



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

The Manor Church of England Voluntary Controlled School

Ruskin Avenue
Melksham
Wiltshire SN12 7NG

Previous SIAS grade: Outstanding

Current SIAMS grade: Good

Diocese: Salisbury

Local Authority: N/A

Date of inspection: 13 May 2015

Date of last inspection: July 2010

School's unique reference number: 134992

Headteacher: Kerry Haines

Inspector's name and number: Sally Naish 780

School context

The Manor is an average size primary school with 258 pupils in the centre of Melksham in an area of some social need. The majority of children are from a White British heritage. Pupil numbers are rising. There are significant numbers of children with special or additional needs. The school's resource base for complex special needs, serving a wide area of Wiltshire, is due to close in August 2015. There are very effective links with local churches and the community. The school has recently formed a multi-academy trust with six other local schools.

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

- The care and concern shown by the staff in order for every child to reach their potential reflects the school's core Christian values which are lived out by every member of staff.
- The strong relationship with the church and the community results in mutual support and fellowship.

Areas to improve

- Link and embed the core Christian values with the school's ethos so that together they form an explicit, coherent Christian framework to inform and support the daily life of the school and the achievement of all learners.
- Evaluate the impact of collective worship on the whole school community in order to support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and inform future planning.

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

The school has had changes in leadership and status since the last inspection, changing to an academy and subsequently becoming part of a multi-academy trust. The original core Christian value statement, 'You are amazing, loved, valued, wonderful and unique because God made you that way,' has been strengthened and is articulated in the way the school treats each child as special and equal. Governors note that these values are lived out implicitly in the every day life of the school. Staff are passionate about trying to find a way to break down every barrier that prevents children from learning. They work hard to tackle low achievement. Achievement is below Government floor targets partly because of the inclusive approach which welcomes children with additional needs who find it hard to make as much progress as other children. The school challenges attendance robustly and finds many ways to support families and vulnerable pupils. Behaviour is predominantly good, although some children can display very challenging behaviour. While the school is inclusive, it is prepared to exclude children whose behaviour causes safety issues. The school provides many opportunities to develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally, particularly through 'house days' which are fun, relaxed and focus on trying new experiences in family groups. On these days children are encouraged to ask 'big' questions and are guided by staff to find the answers themselves. Whilst these are opportunities to experience spirituality, the school does not have a clear, shared definition of spirituality so that ways to identify and develop spiritual concepts are reduced. Building on its implicit Christian values, the school makes a good contribution to the community, singing 'old time songs' in a residential home to help focus memories. They also help in a nearby nature reserve as part of their whole school 'global challenge' topic and take part in the annual Remembrance parade. There are numerous exciting activities organised by school including residential trips from Year 1. Pupil premium funding is partly used to fund extra curricular activities so everyone can participate. Children have a basic understanding of Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith, but have a limited understanding of the Trinity and some Christian festivals. Religious Education (RE) is taught partly through the whole school creative curriculum, for example the story of Creation in the topic 'the Big Bang' but also discretely, in order that the RE curriculum content is covered. The children have a good understanding of other faiths and can compare them to Christian beliefs. Time is given in RE for philosophical discussion which builds confidence in speaking and reasoning although written work does not always reflect some of this deep thinking.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is satisfactory

Every day starts with an act of collective worship which is enjoyed by children and staff. The tone is set by the use of a worship table and lighting of a candle to show that Jesus is 'the light of the world'. Children are given the opportunity to respond through talk partners. They particularly enjoy the weekly ecumenical Open the Book worship and can articulate the importance of these stories. Children remember parables which are subsequently updated to modern day parables so that they can link them to their everyday experiences. Staff in weekly celebration assemblies refer to the Christian values statement boldly displayed in the hall to reinforce their importance and ensure children feel unique, valued and loved. Children enjoy services in church at harvest, Christmas, Easter and at the end of the year and these are well supported by parents. Each 'house' takes a turn, with minimal support from staff, to organise these services, writing prayers and retelling the Bible stories. This helps to develop the confidence, persistence, organisation and communication skills that the school tries to inculcate through the school ethos. However, they do not usually have the opportunity to develop these skills in everyday worship in school. Children also use the church as part of the curriculum contributing to the Angel festival at Michaelmas at St Michael and all Angels Church. The input is valued by the congregation and the vicar is very active at school as a governor, adviser and as pastoral support. Children know the Lord's Prayer and school prayer and Grace is said at lunchtime. However, apart from formal worship, children do not have many other opportunities to write and think about prayer or compose their own prayers to share and do not readily articulate its relevance to their lives. Children also have limited understanding of different church traditions or symbols. Collective worship is not yet good because, although there are stimulating materials to help the planning of worship there

is no formal shared planning or evaluation which limits the school's ability to assess its impact on the lives of the children. This was an area to develop in the last inspection.

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

The headteacher has brought the Christian value statement, 'You are amazing, loved, valued, wonderful and unique because God made you that way,' to life. It is accessible and memorable but does not link readily with the school's ethos statement describing the learning attributes needed to become an independent learner who is 'confident, persistent, organised, resourceful, communicative and motivated'. This limits the effectiveness of the Christian vision of the school and its impact on the school community. However, the passion of staff and governors to make a difference to the life chances of the children shines out in every aspect of school life and is seen by them as living out Christian values. The RE subject leader has made good progress in improving the quality of RE teaching in school; teachers have more confidence because they have good resources and support and children speak positively of their experiences. There have been opportunities for the subject leader to attend training to improve teaching and learning in RE. The school is very positive about support and training from the diocese. Both RE and collective worship meet statutory requirements. There is a comprehensive RE action plan and regular work scrutinies. Governors act as supportive yet critical friends and are very visible in school. There is an Ethos committee which meets termly with the RE coordinator to monitor the subject formally. It reports to the governors' standards committee annually. In addition, there is a children's version of this committee, the 'Inspire group' which acts as the voice of the children. The group has instigated a 'toilet twinning' charity in school and is planning a reflective area on the field. Parents and carers appreciate the fact that the school treats every child as an individual and praise the free after school clubs. They are given many opportunities to participate in school events although take up is often low. Whole school topics like 'Global Challenge' help children begin to understand about issues in the wider world. The school identifies more reflection time in class as a development area. It has a good reputation locally because of its community involvement and the children's good behaviour. The new multi-academy trust, which includes other church schools, is seen to be supporting the development of Christian character through mutual support and collaboration.

SIAMS report May 2015 The Manor VC Primary School, Ruskin Avenue, Melksham SN12 7NG