



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Ullesthorpe Church of England Primary School

Ashby Road
Ullesthorpe
LE17 5DN

Diocese: Leicester

Local authority: Leicestershire

Dates of inspection: 17th October 2014

Date of last inspection: 1st October 2010

School's unique reference number: 120169

Headteacher: David Maksymiw

Inspector's name and number: Liz Youngman 465

School context

Ullesthorpe Church of England Primary School is a small village school serving a rural area. There are currently 101 pupils on roll, mostly white British children. This is an increase following a significant drop in numbers three years ago. Children come to the school from surrounding villages that includes a site for travellers. 10% of pupils are travellers and there are above average numbers of children with special educational needs or a disability. The headteacher has been in post for three years, appointed temporarily at short notice at the request of the local authority and governors. This year he is part-time on phased retirement. Governors have appointed a deputy headteacher who covers the headteacher's role on his non-working days.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Ullesthorpe C of Primary School as a Church of England school are good.

- The head teacher articulates a clear Christian vision for the school that is shared by staff and other stakeholders, making its Christian distinctiveness clear to all
- Children respond exceptionally well to collective worship and the high quality religious education provided
- A commitment to the achievement of individuals, driven by the Christian ethos of the school, results in strong academic standards and progress for pupils
- The leadership of the rector, working with governors, enhances the Christian distinctiveness of the school

Areas to improve

- Make the school's Christian values more explicit in the life of the school and documentation, including the website, so as to reflect current practice
- Develop key areas of the school environment both inside and outside to better reflect the school's Christian character, with focal points that encourage children's spiritual development
- Involve all stakeholders in the systematic evaluation of collective worship to inform future development

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

This school, driven by its Christian ethos, strongly promotes acceptance of all and valuing individuals. The headteacher's view that "being a church school has helped raise standards" in many areas, including in teaching and learning and in relationships, is supported by inspection evidence. There are very positive relationships between staff and pupils and between staff and parents. There has been exemplary work by the school to improve relationships between different sections of the village and traveller communities. This work, based firmly on the teaching of Jesus, has impacted on all aspects of school life and in the wider community. It is reflected in the increased numbers on roll after a fall three years ago and good attendance at events, like a PTA picnic, to which the whole village community was invited. Parents describe the change in really strong terms, emphasising that now "difference is valued here". The impact of the school's Christian ethos is also evident in standards and progress achieved by pupils, including those in vulnerable groups; showing that their needs are being met well. The social and moral development of pupils has rightly been a high priority recently to promote community cohesion and embed the Christian distinctiveness of the school. Spiritual and cultural development, whilst well promoted overall, require further improvement. Therefore the new class 'Reflection Books' to give pupils the opportunity to respond and show their developing spirituality are a positive initiative. Quality Religious Education is given a high priority in the curriculum contributing strongly to the Christian character of the school. The Christian values of the school are not made explicit enough to staff or pupils, though they were articulated very clearly by the headteacher. Trust, forgiveness, honesty and acceptance were all very evident in the school's work.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good.

Collective worship is at the centre of this school's life. It is enjoyed by children who take its Christian message into school life and beyond. The development of prayer has been given a high profile, following the lead by the rector. In special services such as Harvest Festival, well attended by parents, there has been a noticeable effort to successfully create a more worshipful and spiritual atmosphere. These special festival services are now held in church with children involved in leading the worship, including the prayers. All staff are involved in planning and leading daily worship, keeping detailed records. There is insufficient evaluation by children to inform the development of collective worship. The school makes good use of the distinctively Christian themes for collective worship provided by the diocese, sharing these with the school community in newsletters. Collective worship is firmly based on the centrality of the life and teaching of Jesus; a focus on developing children's understanding of the Trinity is less strong. A series on the fruits of the Spirit, including kindness, had led a child to say that she was going to share her last chocolate because it was a kind thing to do. This highlights the impact of the Christian teaching on children's own lives. Reflection corners in each classroom are designed to allow children to pause and reflect but there is little evidence of their use by children during the school day.

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

The headteacher, in partnership with a changing staff team and active governors, has led the school well through a period of development as a church school over the last three years. The school has benefited from valued support and challenge from the rector and foundation governors. There is now a very clear Christian vision expressed by the headteacher and shared by governors and staff. They have worked together to revise the school aims, raising the profile of its church school status. Innovations such as the 'Governors' Saturday Strategy' meetings have ensured that the school improvement plan has put Christian distinctiveness as a priority for the last two years. All this focused work is having a positive impact on pupil achievement and the well-being of the whole school community. The continued development

and future leadership of the school as a church school has been well planned for with the promotion of a teacher to a new deputy headteacher role, whilst the headteacher is part time and on phased retirement. The leadership of RE and Collective worship are given a high priority in the development of middle leaders. The rector takes a strong strategic role on the governing body. There are active links with the diocese and the cathedral that benefit pupils.

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