



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Broadwindsor Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Drimpton Road, Broadwindsor, Beaminster, Dorset
DT8 3QL

Diocese: Salisbury

Local authority: Dorset

Date of inspection: 8th May 2014

Date of last inspection: 30th September 2008

School's unique reference number: 113777

Headteacher: Nigel Arnold

Inspector's name and number: Carole McCormack (224)

School context

This is a popular small school: currently nearly half of the children on roll come from out of catchment area. The school has no looked after children and the percentage of learners with special educational needs or disabilities is much lower than average, as is the percentage of children attracting pupil premium. The Headteacher has been in post for 12 years and the staff is settled. The arrival of the current incumbent some two years ago has transformed the quality and depth of spiritual support that the school community receives. Despite considerable effort the school has not been able recruit its full complement of foundation governors.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Broadwindsor as a Church of England school are good

- The support of the highly skilled and effective incumbent who has an exceptionally clear educational and spiritual vision for the school
- The warm and supportive community – both within the school and the wider context of the church and village
- The strong traditional Christian values which run through all aspects of provision

Areas to improve

- To engage in robust monitoring and evaluation of church school distinctiveness which will lead to accurate identification of issues for church school improvement
- To thoroughly review collective worship planning, ensuring that incumbent, staff and children are involved, so that themes for the year are clearly identified in advance and taken forward in all acts of worship within the time scale chosen for the exploration of each theme
- To introduce structured opportunities for each learner to engage with their own spiritual development

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

The school prioritises equality of opportunity for all, powered by a strong sense of the unique value of each individual. Achievement is good because all children are carefully nurtured to develop the self-esteem and security which will enable them to achieve to the best of their ability. One child explained how Broadwindsor is 'the most secure school'; and that, because of this, 'it is much easier to work here'. The school addresses well the spiritual, moral, social and cultural elements of learners' development, through maximising the natural beauty of its setting and putting in place a variety of learning experiences which enable the children to experience beauty and the intangible (for example participation in the 'Young Voices' concert in Birmingham, where the school sang with 10,000 other children from across the country). However, there are no structures in place to enable each child to engage with his or her own progressive spiritual development from the encounters which are provided, through reflection on these, to spiritual transformation. Relationships within the school are strong and parents praise the 'respectful relationships' and traditional values within the school community. One parent expressed her deep appreciation of the 'fellowship' provided by the enormously popular church club. This is led by the incumbent weekly in school, supported by eight volunteers from the community; and over one third of the children on roll attend. Parents are warmly invited to join in the closing worship when they pick up their children from the club. The RE leader has worked very hard to use RE as a vehicle for promoting an understanding of, and respect for, diverse communities and the success of her work is ratified by the children's attitudes. She has resourced her subject carefully and put in place an effective programme of whole school RE visiting speakers. However, the subject should be broadened to give a planned exploration of the school's underpinning Christian values; and structured opportunities for the children to engage with their own spiritual development.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is satisfactory

The improvement of collective worship was a key development point in the last church school inspection in 2008. Whilst the skill, vibrancy and dedication of the incumbent has impacted very significantly upon worship within the school, central key points have not been addressed by the school leadership: namely planning and sharing these plans with staff to ensure conformity across all acts of worship focussed upon a particular theme; and systematic and robust monitoring and evaluation of the impact of collective worship upon the lives of all members of the school community. Children love the collective worship lead by the incumbent and describe this as 'really fun!' Her whole school worship is Bible centred and covers theological questions in practical and child-friendly ways. Symbols and appropriate liturgy are used, but because of the lack of whole school planning these very strong points of practice are not necessarily taken into key stage and class worship. Christian values within the school are implicit rather than explicit and underpin school worship but, once again, without planning consistency cannot be guaranteed. Discussion with the children revealed that their actions are influenced by worship themes, and they are given some opportunity to reflect upon this through their reflection books. Each child needs to be able to reflect more deeply and more frequently upon the worship theme in order to embed the impact of the life-changing learning delivered in collective worship. The theological teaching of the incumbent in worship, at church club and in her quasi-chaplaincy capacity, ensures that the children are developing a sound understanding of Jesus Christ and the Trinity.

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

The Headteacher clearly links the Christian vision at the heart of the school with standards of achievement: the school 'aims to offer the very best learning environment and promote high levels of self-esteem and a lifelong love of learning within an active Christian environment.' The 2013 Ofsted inspection report makes a strong point that the challenge of effective leadership within the school is taken up by 'the whole of the staff at all levels' and thus the vision is strong and coherent, encompassing standards, well-being and highly inclusive education. The incumbent, who is ex officio governor of the school, constantly refreshes, strengthens and re-invigorates this vision through her presence in school. The absence of another foundation governor has undoubtedly hampered monitoring and evaluation of the success of the school as a distinctive and effective church school. Succession planning has been considered by the school and one of the aims of the incumbent is to 'enable lay people to continue to build' the Christian character of the school. Partnerships with the local church and community are excellent. The school has nurtured a particularly strong relationship with parents, involving them in their children's learning through on-line access to tracking of progress, and working in partnership to provide extensive funding for the school. Parents speak highly of the strong school community, the nurture and respectful relationships within school.

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