them to make informed choices. The high expectations of adults and pupils' enjoyment of school enable all groups to make good progress and attainment. Philosophy for children (P4C) challenges and deepens their thinking skills. As a result attainment and progress are consistently above national expectations. Pupils are given a range of responsibilities, including involvement in staff appointments. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development, with secure links to religious education (RE) and worship are a key part of the inclusive distinctive Christian character. For example, a visit to Leicester to compare it to the village of Napton includes a visit to a Hindu Temple and the experiences of shopping to support the Key Stage 1 topic on India. A debating club extends pupils' language skills in presenting reasoned arguments Arts days enable pupils to create sculptures and banners as a reminder of their time in school. RE is a core subject and is led by an experienced and enthusiastic leader. Cross-curricular links, such as using an old version of The Book of Common Prayer in a topic on the Victorians, further pupils interest. Although the school is in a rural setting pupils have an awareness of religious and cultural diversity through the rich curriculum and visits to other place of worship.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship is a key part of the distinctive Christian character of the school. Themes link Bible stories, Christian values and the liturgical year. Other topics such as 'Christian explorers-people of faith' demonstrate Christian values in action and their impact on SMSC development. The assembly team and representatives from church plan worship. Planning is shared with other local schools and shows a further example of Christian service in action. Outline plans provide a structure for leaders to have a personal approach. The effective policy recognises the difference between assembly and worship, giving supportive ideas, Biblical references and guidelines for visitors. The acting curate in charge maintains links between the church and school and regularly leads worship. Foundation governors recognise how worship brings all together 'as a worshipping community on Friday, at the bottom of the hill and on Sunday in church at the top of the hill'. Anglican tradition is reflected in the use of a candle to indicate the beginning of worship and the display of liturgical colours. These are also used in headlines in parents' newsletters as a further indication of distinctiveness. Pupils experience a range of worship formats and perspectives of different leaders. A weekly 'singing praise' is a strength of worship, involving the adults and pupils enthusiastically accompanying singing on a variety of instruments. The pupil assembly group plan acts of worship, reflecting pupils' knowledge of Bible stories, hymns and prayers. Prayer has a high profile in the life of the school, with the school and Lord's Prayer displayed and used in classes. Children describe prayer as 'a time to talk to God' and aware of different purposes of prayer. They explain that the answer from God may not be obvious 'but sometimes like a thought that pops into your mind'. They have a good understanding of The Trinity 'the three parts of God'. They explain 'God the Father hears our prayers; God the Son came to Earth and God the Holy Spirit is inside us, like the apostles at Pentecost'. The church is used to celebrate festivals including Harvest and Christmas, to which the community is invited. On-going evaluation from leaders and weekly comments from pupils inform discussion and development in termly review meetings.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

RE is recognised by all as a core subject that is central to the school's distinctive Christian character. It is well led by a knowledgeable and enthusiast subject leader who is a member of the Warwickshire Agreed Syllabus teachers' writing group. She has ensured that the scheme fully meets the current needs of the school. The subject leader always attends and contributes to termly diocesan meetings, sharing the outcomes with staff. Consequently, developments in school mirror national developments. Pupils are enthusiastic in lessons and engaged by a range of tasks. Shared learning objectives ensure they know what is expected of them. Lessons have good pace and engage all children by the use of teacher knowledge and questioning skills to extend pupils' thinking. There is challenge, such as focussed questioning and further guidance and discussion with adults to ensure the needs of different abilities are met. Teachers review learning during lessons. Good questioning skills enable children to increase their knowledge. For example, as part of a topic on 'Working together' pupils can compare belonging to and working in different places of worship, before recording their findings as mind-maps. Pupils' workbooks, with a gold mounted image or symbol create a sense of being a record of a special subject. Their books show a range of well-presented activities showing learning about and from religion. Marking comments indicate learning and next steps and pupils respond to these in writing. A range of assessment procedures, observations and book trawls show that attainment is well above national expectations. Pupils recognise their skills and challenges in philosophical thinking that enable them to explore big questions and realise there may be no correct answer. However, they are very aware that they 'need to respect the opinions of others'. The school recently introduced a project 'The Story Tent', led by Warwick University in association with the University of Cambridge Interfaith Programme. This provided the experience of sharing and exploring stories from different faith traditions and holy books. For example, discussion with Christians, Muslims and Sikhs explored Creation, the story of Noah and parables. Everyone involved benefitted from the chance to question members of other faiths and reinforce personal beliefs.

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

The headteacher, governors and staff have a clear and ambitious vision for the school that is securely rooted in Christian values. Training sessions on 'Christian values for schools' have enhanced the knowledge of staff and governors. The vision is expressed in the statement, 'We are a family school that nurtures and inspires, allowing all to grow in grace enjoying freedom through knowledge and aspiration'. As a result, Christian values are made explicit to everyone as they are integral to the daily life of the school and displayed by adults and children. The work of foundation governors reinforces the distinctive Christian character as 'part of the fabric of the school'. This drives every decision and action by leaders and managers who are committed to the wellbeing of the whole community. They ensure the distinctiveness is recognised and valued and the school is 'at the very heart of the community'. Monthly governors meetings, in addition to regular visits, ensure that all governors know the strengths of the school and areas for development. Self-evaluation is accurate and the development points from the last inspection have been addressed. They are committed to on-going review and development of the school through its Christian distinctiveness. They ensure that their efforts effectively support and challenge the learning of all pupils. Consequently, academic standards and personal development of pupils is excellent. Governors are very aware of developments in school through subject reports. The feedback from the regular cycle of lesson observations, learning walks and work trawls are shared with governors. As a result, governors fully understand the impact of the distinctive Christian character on progress and attainment. They also ensure that worship and RE meet statutory requirements. Their awareness of succession planning has enabled the head to currently work a reduced week. This allows leadership experiences for other staff. Parents are positive in their views of the school, shared in discussion and questionnaires. They recognise the impact of the school on pupils' confidence and their enjoyment of learning, commenting 'children skip into school they are such a happy bunch'. The school is part of the Warwick and Southam consortium of schools to share and develop good practice. The school works with the church to share worship across The Bridges group of parishes. The school also has very strong and effective links with the diocese.