



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Pytchley Endowed Church of England Primary School

High Street
Pytchley
Kettering
Northamptonshire
NN14 1EN

Previous SIAMS grade: Good
Current inspection grade: Good

Diocese: Peterborough

Local authority: N/A
Date of inspection: 15 June 2016
Date of last inspection: June 2011
School's unique reference number: 122028
Headteacher: Julia Havlickova
Inspector's name and number: Janet Northing 792

School context

Pytchley Endowed Church of England Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school. Approximately 25% of pupils attending the school live in the village of Pytchley itself with other pupils coming from Kettering and the surrounding villages. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is similar to that of schools nationally. The number of pupils with special educational needs is above the national average. In September 2015 the school joined Peterborough Diocese Educational Trust (PDET).

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

- The Christian foundation of the school impacts positively on all areas of school life enabling pupils to know that they are unique and valued by God.
- The school's Christian values promote a culture of respect and forgiveness resulting in positive relationships across the school community.
- Prayer and reflection are regular features of school life supporting pupils in their spiritual development.

Areas to improve

- Establish a more robust and rigorous system to monitor and evaluate the impact of the Christian ethos, collective worship and religious education (RE).
- Ensure that RE challenges more able pupils so that they make accelerated progress and achieve higher levels of attainment.
- Provide regular experiences for pupils to plan, lead and evaluate collective worship to develop their leadership skills and appreciation of worship still further.

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

Christian values of respect, responsibility, truth and friendship are guiding principles lying at the heart of this school community. As a consequence of their learning in RE children readily articulate biblical links to the school values. In so doing they demonstrate a depth of theological understanding and application of the values to their own lives. For example, a Year 6 child, when referring to the value of respect, used the example of Noah as someone who shows both respect to God and to the world God created. The Christian character of the school impacts positively on attitudes to learning, resulting in improving levels of progress and attainment for all groups of pupils. Parents speak supportively of the impact of the school's Christian environment on their children's academic and personal development. Pastoral support based on the Christian values means that pupils and their families are well cared for should difficulties arise. As a consequence, children are eager to come to school and attendance is in line with expectations nationally. Pupils have ownership of their behaviour through establishing their own code of conduct based on resolving issues through reflection and forgiveness. RE makes a major contribution to children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development. Planned experiences to support children's spiritual growth are also evident in a wide range of curricular subjects. For example, a spiritual day for children in Years 3 and 4 involved them in painting in the style of a particular Christian artist. In addition, the use of natural objects is the inspiration for the creation of spiritual artwork depicted on displays in the classroom. A themed global curriculum, focusing on a range of countries over the academic year, complements children's learning in RE by effectively deepening their awareness of cultural and religious diversity. The multi-cultural nature of the curriculum also supports their appreciation of the place of Christianity within the wider world.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship is an important and influential part of school life. Central themes for worship include focusing on the school values in their Christian context through Bible stories. In addition, the school celebrates Christian festivals as part of the Church's liturgical calendar. Biblical teaching helps the children to understand the importance of Jesus Christ within the Christian faith and in worship. Pupils talk of worship as a special time to think about God and Jesus and to reflect on things happening in their own lives. Children recognise that the lit candle symbolises the presence of Jesus the Saviour of the World, 'who brings us light if we are in darkness'. This indicates the positive impact of worship on their spiritual development. Pupils appreciate the value and purpose of prayer for the needs of others, and for God's supportive presence in their own life. A Year 2 child readily linking the school's support for a range of charities stated that, 'Helping God to help others through what we do is one of God's rules'. Christian symbols are evident in the shared reflection areas and in classrooms. Each classroom has a cross, surrounded by pictures of the children with the words, 'All of us are special to God'. While worship reflects God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, pupils are not able to confidently articulate the significance of this doctrine. The timing of worship at the end of the afternoon provides space for pupils to reflect on their day in school. However, this also limits the scope of worship to impact positively on the day ahead. Children experience a range of leaders including school staff, the 'Open the Book' team from All Saints Church, the Schools' Christian Assembly Team and Bishop's Visitor. The school also attends All Saints Church to celebrate major Christian festivals. This variety adds richness to their experience of worship. A collective worship committee, that includes governors, is in place. Their responsibility involves monitoring and evaluation to identify where improvements are needed. Collective worship is not yet outstanding because learners do not have regular experiences to plan, lead and evaluate worship for themselves.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

The subject leader effectively leads RE. This is due to her knowledge of the subject and the impact of professional development accessed through the diocese. She is also currently studying for a specialist RE teacher qualification. Monitoring and evaluation of the subject is thorough and involves termly observations, book monitoring and meetings with pupils. The school's marking policy is applied to RE with pupils responding to comments, so extending their learning. Teachers across the school display very good subject knowledge in RE and learning is delivered in a creative and stimulating way. For example, a Key Stage 1 lesson focusing on the parable of The Lost Coin included a film clip; talk partners, music for reflection and drama. In addition, the children experienced searching for coins in the classroom to enable them to empathise with the character in the parable. This highlights the effective way that children learn 'about religion' as well as 'learning from' religion. Pupils are enthusiastic about RE and express enjoyment of the subject. At the end of each term, children's progress is tracked and an end of unit assessment is made. While assessments show that standards in RE are in line with other core subjects, the potential for more pupils to make accelerated progress and attain the higher levels remains unrealised. This is due to the lack of differentiation in RE lessons, which means that more able pupils are not sufficiently challenged. RE is taught weekly which maximises its potential to make a positive contribution to the school's Christian character. Teaching and learning about the values through Bible stories effectively supports children's SMSC development. The school follows the Northamptonshire Agreed Syllabus, with Christianity being the major religion taught. Children's learning about other world religions is enhanced by some visits to other places of worship including the mandir in Wellingborough.

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

The headteacher consistently promotes a Christian vision for her school, which she describes as 'sowing seeds of faith'. Her commitment to serve and meet the needs of the school community is inspirational in the way it benefits the lives of all stakeholders, particularly the children. She is supported in this by the governing body of the school. The school's strong Christian ethos means that children and adults alike know that they are part of a Christian family. Children speak of being happy and safe in school, staff of being valued and parents of knowing that their children are loved and cared for. As a consequence, the impact on wellbeing and improving standards of achievement for all groups of pupils is good. Staff development is a priority and since joining PDET in September 2015 the school is benefitting from high quality training. As a result, provision for the development of future leadership of church schools is good. The leadership of RE is highly effective, resulting in improvements to the school's practice and outcomes for pupils. Arrangements for RE and collective worship meet statutory requirements. Evaluation and strategic planning is evident in the school improvement plan that supports the implementation of the Christian vision by setting challenging targets. Governors are involved in the monitoring and evaluation of the impact of the school's distinctive Christian character. This includes RE, collective worship and Christian ethos. However, this is not systematic or precise enough and does not include the views of all stakeholders. It therefore lacks the rigour necessary to secure the on-going development of the school as a church school. Meetings of the governing body begin and end with prayer, and their business is conducted in a way that implicitly reflects the Christian values of the school. Areas for development identified at the time of the last inspection have been fully addressed. As a direct consequence, relationships with All Saints Church have flourished and continue to be mutually beneficial impacting positively on the Christian character of the school. Parents are very supportive of the school as a church school with some giving this as a reason for choosing Pytchley for their children.