



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Guilsborough Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

The Green
Guilsborough
NN6 8PT

Previous SIAMS grade: Good

Current inspection grade: Good

Diocese: Peterborough

Local authority: Northamptonshire
Date of inspection: 2 February 2016
Date of last inspection: February 2011
School's unique reference number: 122022
Headteacher: Yvonne Watts
Inspector's name and number: Janet McMurdo 529

School context

This is a smaller than average school located in a village to the north of Northampton. Pupils come from Guilsborough and a number of nearby villages and are predominantly White British. The proportion of pupils supported by pupil premium funding is well below the national average. The number of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is also well below that of similar schools nationally. The headteacher has been in post since June 2014.

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

- The dedication and commitment of the headteacher, senior leaders and staff to meet the needs of every child, enabling them to flourish within a secure Christian environment.
- The welcoming, inclusive Christian ethos, creates a supportive and loving family community to which everyone is proud to belong.
- The partnership between the church and the school is valued by everyone thus enhancing the distinctiveness of this church school community.

Areas to improve

- Formalise the systems for the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the school as a church school in order to support the self-evaluation and strategic planning.
- Increase pupils' confidence in planning, leading and evaluating worship in order to promote their sense of responsibility and opportunities for spiritual exploration.
- Ensure that systematic monitoring of teaching and learning in RE results in high expectations across the school

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

The school is popular with parents many of whom send their children to the school because it has strong Christian values. The headteacher has a resolute set of values which are respected and supported throughout the school community. She leads by example in ensuring that the care and well-being of pupils is of the highest standard. The Christian values permeate the whole school and are reflected in the excellent relationships across the school. Throughout the day pupils all work and play together within a caring and harmonious atmosphere. Every pupil is encouraged to achieve well in both their academic and personal skills. Standards of attainment in Reading, Writing and Maths are in line for key stage 1 and above the national average for key stage 2 across the school. Pupils learn well because teachers care for them and ensure they enjoy lessons whilst working hard. They appreciate the importance of equal opportunities, fairness and justice which contribute to their very high standard of behaviour. Pupils' spiritual development is supported by the priority given to prayer and reflection around the school and through the RE curriculum. Pupils talk confidently about Christian values both in lessons and to adults around school. All aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development are good. Pupils learn and understand about Christianity and especially about Anglican traditions. The headteacher, the foundation governors and the vicar provide excellent support for pupils' developing views. Pupils' appreciation of Christianity as a world-wide faith is not fully developed though they do have some understanding. There are good links with schools in other countries which supports pupils' growing respect for diversity and difference within the church and other faith communities. Parents are very supportive of the school and of the headteacher. They recognise that Christian values permeate school life and that the provision in RE in particular supports their children's character development. Christian fellowship is demonstrated by the school and parents working well together to encourage good attendance which is above the national average.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Great value is placed on collective worship and its place in the routine life of the school clearly impacts on all members of the school community. Older pupils help with organising worship and in the saying of prayers. All children enjoy being chosen to participate in the weekly 'Open the Book' Bible story telling drama. Collective worship is well planned and is linked effectively to Christian values. Themes are relevant and pay attention to learners' spiritual and moral development. There are frequent references to God and Jesus within worship; this enables all children to articulate a good understanding of Jesus Christ and God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Resources to support worship are good and create a reflective and respectful atmosphere within the school hall. In addition opportunities for prayer and periods of reflection occur regularly throughout the day. Candles are used to help pupils develop an understanding of Anglican traditions and the appreciation of Jesus as the Light of the World. Pupils' participation and enjoyment in worship helps their understanding of the impact of Christian values on their lives. Questioning and responses within collective worship confirm that pupils have a good understanding of what Christian values mean. The impact of collective worship is shown by older pupils' confidence in discussing their experiences about previous acts of worship. They explain how visitors and activities within worship make the worship memorable. At present there are too few opportunities for pupils to be involved in the planning and monitoring of this important aspect of school life. Pupils attend the local church for Christian festivals and special school events. They speak warmly about the recently introduced 'Open the Church' which welcomes parents as well as children into a monthly extended service. Although the collective worship team monitor its impact, they do not as yet systematically present their findings to the governing body of the school.

The effectiveness of religious education is good

Pupils' work shows that all pupils make good progress from their individual starting points in RE. Attainment levels at the end of Key Stage 2 are in line with English and Maths within the school.

This is because learners, who are motivated and enjoy lessons, are all given the support they need. The school promotes a 'can do' culture and this is shown in pupils' good standards of presentation of their written work. Teaching of RE is good. The RE co-ordinator, a member of the senior leadership team, is benefitting from increased access to diocesan courses to improve her skills in line with her enthusiasm. She is now able to fully support the teaching team with an increased range of teaching strategies. The new assessment system enables teachers to judge the progress of pupils as they move through the school. This system is new and is not fully embedded and therefore the impact on achievement is minimal at this stage. The development of a curriculum cycle for RE ensures that the teaching of Christianity is effective whilst also developing pupils' understanding of other faiths and cultures. RE is seen as an important subject in the school and the time allocated meets requirements. The school has chosen to base the RE curriculum on the Peterborough Agreed Syllabus which provides for pupils of all abilities. Pupils all have one RE lesson each week and the balance of learning activities makes a good contribution to Christian values and to pupils' good SMSC development. Pupils talk confidently about religious concepts and can ask questions and 'debate' issues with their teachers and each other. On the day of the inspection children were working together to develop their thinking in relation to peace; they report that this is typical of RE work and an aspect they particularly enjoy.

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

The headteacher is having a positive impact on the Christian nature of the school and its ongoing development as a church school. She is supported in this by governors, parents and pupils, who clearly articulate the impact of the Christian values on the whole life of the school. The strong Christian vision also impacts positively on the well-being of all members of the school community. All the areas for development from last inspection have been well addressed. The Christian vision, developed by the school is reviewed routinely. Evidence indicates that the Christian ethos has a positive impact on standards of achievement. However, governor monitoring and evaluation is not yet systematic enough to inform the ongoing strategic development of the school as a church school. The headteacher and staff have recently begun to make good use of the training provided by Peterborough Diocese. These opportunities have led to changes in school policy and the strengthening of the school as a church school. The foundation governors are regular visitors helping with day to day activities such as hearing children read. This helps them to know the school well and establish positive relationships. More formally governors act as a critical friend particularly in the school's self-evaluation so fulfilling their strategic role. The relatively new vicar is a regular visitor. He offers both pastoral care for the headteacher and school community and monitors and feeds back on the quality of collective worship and Christian distinctiveness. The regular governor/staff conversations inform the development of the school but are not always recorded. The school has a developing relationship with a multi-cultural school in Northampton and is seeking ways for this to be further developed. Arrangements for RE and collective worship meet statutory requirements. Teachers are now supported to develop their skills as future Christian leaders.

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