



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

St Barnabas Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Drove Lane, Market Lavington
Devizes, Wiltshire
SN10 4NT

Previous SIAMS grade: Satisfactory

Current inspection grade: Good

Diocese: Salisbury

Local authority: Wiltshire

Dates of inspection: 21 May 2015

Date of last inspection: 21 April 2010

School's unique reference number: 126380

Headteacher: Jill Hibbs

Inspector's name and number: Linda Windsor (747)

School context

St Barnabas is a much smaller than average primary school with 71 pupils on roll. The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The number of pupils with learning needs is above average as is the proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium. There are three mixed age classes. Attendance is slightly above the national average. There is a before-school club on the premises, run by the school's governing body. In the recent OFSTED inspection the school was judged to be good.

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

- The Christian values of the school are embedded and positively influence pupils' behaviour and attitudes.
- Worship is very well planned with links to the school's values. Worship themes are effectively reinforced across the curriculum, especially in religious education.
- The headteacher leads her team effectively, bringing about significant improvements that are impacting on the personal development of all pupils.
- There are good links with parents, the village community and with local churches and clergy

Areas to improve

- Governors to build on their role as critical friend by more systematically monitoring and evaluating collective worship and the Christian character of the school
- Broaden and deepen staff and pupil understanding of spirituality, building on the progress already made.
- Involve pupils more regularly in the planning and leading collective worship.
- Ensure that pupils have developed an understanding of God as the Father, The Son and the Holy Spirit at age appropriate levels.

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

St Barnabas is a school on a journey of improvement and has made excellent progress in working to achieve its aims. The school reviewed its Christian values last summer, in consultation with all stakeholders, and these are now thoroughly embedded in the daily life of the school. Pupils, in particular, had a voice in the selection of the values and know and understand them well, taking pride in their ownership of them. They are able to link their chosen values to Biblical materials and describe how these affect them in their daily routines. Some pupils described how the values have made the school a better place to be as most pupils now make the right choices, influenced by their values. As a result, the behaviour and attitudes of pupils is very positive and this impacts on their learning, which is good and generally in line with the national average, despite being below average on entry. Vulnerable or underachieving pupils are quickly identified and are well supported, in an atmosphere of Christian love and care, to make progress, even where learning difficulties necessarily means progress is measured in small steps of achievement. There has been a focus on spirituality and staff are developing in confidence in both providing and taking advantage of opportunities that enable pupils to explore ideas and questions, leading to some thoughtful observations and a deeper understanding of themselves, others and the wider world. RE, especially, fosters this with marking that provokes thoughtful responses. Pupils can offer their opinions and are clear that not everyone has the same ideas. They are respectful of others, including those of different faiths and cultures. One pupil said that learning about others showed them that, despite very different ways of worship and lifestyles, "we are really all very much the same." Parents were supportive of the school and were clear that the Christian ethos, always there at the heart of the school, has been strengthened over the last year, leading to better outcomes both academically and socially for their children. A parent who said, "Children thrive in this school because they show them how to be good instead of focusing on the bad", summed this up. Another said, "They encourage our children to be the best they can be."

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

At St Barnabas, collective worship is a focal point in the school day, drawing the community together in an atmosphere of calm reflection. Planning has been improved to make worship times more meaningful for pupils and is linked to their chosen Christian values and to all key events in the Anglican calendar. As each value is focused on, the headteacher has introduced a number of thought provoking questions to engage and interest pupils. These enhance the meaning and purpose of the worship and impact further into school life. The local vicar supports in the delivery of collective worship both in school, on a weekly basis, and in church, for the main festivals. The worship observed, led by the headteacher, was good. A pupil introduced the worship; candles were lit with the special school prayer being said. After some enthusiastic singing, the headteacher introduced the content for the worship, which linked the story of Zacchaeus with the Christian value of forgiveness. Pupils were very involved in discussion throughout and this was then drawn together with questions to reflect on and a closing prayer. Whilst pupils do have opportunities to participate, they would like more opportunities to plan and lead collective worship. Prayer is valued across the school and pupils talk confidently about its purpose. One child explained that prayer is talking to God and that she could do this anytime, anywhere. A parent said her child felt comfortable enough to enjoy the experience of prayer and that the school has enabled pupils to think of prayer as a normal part of life. As yet, there has been little focus on the concept of the Trinity but as the changes to collective worship embed, there will be more opportunities to introduce this effectively. Pupils spoke of the enjoyment of the fortnightly 'Open the Book' sessions. These are clearly valued by all pupils. There are systems to monitor and evaluate worship through pupil feedback as well as staff and governor comments. It is clear that the provision and practice for collective worship has been significantly improved this academic year with good planning linked to Christian values and with good support from the vicar and the foundation governors. All statutory requirements are met.

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

The school has made significant improvements since the last inspection, both academically and in terms of enhancing the Christian ethos of the school. With a clear and comprehensive action plan, the headteacher has been rigorous in ensuring changes have enhanced provision and practice across the school. To this end, she has been well supported by governors who now better understand their role as critical friends and are able to both support and challenge, as appropriate. School self-evaluation shows that the school's Christian values are becoming fully embedded and that their impact is becoming apparent in the learning, behaviour and attitudes of all pupils. Governors have an accurate and realistic view of the school and are clear of the need to consolidate and then to build on current good practice. There is an honesty and integrity shown in the assessment of the school and in discussing its need to improve. Whilst the new Christian values have clearly been the main focus this academic year, governors will need to broaden their monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of the school as a church school, taking into account all aspects of RE, collective worship and ethos. This needs to be systematic and thorough. The new RE leader, with a background in theology, has worked hard to establish herself in this role. She has a good view on standards of RE across the school and works hard to ensure all staff can plan and deliver RE effectively. She is aware of aspects of RE leadership she has still to cover but her enthusiasm and obvious desire to be excellent in her role will ensure her continuous development. She is an asset to the school. Recent staff changes have supported school development, with recruitment procedures ensuring all new staff are in sympathy with the school's church status. The school is active in this small village community and there are excellent links with the local clergy and churches. Pupils regularly participate in village events, such as the May Fair, when a pupil unveiled a memorial stone to commemorate the start of World War I. Governors and clergy are well known in school, supporting in worship and keeping abreast with all developments, especially those focused on ethos. Leadership and management are now judged as good but this step is very recent and needs to be built on to ensure continued progress. Development points from the previous SIAS have been addressed. The school meets the statutory requirements for religious education.

SIAMS report May 2015 St Barnabas CE VC School, Market Lavington Wilts SN10 4NT