



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Sparsholt Church of England VC Primary School.

Woodman Lane,
Sparsholt
Winchester
Hampshire
SO21 2NR

Diocese: Winchester

Local authority: Hampshire

Dates of inspection: 17th November 2015

Date of last inspection: 16th November 2010

School's unique reference number: 116317

Headteacher: Lindsay McCarthy

Inspector's name and number: Lorraine Pugh 819

School context

Sparsholt Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School is a semi rural school with 132 pupils. Teaching is arranged into five classes. The majority of its pupils are of white British heritage. Special educational needs are lower than the national average. Levels of deprivation are low and pupils come from a range of socio-economic backgrounds. The most recent Ofsted report (2010) judged the school to be outstanding. The previous SIAS report (2010) also judged the school to be outstanding. The headteacher joined the school in 2014.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Sparsholt primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding.

- The school's strong emphasis on explicit Christian values significantly impacts on the daily behaviour and individual development of pupils.
- There are clear links between the school's Christian values, collective worship and religious education with each having Jesus and the teachings of the Bible as their focus.
- The strong commitment and vision of the Headteacher, Deputy Head, staff, governors and clergy ensures that the school continually reviews and develops its Christian vision.

Areas to improve

- Increased opportunities for pupils to have first hand encounters with other faiths.
- Opportunities for older pupils to explore personal faith to a deeper level.

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

Christian values are expressed to pupils in ways that they clearly understand. The school's six MOSAIC ethos values are each referenced to Biblical teachings and clearly displayed for all

stakeholders to see. This leaves no doubt as to Sparsholt's position as a distinctively Christian environment. Pupils explain confidently how Christian values support their academic work, personal relationships and behaviour. One pupil explained how values support him, 'We are our values. I use them to help me think things through and make decisions'. Friendship disputes are speedily resolved with an emphasis on forgiveness and reconciliation. Pastoral care and high academic achievement is central to the school's ethos and this has resulted in academic standards consistently exceeding nationally expected levels. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress due to the efforts made by the school in addressing their individual needs. The Headteacher is highly ambitious for the school and this is supported by the work of her staff and governors. Pupils are encouraged to learn from their mistakes and they are very willing to challenge themselves. Religious Education (RE) teaching is highly effective in developing the children's thinking and pupil work shows a good balance between the gaining of knowledge and independent ideas. Resources that enhance and enrich RE support the high teaching standards. Religious festivals are celebrated through the Christian year and pupils, as a result of their active participation, are able to explain their meaning. Pupils know that they are part of a multi-faith world and they talk with enthusiasm about similarities and differences between faiths. One pupil was happy to explain to his peers how he used the Qur'an to support his Muslim faith. Increased opportunities for first hand encounters of other faiths are planned for the future. The recently established link with a contrasting City school supports pupils in their knowledge of Britain as a multi-faith society. Pupils talk positively about how they use the school's reflective spaces for quiet thought and personal prayer and this supports their spiritual and emotional development. Spiritual opportunities are firmly woven into school provision and evidence is collected so that these moments can be captured and appreciated. Adults know each child well and pupils know they are cared for. The school's nurturing and compassionate atmosphere provides a happy and calm learning environment with mutual respect clearly evident throughout the whole school community. Positive relationships have been quickly established with the new Rector, who is a regular visitor to the school. Strong relationships exist between the school and church with pupils attending the monthly lunch gatherings for older residents within the community. An example of the strength of the church and school partnership is the Headteacher's involvement in the appointment process and licensing of the new assistant Priest.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective Worship is an outstanding feature of Sparsholt school. It is an integral part of school life, led by staff and regular visitors. Pupil engagement in worship is shown by excellent behaviour and an eagerness to participate. Focussing on one value each week ensures pupils gain a deep understanding of how values support their behaviour. Stimulating resources and Anglican traditions give pupils a rich experience that captures their attention and interest. Jesus and His central position within Christianity is embedded within worship themes and pupils confidently discuss His teaching. Bible stories are a significant feature and pupils talk enthusiastically about their favourite stories, showing an awareness of how they support our own behaviour. Adult and child led prayer, with time for reflection, are key features and as a result pupils are able to share how personal prayer supports them. Pupils understand the Trinity at a level appropriate to their age because the adults leading worship make sure that language is simple and within their understanding. For example, a shamrock is used to represent God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit all as one. Pupils enjoy being participators in worship and they enjoy going to church services. Personal prayer and reflection spaces are evident throughout the school building and pupils are able to explain how they are used and why these spaces are important to them. Prayer is explained by the pupils as, 'Time for giving thanks and for asking for help'. The Pupil Worship Team regularly plan, deliver and evaluate worship. This pupil voice plays an especially important role, with ideas incorporated into future provision. This has directed how pupils like to be seated in family groupings, the use of music and increased pupil involvement. The worship leader works with a Foundation governor in monitoring the provision and impact of worship.

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

The Headteacher and school governors are successful in ensuring Sparsholt school places Christianity at the heart of its vision. The school's distinctively Christian character has a high profile to all members of the school community. Strong partnerships between the school's leadership and staff exist within an ethos of trust, respect and collaboration. This enables the school to be successful in continually improving its provision. Links with the Diocese and other sources of professional guidance ensure staff and governors benefit from personal, professional and spiritual development. Efficient monitoring and evaluation systems by leaders contribute positively to the school's effectiveness. The school uses the Living Difference, Hampshire agreed syllabus that supports and enriches high quality RE provision. Evaluations by leaders are successful in ensuring RE and Collective worship impact on the Christian development of the pupils, with strong links to the core Christian values of the school. Governors make significant contributions to this development as a result of their involvement and regular monitoring. The previous SIAS inspection development areas have been addressed, with pupils now having much greater involvement in leading and evaluating worship. Stakeholder evaluations of the school's Christian character are now informing future planning. Parents highly appreciate the school's work in giving children opportunities to encounter faith in ways that promote understanding and engagement. The newly appointed rector has quickly become a regular visitor and active member of the governing body. Her commitment and vision are already impacting on future plans of the school. This enhances pupil development and their understanding of Christian belief. Opportunities are planned for older pupils, if they wish, to consider their own personal faith at a deeper level

Local and international links, established by the school, contribute successfully to the pupils' understanding of other communities. Pupils are keen to explain differences and similarities and why there should be respect between different faiths. Adult and child led charity work is a strong feature of the school. Pupils confidently explain how this work links to their values, including its impact on the lives of other people. Statutory requirements for collective worship and RE are met.