



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

### St Peter's Church of England Primary Academy

Lord's Mead  
Chippenham  
Wiltshire  
SN14 0LL

**Previous SIAMS grade: Not previously inspected as an academy**

**Current inspection grade: Outstanding**

**Diocese: Bristol**

Local authority: N/A

Date of inspection: 14 October 2015

Date of last inspection: N/A

School's unique reference number: 141274

Headteacher: Mark Everett

Inspector's name and number: Patricia Morris 626

#### School context

St Peter's is an averaged sized primary academy with 200 children on roll. The majority of children are of white British heritage. The number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is slightly higher than the national average. The proportion of children supported by pupil premium is below the national average. St Peter's became part of the Diocese of Bristol Academies Trust in September 2014. The headteacher has been in post since September 2015.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Peter's as a Church of England school are outstanding

- Excellent relationships and a shared vision between all members of the school community ensure each child is nurtured and valued as an individual.
- Core Christian values make a significant contribution to children's behaviour and attitudes to learning.
- High quality teaching and experiences contribute to children's growing awareness of their own spirituality.
- Inspirational collective worship and a diversity of leaders provide rich experiences that engage and challenge children.

#### Areas to improve

- Improve opportunities for governors to be more formally involved in the monitoring and evaluation of religious education and collective worship and their impact on the Christian distinctiveness of the school.
- Improve the effectiveness of assessment in RE by ensuring that good practice is shared across the whole school to provide greater continuity of approach.
- Improve the impact of collective worship by involving children to a greater extent in leading the direction in which worship themes are explored.

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

Distinctive Christian values are clearly expressed and all members of the school community clearly articulate their significant impact on the daily lives of children. As a result behaviour and manners are of a very high standard and relationships across the school are excellent. Four core values are underpinned by explicit questioning which is used to successfully challenge children's thinking about each value, how they are used in Jesus' teachings and how they extend into the wider community. The introduction of a specific symbol to represent each value means they are distinctive in every area of school and have an exceptional impact on children who see them as 'visual reminders wherever we go'. Children speak extremely proudly about the way they use these symbols to exclusively pinpoint where values are reflected in the many vibrant displays around the school. This extends to reflection areas in every classroom where treasure boxes are used to 'discover the values within us' as one child stated and then continued to explain the difference between heavenly and earthly treasures. An outdoor reflection garden with Bible verses and prayers is highly valued by children as is a wooded area including hens and growing areas which are carefully tended by a nature group. The impact of this is apparent in the respectful way children talk about God's creation and the way the four benches represent the elements that 'God gave us for good reasons'. These regular high quality experiences contribute greatly to children's spiritual and moral development. Children express their thoughts and feelings confidently and with real empathy for others. They say they feel safe and that adults always listen to them. This can be seen in the nurturing way staff interact with children, constantly referring to school values. Religious education makes a significant contribution to the Christian character of the school and to children's spiritual and cultural development. Children engage with enthusiasm in lessons and have excellent attitudes to learning. They show great respect for other faiths and beliefs and have a very good understanding of Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith. This is apparent through displays comparing similarities and differences between Christianity and other faiths and the knowledgeable way in which children discuss their work.

### **The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding**

Collective worship is inspirational and a very important part of school life. Four core Christian values are clearly identified and effectively used to support worship and have a positive impact on all children. Worship is recognised as being special 'because everyone is there and wants to be involved'. As a result, it thoroughly engages children and is fully inclusive. This is reflected in children's enthusiastic contributions and the way in which they listen so respectfully. Candles are lit at the beginning of worship to represent God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit and a fourth candle to represent everybody there. Children's familiarity with this is reflected by comments from even the youngest children 'God is one but he is made of three parts'. A wide variety of leaders for worship and the way it is delivered through drama, improvisation and creative use of resources contribute to children's enjoyment and enthusiasm. Excellent links are made between stories from the Bible and the school's core values that are clearly rooted in the teachings of Jesus. High profile displays reflect examples how the teachings of Jesus demonstrate these values and have relevance in children's lives today. Opportunities for reflection are initiated through carefully chosen questions appropriate for different year groups to contemplate in a quiet time at the end of worship. Themes challenge children to take responsibility for their own actions as well as responsibility towards others. They have an excellent understanding of prayer and have many opportunities to write their own prayers and share them in worship. A prayer club takes place on a weekly basis for younger children who presented prayers in the shape of their hands with each digit representing a different aspect of prayer. As a result, prayer is clearly valued and has a central part in school life. A special song written by a local minister for the school is sung proudly and with feeling as part of worship. The words have a very positive impact on children because it was written especially for them and they confidently quote how they want 'to soar like eagles' and 'shine like stars'. There are excellent links with the local church and parents

speaking of the local vicar as being an extremely positive and valuable influence. Children visit the church for worship on a weekly basis as well as the vicar taking worship in the school. His enthusiasm excites the children and this is reflected in the way they talk about their participation in celebrations such as Pentecost and Christingle. Planning for worship is thorough and some evaluation takes place through children's feedback although it is acknowledged that more formal monitoring and evaluation needs to take place.

### **The effectiveness of the religious education is good**

Religious education (RE) has a high profile within the school curriculum and is valued as a core subject. Standards of attainment are at least in line with other core subjects with a number of children attaining higher than national expectations. Religious education is well planned and the new co-ordinator has high expectations of the way in which it is taught. As a result, the majority of teaching is very good with some outstanding aspects although best practice has yet to be shared across the school as acknowledged in the very thorough action plan. Children are enthusiastic about RE and the creative opportunities it gives for drama and art. They apply prior knowledge to help them answer challenging questions thoughtfully and with purpose. For example, when asked for opinions children first discuss the pros and cons with each other before making a decision. These experiences impact positively on spiritual, moral and social development. Opportunities for reflection are well linked to school values. Children share their feelings and opinions confidently knowing others will respect and listen to them. As a result children make good progress and are thoroughly engaged in lessons. Work is annotated and next steps have been introduced with opportunities for children to reflect on their work. The excellent subject knowledge and hard work of the co-ordinator is reflected in the planning and the very good links between the local church and the Diocese. Staff training is well supported by Diocesan visits and appropriate courses. Visits to church enhance the curriculum and give children first hand opportunities to experience Christian festivals and celebrations. For example, the annual Bethlehem pilgrimage held in the church when children dress as they did in Jesus' lifetime has a huge impact on children who speak of such events with enthusiasm and real understanding. Children are aware of a number of different faiths that are studied in RE. Displays reflect good understanding of similarities and differences between these faiths and Christianity. Visitors from other faiths are welcomed into school to share their faith and culture and the impact of this is reflected in children's good knowledge and the respect they show for other's beliefs. Opportunities to fund raise for local and global communities through specific charities also contribute to children's awareness of Christianity as a world faith. Assessment involves interviews with children and learning walks. The co-ordinator effectively communicates improvements in teaching and learning in RE to senior leaders, staff and governors but acknowledges that more formal monitoring and assessment needs to be developed and to involve more members of the school community.

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

The smooth transition from the previous headteacher to the current headteacher has been instrumental in maintaining and developing the outstanding leadership and management of the school. The headteacher is highly motivated and consistently promotes and lives out a vision based on distinctive Christian values. There are excellent relationships between all members of the school community and support from staff and governors ensure a shared vision in moving the school forward. Governors have an excellent knowledge of the strengths of the school and areas for development. As a result of their challenging questioning and very strong commitment and involvement in the school there is continual development of the Christian ethos. The local vicar who is also the chair of governors is stated as being 'a great resource' to the school with his enthusiasm, commitment and regular input. Parents feel welcome in the school and especially recognise the excellent support of the vicar and the headteacher and praise the open door policy. They especially appreciate the committed work of teaching assistants in supporting their children and state that 'they go beyond the call of duty'. As well as annual questionnaires, a suggestion box for parents and children has recently been initiated and ideas are shared in the

newsletter before being acted upon. Parents appreciate their involvement in the launch of the school as an Academy and they support staff and governors in their successful commitment to maintain and develop the Christian ethos of the school. The leadership of RE and worship is given a high priority in the school. There is highly effective support for staff which makes a positive impact on the confidence of teachers. Self-evaluation strongly identifies the impact of Christian values on the lives of children and is secure in ensuring continued improvement within a school development plan clearly promoting Christian values.

SIAMS report October 2015 St Peter's CE Primary Academy Chippenham Wiltshire SN14 0LL