



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

### Ladock Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Ladock  
Truro  
Cornwall TR2 4PL

**Previous SIAS grade: Good**

**Current SIAMS grade: Good**

**Diocese: Truro**

Local authority: Cornwall

Dates of inspection: 3 March 2015

Date of last inspection: 1 December 2009

School's unique reference number: 140468

Headteacher: Lisa Michell

Inspector's name and number: Andrew Rickett 201

#### School context

Ladock is a much smaller than average size rural primary school with 85 children arranged into three teaching groups. The school serves the immediate locality with varied socio-economic backgrounds. Most children are from a white British heritage. The number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly in line with the national average as is the number entitled to receive the pupil premium. The school converted to academy status in December 2013 and is part of a multi academy trust sponsored by the Diocese of Truro. Attendance is above the national average.

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

- Explicit Christian values underpin the high quality of relationships throughout the school and contribute to the positive learning environment.
- Acts of worship are central to the life of the school and provide children with time to be still and reflect.
- Links with the church community are an integral part of the school's relationship with the local community.

#### Areas to improve

- Develop assessment in religious education (RE) so that it tracks children's progress and identifies trends in learning that inform future improvement.
- Ensure that greater consistency in the use of challenging questions across the school in RE deepen children's knowledge and understanding.
- School leaders and managers to develop more effective systems to monitor and evaluate the impact of the Christian character that includes the gathering of robust evidence from meetings with children.

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

Since the previous inspection, more explicit links between the school's Christian ethos and the school's six core values has given them greater significance to the whole school community. There is now an excellent understanding that values such as trust and compassion are rooted in the teachings of Jesus and are interpreted through specific Bible stories that explain their significance to the everyday lives of children. Children are very confident to express their views on the core values and explain how they make a difference to their learning and personal development. They explain how values such as perseverance encourage them 'to keep trying' with their work and 'to never give up'. This positive attitude impacts on the children's attitudes in the classroom and their willingness to engage in their learning. Children therefore make good progress academically and, as data indicates, attain standards at least in line with national expectations. An essential element to the children's positive attitudes towards their own learning is the fact that teachers listen intently to the children and give them the opportunity to think before they respond. This allows children the time to consider in greater depth and therefore provide more sophisticated responses that show a deeper level of understanding. This emphasis on the whole child is a reflection of the school's focus on spiritual development and the creation of reflection areas in all classrooms. Links between Christian values and social, moral, spiritual and cultural (SMSC) development have improved since the previous inspection and are now more clearly identified in the overall curriculum through careful planning. Through the encouragement and involvement of groups such as the school council, children have a good awareness of other cultures and the diversity of life in modern Britain and abroad. Special days, such as the recent RE focus day on world religions, give children an excellent opportunity to learn about and appreciate the many different faiths that make up Britain today.

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

Collective worship is central to daily life at Ladock Church of England Primary School. It is a lively, vibrant and a wholly Christian experience. Children understand that worship enables them to learn about special people in the Bible as well as the school's core Christian values. They say that these values are relevant to them and that they have meaning for them on a personal level. The impact of worship is significant because children express with considerable commitment that the messages they hear make a difference to their lives both in and out of school. The quality of leadership is excellent and this ensures that children too want to lead and contribute actively. For example, Year 6 children have made an outstanding contribution to the format of the weekly celebration worship by writing their own order of service based specifically on Anglican practice. Children regularly plan and lead worship as part of the weekly pattern of worship. They recognise that their school's Christian values are promoted very effectively by daily worship and easily link them to Christ's teaching and His life. Worship has a significant effect on children's spiritual development. Frequent opportunities for reflection are provided as well as for prayer at a personal level. Prayer takes a central role in the life of the school as seen by the way the children discuss the importance of prayer spaces around the school. Worship themes are based around whole school issues that focus on specific Christian values such as forgiveness and these have a powerful effect on children's thinking. Children are developing an understanding of the Trinity from prayers and blessings used in worship. Evaluations of worship have made some contribution to the ongoing improvement of the impact of worship but have not fully gathered the views of children in this process.

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

Standards in RE are broadly in line with national expectations by the time children leave the school at the end of Year 6. This compares favourably with other core subjects and represents good progress from the children's starting points when they enter the school. The school has recently addressed the area for development from the previous report by creating an evidence base to support teachers' assessment of children's attainment. This has yet to be shared with all staff to ensure greater consistency in the accuracy of assessment. Assessments are regularly

carried out in RE and currently record children's achievement at the end of each year. These have not yet been used to track children's progress as they move through the school. The quality of teaching is good and leads to learning that is meaningful and which equips children with the skills and knowledge to engage in RE at a good level. The best teaching challenges children's perceptions and understanding of religious concepts through high level questioning that encourages children to respond at a deeper level. There is some inconsistency in the quality of this approach across the school which means that some children do not achieve their potential at higher levels. However, at its best, effective questioning significantly enhances the quality of the RE syllabus by allowing teachers and children to explore concepts in much greater depth. Teaching generally is confident with good subject knowledge contributing to the children's own good level of knowledge. The pace of lessons often moves forward swiftly because children use prior knowledge and apply it to new learning with ease. Children respond very well to their learning in RE and share their ideas with enthusiasm and a genuine enjoyment of the subject. Leadership of RE is an important aspect of overall school leadership. The secondment of the acting head of school, with considerable experience in RE, has given the new RE coordinator very effective support that has allowed her to quickly begin to take the subject forward.

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

The strength of the school's Christian ethos is evident in the way that the school community has responded with sensitivity and care to circumstances that have affected the school community over recent years. The steadfast commitment to the school's Christian ethos has been a mainstay of the school community and has resulted in progress being made in taking forward its church school foundation since the previous inspection. School leaders, including governors, clearly articulate how a greater emphasis on explicit Christian values and more meaningful acts of worship have made a difference to the school environment and the way in which the Christian ethos is viewed by children and their parents. The acting head of school in particular has ensured that the introduction of initiatives in RE and collective worship have improved both of these aspects of church school distinctiveness. The quality of self-evaluation as a church school is accurate but lacks the involvement of all members of the leadership and management and does not fully reflect the strengths of the school particularly with regard to the extent to which views of children are gathered and then form a central part of the monitoring and evaluation process. Parents agree that the way the school promotes its distinctive ethos is one that they like because it encourages their children to ask questions about faith and belief and provides time for them to make up their own minds about what it means to them. The school's relationship with the nearby parish church forms a strong bond that makes a significant contribution to the local community.

SIAMS report March 2015 Ladock CE VA Primary School Truro TR2 4PL