



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Okeford Fitzpaine Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Okeford Fitzpaine
Blandford
Dorset
DT11 0RF

Previous SIAMS grade: Good

Current SIAMS grade: Good

Diocese: Salisbury

Local authority: Dorset

Dates of inspection: 15 June 2015

Date of last inspection: 20 July 2010

School's unique reference number: 113810

Acting Headteacher: Alan Frame

Inspector's name and number: Marcia Headon 761

School context

Okeford Fitzpaine is a small primary serving the local village and surrounding area. It has 55 pupils aged between 4 and 11. The vast majority of children are of white British heritage. The proportion of children with special educational needs and or physical disabilities is well below national averages. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for the additional funding known as the pupil premium is broadly average. The school is shortly due to join the Shaftesbury Multi Academy Trust (MAT). An acting headteacher is currently working in the school for two days a week.

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

- The revised values which are well understood by the pupils exert a strong influence on the work of the school.
- The strong support of the local clergy and their involvement in the life of the school has enhanced the experiences of the pupils.
- The Christian love, care and support given to all pupils by the staff.

Areas to improve

- Ensure that marking in Religious Education (RE) gives pupils greater guidance on how to improve their work.
- Develop the opportunities for pupils to be able to deepen their spirituality by allowing time for reflection and deep questioning.
- Extend the opportunities for the greater involvement of all stakeholders in evaluating Collective Acts of Worship and the distinctiveness of the church school.

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

The school plays a central role in the life of the community. Its long history in the village as a church school is recognised and celebrated by pupils, staff, governors and others within the locality. Following a highly successful Values Day run by the local clergy, the school's recently revisited values are becoming more strongly embedded in its everyday work. Pupils explain easily how the values of love, respect, honesty, courage and faith are relevant to them and how they are illustrated in different Bible stories from both the Old and New Testaments. Staff in the school know the individual children well and one pupil compared it to being like a small loving family where everyone helps one another even when they fall out. After a dip in 2013, standards at the end of Year 6 rose rapidly in 2014. In 2015 all pupils in Year 6 are predicted to achieve at least level 4 in reading, and the vast majority also in writing and mathematics. All pupils in Year 1 are predicted to pass the phonics test. Pupils make good progress from their starting points and children with special educational needs and disabilities are well supported. Pupils attend school willingly and attendance is above national averages. Relationships within the school are excellent. Staff are very strong role models of Christian behaviour. Most children know right from wrong and are beginning to use the language of the values of the school when they consider any minor misbehaviour. Their social development is influenced by the Christian ethos of the school. They help one another willingly and seek to aid others. For example, they run a Fairtrade sweet stall to raise money and recently sent two gardening kits to Africa as a result of a plant sale from their gardening club. They have raised money for the victims of the Nepal earthquake. The pupils understanding about diverse communities is increasing. In religious education (RE) there is comprehensive teaching about other faiths with visits to a Hindu temple and a Jewish visitor coming to talk. The school has recently held a 'Jamaica Day' and an 'Australia Day'. However, the children are less aware of the diversity within the Christian faith. Pupils' spiritual development is not as strong and there is not always sufficient time given to allow pupils to reflect either in lessons or in worship. Some pupils are beginning to ask 'the big questions' but planning for this aspect of the curriculum is less well advanced.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship is well organised and structured. It is planned carefully with the local clergy who, with the staff and pupils, play a central role in leading acts of worship. The pupils enjoy worship and participate enthusiastically. They explain how acts of worship influence them and are related to the school's values. A particularly memorable assembly about Jacob and Esau was linked by the pupils with the value of honesty. Year 5 and 6 pupils set up the hall for collective worship and 'The 'KFC' club helps with planning and delivering acts of worship half termly. However, there is room for pupils to be more involved in the planning and leading of collective worship. Music and singing are enthusiastically embraced and pupils make responses to simple liturgy such as the Peace and join in the Lord's Prayer with confidence. A number of clergy from different Anglican traditions come to lead collective acts of worship and this means pupils experience a wide range of Anglican liturgy. All acts of worship include Bible readings and prayer and follow the festivals of the Christian calendar. At these important times of the year the pupils attend services in the local church. Children enjoy going to the local church, regarding it as their own special place for worship. These are very well attended by parents, as are the celebration assemblies. Although some evaluation of collective worship has been undertaken by the KFC Club this is not yet fully developed and does not involve all stakeholders. Christian teaching in worship means there is a growing understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit and most children were able to explain this in their own way. The school and the pupils value prayer. Pupils write prayers for assembly and for their own use in class. Grace is said before lunch and the governors use prayer before their meetings and when making staff appointments. The school has a quiet area where pupils can reflect, but the school recognises this is an aspect for development.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

Standards in RE are similar to other subjects in the school and are generally good. Pupils make progress especially in developing their knowledge of Bible stories and of other faiths. A mixed group of Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils showed a very effective understanding of what a Hindu mandir looks like and how Hindus pray. They were able to make simple comparisons with Christian churches. However, pupils make less progress in learning how religions, both Christian and non-Christian, affect their everyday lives. Sufficient emphasis is not always placed upon giving pupils time to reflect on this aspect of their work. The school has recently begun to use 'I can' statements to assess work and while marking in books offers encouragement and praise, it does not provide pupils with enough guidance as to the next steps they should take to improve their work. Pupils enjoy RE, particularly the discussions and activities in the lessons. They like the wide variety of resources which are used such as videos, ipads to take pictures and to tape interviews. Teaching in RE is generally good. In a Year 3/4 lesson pupils were busily engaged in discussing miracles. The work had been carefully matched to the ability and age range of the pupils. Older pupils were considering modern day miracles while the younger pupils were discussing whether they could prove some of the miracles of Jesus. The RE coordinator has a thorough understanding of the curriculum. She takes her role very seriously and is keen to develop the RE within the school. She meets regularly with other RE coordinators within the pyramid of schools and has attended a number of training courses run by the Diocese. She has also visited other schools in the pyramid to observe other practice. She is fully aware of the need to ensure lessons are planned for progression throughout the school. She has recently undertaken a learning walk and has monitored some books but currently no internal or external moderation has taken place of the work. RE is given appropriate curriculum time and meets the National Society statement of entitlement for RE.

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

The faith of the school has sustained it through a period of turbulence in staffing. The acting headteacher has brought much needed stability and in his leadership he models the values of the school very effectively. The school's self-evaluation is perceptive and accurate and there is a vision for the future direction of the school within a multi academy trust of like-minded church schools. The Governing Body is very effective and has steered the school well in difficult times. Through its Ethos Committee it articulates the church school distinctiveness as providing a caring and mutually supportive Christian ethos that maximizes the learning power for individuals and thus enhances the community as a whole. However, it recognizes the need to develop more formal ways to evaluate the church school distinctiveness. Governors visit regularly, know the strengths and weaknesses of the school and provide support and challenge. They are very assiduous in their roles and ensure that they keep themselves up to date with regular training sessions. Links with the local churches are well developed. The local clergy support the teaching in RE very effectively for example demonstrating a baptism service to younger pupils to enable them to develop their understanding of services, through running clubs such as Rock Solid Club for pupils after school and through offering confirmation classes to those who wish to be confirmed. Volunteers from the church also provide help with reading, and running after school events. The school takes the professional development of staff seriously and has provided development opportunities for the leader of RE. Links with the Diocese and the Diocesan Board of Education are well developed. The visit of the Bishop of Salisbury on the two hundredth anniversary of the school was a highlight of the year for many pupils. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. They consider their children are being taught values for life.