



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Wylde Valley Church of England (Voluntary Aided) Primary School

Cherry Orchard
Codford
Warminster
Wiltshire
BA12 0BN

Previous SIAMS grade: Good

Current SIAMS Grade: Outstanding

Diocese: Salisbury

Local authority: Wiltshire

Dates of inspection: 28 04 2015

Date of last inspection: 21 10 2010

School's unique reference number: 134977

Head Teacher: Debi Downing

Inspector's name and number: Dianne Christopher (731)

School context

Wylde Valley Church of England Primary School is situated in a rural village community. It is a smaller than average primary school with 113 pupils on roll. Pupils are from a mixed socio-economic background and pupil turbulence is high. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is above the national average. The number eligible for free school meals is in line with the national average. Almost all pupils speak English as their first language. Attendance is at 96.4% and improving.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Wylde Valley CE Primary School as a Church of England school is outstanding

- The strong and consistent leadership of the head teacher, who together with dedicated governors and a committed staff, is highly effective in promoting the distinctive Christian character of the school.
- Through explicit Christian values pupils are encouraged and supported extremely well in striving to be the best they can be.
- The school environment enables pupils to be active and enjoy their learning whilst also providing opportunities to experience the natural world.

Areas to improve

- Governors to monitor the effectiveness of the succession planning which is in place, ensuring continuity and progression, as the current head teacher moves towards retirement.
- Establish a formal system for regularly monitoring and evaluating collective worship.
- Explore and develop different approaches to RE to ensure engagement of all pupils

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

The distinctive Christian character of this school is outstanding because Christian values clearly permeate all aspects of school life. The school's vision is rooted in "Love, Care and Respect" and celebrated through Christian symbols, displays and artefacts, which are thought provoking, vibrant and exciting, and enthuse the pupils. Christian love is at the root of all that the school achieves, evidenced in the exceptional way that pupils care for each other in even small acts of kindness. Christianity is central to the work of the school. Standards are constantly improving with the majority of pupils making better than expected progress since 2014. Staff and pupils readily confirm that Christian values of love and respect apply to all aspects of the work and they feel valued and appreciated. Additional needs are well supported, enabling pupils to make a positive contribution and achieve their best. Behaviour is exemplary and pupils understand that forgiveness and caring for each other are important parts of friendship. "I could tell anybody anything because we trust each other", was one pupil's comment. Spiritual development is given high priority through the provision of a wide variety of experiences in the arts and through religious education and worship. Well-planned themes ensure that spirituality is treated through each curriculum area. A recent project, "Take One Child", was carefully linked to the school values of 'love and respect' thus enabling pupils to develop skills and understanding, while fully engaging their enthusiasm for learning. The learners are extremely proud of their class portfolios and are keen to talk about them. A wide range of experiences, such as providing Forest School, Louis' Garden and Prayer Club, reflection and quiet moments provide opportunities for thought and prayer. A pupil commented, "It helps me to appreciate the serenity of the moment". Positive attitudes to moral and social issues are delivered through the curriculum, religious education and worship, as well as through experiential activities such as residential trips and visits to London, which impact on pupils' confidence, self-esteem and independence. Diversity is explored through the curriculum and collective worship. The close links with a village in Madurai, India, offer opportunities for pupils to understand different faiths and diversity of cultures. Pupils are very proud of the contribution that they make to life in school. The Prayer Group, Healthy School Committee and Eco Committee are all platforms for pupil expression. The school council is very proud of the contribution it makes to local charities. The "Sports Premium" funds numerous clubs, including the highly valued Forest School that is available to every class, as well as small groups of vulnerable learners. Parent volunteers help to support the gardening, science and art clubs. One parent commented, "Church, school and family are one organism here. They merge together." Another said, "I can't praise this school enough for supporting my son."

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship is outstanding and occupies a place of central importance in the life of the school. Children's spiritual, moral and social development is very well supported through worship because it is planned and structured carefully and based on the school's very distinctive values. Worship covers social and moral issues, as well as taking into account the major Christian festivals. The worship observed was based on the Christian value of 'to love one another' and was led by the head teacher. Pupils were keen to contribute their ideas. Pupils enthusiastically seize opportunities to initiate and lead collective worship and were keen to describe how they re-enacted the Bible story of 'Jesus healing the crippled man'. Worship is focused on a dedicated display area that provides a reflective environment. Biblical references supporting the weekly theme are displayed above this area. Daily worship can be lively and informal enabling pupils to take part in sharing experiences, singing or leading in prayer. The standard of singing in the school is excellent and enhances the collective worship enormously. A pupil commented, 'Worship helps you to know how to behave and be a better person and helps me to know more about God'. Pupils are always consulted when collective worship is evaluated stating that they feel that their ideas are heard. The school is aware that occasionally evaluations of worship are not captured or recorded systematically and therefore thoughts or elements are sometimes missed. Staff clergy and other visitors lead in acts of worship, offering a

wide variety of activities and approaches that support pupils' spiritual development. In particular clergy support the school by reinforcing concepts of the Trinity. As a result pupils have an excellent understanding of the Anglican traditions, knowledge of prayers and responses, as well as traditional hymns. Prayer is a very strong feature throughout the school and contributes to pupils' spiritual development. The school prayer is known by all and displayed clearly, as is the Lord's Prayer. The Prayer group are very enthusiastic and meet together regularly. They all agreed that worship ties the Christian family together in this school. The school meets all statutory requirements for collective worship.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

Religious education has a high profile in the school, reflecting its Christian foundation. Pupils have a good understanding of Christianity and make good progress, as is evident in RE in the high quality portfolios of work. Standards are in line with those attained in other core subjects. RE is well led and managed by the subject leader (head teacher) who demonstrates a clear purpose and sense of direction in leading initiatives to continually raise standards. Assessment is thorough, based on the 'How? What? Why?' questions consistently used in lesson planning throughout the school, and linked to expected curriculum standards. These are supplemented by regular work scrutinies and lesson observations. The school has adopted the Wiltshire approved 'Discovery RE' scheme but also continues to use national curriculum levels so that pupils' progress can be monitored regularly. Challenging questioning encourages learners to think deeply about the 'big questions'. Planned themed days throughout the year, together with the study of Islam and Judaism, support the learners' cultural development. One pupil explains that learning about other faiths 'helps us understand other people better.' The RE lessons observed were all good and demonstrated a consistent approach to teaching and learning. However, both lessons observed lacked pace and pupils were too passive, spending too long listening rather than being engaged in their learning. Pupils demonstrated a high level of understanding, knowledge and thoughtfulness. Their attitudes towards RE are very positive and learners say that they enjoy the subject. The learners' responses, in key stage two, to the question, 'Do you have to go to church to be a Christian?' were mature, innovative and insightful. There was a range of focused and child initiated learning taking place with mixed ages in key stage one, where pupils were engaged in learning about the Jewish 'Shabbat'. The school meets the statutory requirements for religious education.

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

The head teacher, senior leaders and governors provide excellent management and leadership. They are highly effective in articulating the school's Christian character and in promoting and establishing its ethos throughout the school. Christian values are deeply embedded. The head teacher works tirelessly and is passionate about the school. Through a clear understanding of the school performance and Christian distinctiveness, based on effective and insightful self-evaluation, the governors are robust in their challenge of all aspects of school development. The leadership is clear and strategic in supporting all staff and governors in continued professional development. There is a strong commitment to succession leadership planning, particularly in light of the impending retirement of the head teacher. Religious education and worship are given priority within school improvement planning and resources are planned for these as required. Governors have been successful in ensuring that the academic needs of the pupils are met, for example by acquiring the 'Making Maths Make Sense' and 'The Read Write Inc' Literacy scheme, which have impacted positively on pupil attainment. Opinions of parents and learners are sought so that school improvement is constantly under scrutiny. Data collection by the school confirms that the parents value and support the school and believe that matters of faith impact on the successful outcomes for their children. There are close and mutually beneficial links with the two village Churches through shared activities, resources and support.