



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

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

### Grade Ruan Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Ruan Minor  
Helston  
Cornwall  
TR12 7JN

Current SIAMS grade: Outstanding

Previous SIAS grade: (prior to multi-academy trust status) Good

#### Diocese: Truro

Local authority: Cornwall

Dates of inspection: 29<sup>th</sup> June 2015

Date of last inspection: 12<sup>th</sup> February 2010

School's unique reference number: 908/3034

Headteacher: Tom Harman

Inspector's name and number: Linda Rudge, 791

#### School context

Grade Ruan is a smaller than average primary school with 65 pupils. It is situated in a remote coastal position. The school has a lower than average number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupil premium funding is below average. Almost all of pupils are identified as White British. The school is part of the Keskowethyans multi-academy trust (MAT) established in March 2104 with four other small primary schools. The Headteacher leads all the schools in the MAT. The school has successfully addressed the areas for development in the last Church school inspection for Grade Ruan as a single establishment.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Grade Ruan as a Church of England school are outstanding

- Agreed and clearly understood Christian values have a direct and outstanding impact on pupils' overall academic and personal progress
- Religious Education (RE) and collective worship have a high profile and contribute significantly to the Christian character of the school
- The school has already secured future church school leadership through its effective influence on values-led education and worship across the MAT

#### Areas to improve

- Spiritual development across the whole curriculum through embedding the 'Time to Reflect' initiative to further help all pupils express their spiritual identities

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

Grade Ruan school is an integral part of village life and all groups in the community are aware of, and appreciate, the school's character. Many families have been associated with the school for generations, but the community also regularly receives new members from a variety of backgrounds. All pupils and their families feel welcomed and supported in their personal development, and attendance rates are good. The Christian roots and effects of the chosen and shared values are shown through the modelling of Christian action by staff, and through direct teaching about Biblical texts in Religious Education (RE) and worship. For example, teaching about the Christian concept of 'Forgiveness' has stimulated conversations at home and school about being compassionate, and resulted for some in improved relationships and reconciliations. The school consistently exceeds government floor standards in levels of progression and attainment and was listed in the top fifteen schools in the local authority in 2014, and this is recognised by many as attributable to values-led learning. The curriculum is broad and balanced, meeting the needs of all pupils and enhancing their experience through a range of activities in school and beyond. These include surfing clubs, highly commended and affective drama productions, Breakfast Club, and choir activities. The choir's recent performance of the Lord's Prayer in the Cathedral was noted publicly as inspirational to many members of the multi-academy trust and to the wider Diocesan community. A recent initiative to introduce 'Time to Reflect' opportunities has already had an impact on the way pupils think about and respond to deep questions in many lessons. This is evident in some pupils' prayerful responses to tasks in artwork, story-writing and poetry. Pupils also recognise the importance of RE, and talk freely about how it helps them to learn about themselves and other people in the world. A recent visit to the site of a new interfaith place of worship in Truro was recalled by pupils and staff as inspirational and informative in their learning about diversity. The subject also makes a key contribution to spiritual development through, for example, experiential and active learning. The school's spirituality is based on community learning and partnerships, reflective action, high expectations and values-led learning. The character of the school has been sustained and enhanced since the last inspection.

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

Great value is placed on worship by the school in a way that is highly appropriate to its foundation, its catchment area and its setting very close to the parish church and the Methodist chapel. Collective worship is highly inclusive and focused on the person and teachings of Jesus Christ. The worship observed in a whole school assembly during the inspection visit showed pupils of all ages demonstrating sound knowledge of Christian songs and appropriate responses, and expressing ideas about Christian concepts such as the Trinity. The theme also reinforced learning about Christian leaders in Africa. Key elements of Anglican worship through a lighted candle, clear focus on the cross, and gathering and closing techniques were shared by all. The school sees worship as a central part of school improvement strategies, especially in its links to behaviour, positive relationships and achievement, and in the inspiration it provides to promote social action, for example in the pupil-led response to current conflicts through the 'War-Child' charity. Pupils help staff, local clergy and governors to plan and review worship and they take appropriate leads in a variety of settings including the parish church. Quiet and symbolic areas in classrooms, and around the school environment, are also used by pupils for personal individual reflection. The prayer tree and prayer boxes are appreciated by pupils who prefer to offer prayer without leading worship or speaking 'out loud'. The school's emphasis on worship is seen through the careful shared planning and skilled leadership. Parents and staff speak highly of the Friday community worship, and the worship and pastoral care groups run in the school by the local churches, and the youth leader. This is a worshipping educational community with a spirituality based on thankful learning and mutual support. Worship remains a central and outstanding feature of Grade Ruan.

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

Shared leadership amongst staff and governors, including across the five schools, is demonstrated through the ways that individuals and teams live out and promote a vision of this school that is clearly embedded in the shared Christian values. Grade Ruan primary has a leading role in the development of collective worship and values-led education across the multi-academy trust. The staff and governors have a thorough and accurate understanding of the school's performance and distinctiveness. Pupils and parents help them to evaluate the school's ethos. The monitoring of school improvement is exemplary and arrangements for RE and collective worship meet statutory requirements. Key areas for the development of the school's Christian character through, for example, the 'Time to Reflect' programme have already been correctly identified in the self-evaluation process. The school takes a pro-active and increasing role through the local Diocese as well as through the MAT in contributing to future leadership of church schools. Beneficial partnerships with immediate school partners such as the local church and other Christian groups have been sustained and enhanced since the last church school inspection. For example, the Methodist chapel made teaching space available while part of the school was being rebuilt. Relationships with the parish church remain strong and mutually beneficial. Increasing numbers of staff and parents have started to contribute to Sunday services. This development supports the pupils in their own journeys of spiritual development and their growing sense of identity. Members of the community such as fishermen, local artists and local authors continue to enhance the curriculum through their contributions to pupils' spiritual and cultural development. Local musicians and drama experts help with school productions. The formation of the MAT and the leadership of this school have created new partnerships in continuing professional development in RE. The RE leader supports the other schools in their RE teaching and in curriculum development. Teachers and pupils are all benefitting from these arrangements, and all express a sense of worth and an ethos in which they can develop as members of the school. The actions of the head teacher and other leaders have resulted in the Christian character of the school being secured and celebrated through the formation of the academy trust. This is a happy and positive Church school led by adults, and increasingly by pupils, who all live out the school's vision and distinctively Christian values.

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