



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

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

### **Woodbury Salterton Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School**

Woodbury Salterton

Exeter

Devon

EX5 1PP

**Previous SIAS grade: Good**

**Current SIAMS grade: Good**

**Diocese: Exeter**

Local authority: Devon

Dates of inspection: 22 April 2015

Date of last inspection: 22 June 2010

School's unique reference number: 113441

Headteacher: Duncan Nelmes (executive headteacher)

Inspector's name and number: Daphne Spitzer NS No 37

#### **School context**

The school is located in the village of Woodbury Salterton close to the city of Exeter. It has 73 children on roll, organised in 4 classes. The large majority of children are from white British heritage families. The numbers of children with special educational needs and/or physical disabilities are above the national average and the numbers eligible to be in receipt of the Pupil Premium are below the national average. The large majority of children live outside the village. Pupil mobility is higher than the national average. The school entered into a management partnership with Littleham Church of England Primary School in September 2014 with the headteacher of that school becoming the executive headteacher. The school does not have a hall.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Woodbury Salterton VA as a Church of England school are good**

- The transformational leadership of the executive headteacher which is raising the school's distinctive Christian character by further strengthening the partnership between church and school communities for the benefit of all involved
- The strong friendship bonds based on distinctive Christian values which enhance learning as well as spiritual and personal development
- The robust way that religious education is led raising standards and its profile within the school

#### **Areas to improve**

- Provide greater opportunities for children to plan and lead worship on a regular basis

- to gain greater understanding and ownership of this important part of the school day
- Provide a planned programme of visits and visitors, in order to enrich the RE curriculum and increase children's understanding of diverse communities living in this country
- Involve parents in the church school self-evaluation process so that their views are included and feedback is widened

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

Woodbury Salterton Church of England Primary School is a warm and inclusive Christian community. It has identified a set of six values deeply rooted in Christian teaching which are integral to the whole life of the school. These values are having a significant impact on children's personal and spiritual development as well as their academic achievement; consistently above and currently well above the national average. Children talk enthusiastically of the importance of the values in their lives and their strong belief that all the values help them to learn and achieve well in school. In particular, they believe that the central value of friendship is important because it was important to Jesus. They recognise the part played by their teachers in showing respect and friendship and creating a happy and secure environment based on God's love; saying that the school is like a family because 'God loves us and protects us all'. As a result, relationships within the school community are outstanding. Children speak with a mature and growing understanding of how spiritual awareness is supporting and enhancing their learning. The school's spiritual environment is enhanced by the physical presence of the adjacent church and its use each week for whole school collective worship. Although children believe that God is 'walking alongside' them, they say that church is special because there 'the air is filled with joy'. Opportunities to develop spiritual awareness are now becoming planned into the curriculum and are having a good impact; for instance, the recent visit by the younger two classes and those of the partner school to Buckfast Abbey to experience the Easter story. Children demonstrate an open and positive attitude towards peoples of other faiths and cultures from the very effective way that religious education (RE) is taught. However, although children have visited a synagogue and held a 'Hindu Day' since the last inspection, the school recognises the need to increase children's interactions with people from diverse communities.

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

Collective worship is explicitly Christian and of central importance in the daily life at Woodbury Salterton. This is because it is very effective in promoting distinctive Christian values which children identify as being crucial to their well-being and learning. These values are clearly linked to scripture, as in the case of the current Christian value of friendship illustrated by advice from St Paul to 'encourage one another and build each other up'. Messages from worship are clearly understood by children because they are illustrated in a meaningful way, set in the context of children's lives and daily interactions. A recent initiative has been the introduction of weekly class worship. This has empowered children and with growing confidence, is preparing them to take on leadership roles. Children enjoy worship because they are engaged and participate well. Worship promotes spiritual awareness very effectively; by the quiet reverence shown during the weekly visits to church as well as times of prayer and reflection linked closely with the theme. Prayer spaces have been developed in classrooms following their whole school introduction by the Initiative in Christian Education (ICE) team and these are well used. Children enjoy using pebbles to promote prayer and understand their significance; such as reflected in the comment 'we're all known to God'. Worship, as well as RE, is very effective in promoting a good understanding of the Trinity. Anglican practice is developing very well; in ways such as prayer responses. The planning for collective worship has recently been widened into a group which reflects the strong links between the school and church team, who play a prominent role in school worship. This initiative has successfully enhanced the profile and impact of worship. Although children are

not included in planning worship the practice of seeking their reflections on the impact of worship is becoming established and this feedback now addressed by the governors' ethos committee.

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

Standards attained in RE are good. Children make good progress from starting points in line with the national average to attainment which at the end of Year 6 is above average. The subject leader's accurate monitoring suggests teaching is at least good and this was verified in lessons seen. Learning is of a high quality because teachers use well-chosen activities based on enquiry methods which are both challenging and exciting. Older children use debating and analytical skills very well; arguing in a highly respectful manner in order to convince others of their views. Children enjoy RE because they find the curriculum engaging and relevant to their own lives. Children were able to show a high degree of empathy for the challenges of prayer for a muslim child in this country. This is an excellent example of the high level of spiritual awareness promoted by RE and also evident throughout the school curriculum. Children's knowledge and understanding of Christianity is good. For instance, younger children reflecting on the symbolism of Christian artefacts were able to identify the Easter story as well as a range of Bible stories. Religious education is led exceptionally well by the senior teacher. Although this role is a new one, in a short time, she has addressed issues which have been successful in raising standards. An example of this, is the introduction of individual children's books for RE and the good use already being made as spontaneous prompts to learning.

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

The governing body's strong commitment to the school's Christian foundation is demonstrated by the well-considered way they have planned for the succession of the school over the last school year. The recently appointed executive headteacher has built on this strength by providing strong direction for the promotion of the school's distinctive Christian character. His open and transparent leadership style has empowered staff and school community so that all feel valued and motivated to fully contribute to securing the school's future. Governors clearly understand the impact of the school's distinctive Christian character and values on the children's academic achievement from their overall monitoring of the school's performance. An ethos committee has been created which has been highly proactive; establishing strategies for monitoring and evaluating the school's performance which have already improved its Christian distinctiveness. Although parents contribute fully to the life of the school and are exceptionally supportive, their views are not yet sought formally in the evaluation process. There are mutually beneficial links with the diocese. An example of this, is the way the diocese has supported the school in preparation for the imminent federation and the school's role in the diocesan RE Christianity project. The existing good partnerships between the school and church have further strengthened over the recent period affirming the school's role at the heart of the local community.

SIAMS report April 2015, Woodbury Salterton Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, Exeter EX5 1PP