



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

### Trent Young's Endowed Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Trent

Dorset

DT9 4SW

Diocese: Salisbury

Local authority: Dorset

Date of inspection: 07 May 2014

Date of last inspection: 15 July 2009

School's unique reference number: 113817

Headteacher: Mrs Sarah Patterson

Inspector's name and number: Mr Chris Williamson 290

#### School context

Trent Young's Endowed Church of England Primary School has 127 children on roll. The school serves the local area, however a significant number of children come from the surrounding villages. The school has five classes, mostly of mixed age. 16% of the children have Special Educational Needs which is below average, 6% of the children are from ethnic minority groups and 3% are entitled to Free School Meals. Since the last inspection two new teachers have been appointed and almost all the governors are new.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Trent Young's Endowed Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The ethos of mutual care and respect, based on the school's Christian values
- The collective worship which is meaningful to the children's lives and in which they are involved
- The effective teamwork demonstrated by the school leadership
- The strong partnership with the local church and local community

#### Areas to improve

- To formally review the school's Christian values with all stakeholders and to evaluate the impact of these values on the children
- To identify opportunities for spiritual development and reflection throughout the curriculum
- To continue to develop assessment procedures in religious education to better inform teaching and learning

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

The school's Christian values, which are explicit and permeate the life of the school, have a significant effect on children's achievement, personal development and also their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Children say that they enjoy the variety of opportunities that are provided to reflect on a range of issues; these enable children to explore and extend their learning. For example children say that the areas for reflection in each classroom, "gives me time to think" and "gives time to realise how you feel". Children in Key Stage 2 are able to articulate their thoughts and feelings confidently through the use of reflection diaries. The school recognises that these now need to be developed further by providing children with focussed themes. The school also recognises the need to identify opportunities for reflection in curriculum planning, to extend children's spiritual development further and to ensure consistency in all year groups. The school's Christian ethos enables it to provide excellent pastoral and emotional support and children say they feel safe and secure. Each child is valued as an individual and this has a significant impact on children's achievement, which is above national expectations overall. The school's golden rule, rooted in Jesus' teachings is "Treat others as you would wish to be treated". Mutual respect is demonstrated by all members of the school community. This leads to a very high standard of behaviour throughout the school. Since the last inspection the school has developed its understanding of spirituality. Children have participated, with the support of parents, in developing a spiritual quiet area in the school grounds which has increased children's spiritual awareness. The Christian ethos of the school has a major impact on relationships throughout the school community. There is a "family" atmosphere in the school, for example older children act as reading buddies for the younger children at lunch time and children look after each other in the playground. Children show an interest in other cultures and are keen to explore how they differ from their own lives. This understanding is extended by a range of visitors to the school, cultural awareness days and the school's work with a range of charities as well as through the school's religious education (RE) curriculum. Children have a good understanding of Christianity. Children have a less secure understanding of Christianity as a multi cultural faith.

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

Collective worship is distinctively Christian and is a key part of the school day. Children are very positive about collective worship and demonstrate high levels of engagement. In the collective worship observed, an atmosphere which was conducive to worship and reflection was maintained throughout. The theme 'Tolerance' was thought provoking and challenged children's thinking. A wide variety of approaches, were used effectively to maintain and stimulate children's interest. Children were encouraged to think about the theme, reflect on how it related to their own lives and to pray about it. Collective worship is presented in interesting and creative ways, for example children have engaged in a "harvest walk" across the fields, stopping on the way to praise and worship God for the environment, and ending at a nearby church with a brief service. Children are very familiar with Bible stories and can relate them to their own lives as well as to the school's core values. The trustees of the school give age appropriate Bibles to children in the reception class and to Year 6 leavers. As a result children are encouraged and supported to read their Bibles throughout their time at school. Children's understanding of the main Christian festivals is enhanced by the school celebrating key festivals in the local church. Children value prayer and sometimes write their own prayers in response to a theme or sometimes pray aloud spontaneously in response to worship. Children's spiritual development and their understanding of Christianity is enhanced by the variety of collective worship leaders including staff, the local vicar and a range of visitors from other Christian denominations. Children particularly appreciate the regular fortnightly occasions when children in Year 6 lead worship. Children say that they enjoy these occasions

because they are presented creatively and “easy to understand”. Year 6 children prepare in their own time and follow the school’s established core structure for worship. Year 6 children regard this opportunity as a privilege, demonstrating the importance of collective worship within the school. Since the last inspection, collective worship has been given a higher profile. Worship takes place daily, all staff now have a responsibility for leading worship and collective worship has become a recognised time for reflection and praise. Worship is well planned on a two year cycle taking into account the school’s Christian values as well as the important events in the church’s calendar. Governors, staff and children have been involved in evaluating collective worship which has led to improvements, such as the key elements of worship being included in every worship, children lighting the candle and children having the opportunity to pray spontaneously. However, recently evaluations have become more informal and the school rightly recognises the need to ensure that evaluations take place regularly.

### **The effectiveness of the religious education is good**

Standards of attainment in RE for most children are at least in line with national expectations. The school has started to develop assessment procedures in RE but rightly recognises that these need to be developed further in order to inform teaching and learning. The majority of teaching of RE is good and children enjoy RE lessons. In lessons observed, clear learning objectives for RE were shared with children enabling them to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding. A variety of teaching and learning styles are used to engage the children. For example in one lesson observed, children were greatly enjoying making bread as a way of learning about the Jewish celebration of Shabbat. Children particularly enjoy practical activities for example cooking seasonal food, visits to the church to learn about baptism and dressing up when learning about robes and vestments. Children’s understanding of Christianity is enhanced by links with the local church, for example the vicar has recently taught a series of lessons about communion to Year 6 children. Children are developing their confidence in expressing their own thoughts and ideas about religious beliefs and how these beliefs influence the lives of believers. A range of marking strategies is used for children’s work in RE. However the school rightly recognises the need to improve the impact and consistency of marking, building on the good practice already established in Literacy. After the last inspection the RE scheme of work was reviewed and brought into line with the locally agreed syllabus for RE. In September 2013 ‘Discovery RE’, an enquiry based programme which links to the Dorset agreed syllabus, was introduced. This has enabled teachers to develop imaginative and creative approaches to RE. Experiential learning is promoted which enables children to reflect, empathise and articulate their own thoughts and opinions with confidence. This programme is supplemented with additional material for the teaching of Christianity which enables most children to have a secure knowledge of Christianity and the Bible. Good displays of RE work provide a stimulating environment and support children’s learning. There is some monitoring of RE, including work sampling and pupil discussions. However the school rightly recognises the need to continue to develop its evaluation systems for RE so that they lead to action plans with a focus on raising standards.

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

The leadership of the school consistently and confidently promote and live out a Christian vision for the school. This Christian vision has a significant impact on children’s sense of well being and thus their academic achievement. The promotion of distinctively Christian values, established by the whole school community after the last inspection, has a positive impact on the whole life of the school. The leadership of the school, together with the governors, work very well as a team and as a result have a clear understanding of the school’s performance and distinctiveness. Foundation governors are proactive in supporting and challenging the school. Self evaluation procedures have improved since the last inspection and now involve the whole school community. An ‘Ethos Group’, formed after the last inspection in 2009, consisting of

children, staff and governors monitors and evaluates the school's Christian distinctiveness. However the school acknowledges the need to review its Christian values and evaluate their impact on the children because many of the staff, almost all the governors and most children are new to the school since the last inspection. The leadership of the school has a good knowledge of the staff and professional development of staff and governors is promoted actively. This has included opportunities for staff to extend and develop their skills by accepting additional responsibilities which will prepare them for future leadership of church schools. The school enjoys excellent relationships with the local church and local community. For example eight members of the local church community run 'The Ark', a popular after school club in which Bible stories are explored and a local lay preacher visits each week to run an 'Open the Book' session for Key Stage 1 children during the day. Children enjoy participating in a wide variety of village events. The school supports a range of charities, for example it responded to a local child with leukaemia by charity fund raising for a year. Parents are particularly supportive of the school and provide help in a variety of ways.

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