



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Cury Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Churchtown
Cury
Helston
TR12 7BW

Previous SIAMS grade: Good

Current inspection grade: Good

Diocese: Truro

Local authority: Cornwall

Dates of inspection: 10th June 2015

Date of last inspection: 23rd June 2010

School's unique reference number: 112001

Headteacher: Lisa Newberry

Inspector's name and number: Patricia Morris 626

School context

Cury is a much smaller than average sized primary school with 44 children on roll. Most children come from the rural villages of Cury and Gunwalloe with a small proportion coming from outside the catchment area. The majority of children are of white British heritage. The headteacher joined the school as associate headteacher in June 2013 and was appointed as a part time headteacher a year later. The post became full time in February 2015. The number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above the national average. The proportion of children supported by the pupil premium is below the national average.

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

- Strong relationships based on Christian values in which all children are nurtured and valued as a result of the dedication and commitment of the new headteacher.
- Core Christian values are reflected in the children's caring attitudes and behaviour around the school.
- Good quality experiences contribute to the children's growing awareness of their own spirituality.

Areas to improve

- Develop a more rigorous marking system in religious education so that children are more informed on how they can improve their learning and more able children are suitably challenged.
- Develop a systematic way to monitor and evaluate collective worship and provide opportunities for children to plan and deliver worship to encourage a feeling of ownership.
- Extend children's experiences to prepare them for life in modern Britain.

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

The Christian character of the school is good because Christian values are clearly expressed and children identify the effect of these values on their daily lives and how they are related to the ten commandments. They talk animatedly about each hand representing the school's six core values, one for each finger and one in the palm. The child friendly version of the Christian values enhance the Christian ethos and are firmly underpinned by specific Bible stories to represent each value. The school aims and mission statement clearly promote Christian values. This is reflected in children's attitudes as one child stated 'our school is a church school where everyone knows everybody and we all look out for each other'. The current value of compassion is extremely well linked with worship. For example, when children see examples of the values in action they are invited to write them on a footprint that is placed in a box and shared during worship. This develops children's understanding of core values and they can recognise them in action. There is a clear and united understanding of spirituality with identified opportunities across the curriculum for reinforcement. Spiritual development is effectively promoted through good opportunities for reflection and children are encouraged to explore their relationship with God. This is evident from the way they talk enthusiastically about the worship areas in each classroom where they are encouraged to use pebbles when they want to reflect or pray. An outdoor reflection bench is regularly used for quiet times and the recently hatched chicks in one of the classrooms was effectively used as an opportunity for a memorable spiritual experience. Quality opportunities such as these and the recent introduction of the visual images of the window, mirror, door idea effectively supports children's reflections on core values but as yet are not fully embedded in the life of the school. Relationships are a strength of the school and are strongly underpinned by the Christian ethos. Children feel safe and secure because they know that adults take good care of them and support them. As a result children are well behaved and have good attitudes to learning. Cohorts are small so attainment varies from year to year. Most children achieve expected progress and standards are improving as a result of effective intervention programmes and improved tracking systems. There is the opportunity for them to be heard through the school council and through regular pupil conferencing so they feel they are listened to. Parents say the values are seen in action at home reflecting the family feel of the school where all staff care about every child. Communication is good and parents are well informed through weekly newsletters and regular updates on the school website. Religious education makes a positive contribution to the Christian character of the school. Children behave well in lessons. They have an understanding of Christianity as a world faith that is reflected in the support shown for local and global charities as well as supporting projects in the community. Children show respect for other faith communities and can talk about some differences between other faiths and Christianity as a result of the work covered in lessons.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship is an important part of the school day and plays a central role in promoting Christian values. The 'Values for Life' resource is used effectively resulting in worship being well planned and having a high profile in the life of the school. Worship is clearly valued by the children and this is reflected in their good behaviour, positive responses and the way in which they listen and participate. Worship themes are linked extremely well to the school's core values and to Bible stories that children compare with their own lives and experiences. They recognise that worship 'is a special time to pray to God and talk to him'. Prayer is central to the school day. Children know the Lord's prayer and have a school prayer. They are given opportunities to write and say their own prayers in worship, at lunch times and at the end of the day. There are strong links between the school and the church. This results in the church being seen as an extension of the school. The local vicar is part of the Open the Book group that visits regularly. This impacts positively on children because it is inclusive and they are able to contribute in the acting out of Bible stories. Children are aware of the major festivals in the church calendar the majority of which are held in the church. They make regular visits to church as part of the religious education curriculum resulting in a good understanding of the significance

of many church symbols. There is a growing awareness of Christian traditions and the annual Easter Eucharist brings all members of the school community together and is particularly valued as an important way to be with God. Children are involved in various aspects of worship such as drama and prayer but these are adult led and children have few opportunities to be involved in regular planning and presenting of worship and as a result lack a feeling of ownership. There is a simple understanding of the Trinity but the significance has not yet been made explicit to children. A book is placed in the hall where children can comment on aspects of worship and make suggestions for improvement. There is some reflection on the delivery and monitoring of worship although the school recognises it has yet to embed systems for a more formal evaluation of its quality and impact.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

Religious education (RE) has a high profile within the curriculum and is valued as a core subject. Pupil voice, lesson observations and work scrutiny are in place although there is currently no action plan. Children say they enjoy RE and develop a range of skills in lessons. They answer challenging questions thoughtfully based on prior knowledge. Children share their feelings and opinions confidently knowing others will respect them and there are good opportunities for reflection. The majority of children achieve good standards which are broadly in line with other core subjects and work in books shows good progress across year groups. Work is annotated but as yet there are no next steps or opportunities for children to reflect on their written work. The good subject knowledge of the co-ordinator is reflected in the way units of work are well linked to core values and the commandments. Assessment procedures are in place to inform future planning although differentiation is based on year groups rather than individual ability resulting in a lack of challenge for the more able children. RE makes a good contribution to the Christian values of the school and to children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The RE co-ordinator initiates themed weeks on a regular basis which results in inspiring children and developing their creative ideas. Opportunities for drama, poetry and using the senses also impact positively on children's spiritual development. Children are aware of a number of different faiths that are studied in RE and show some awareness of how others practise their faith. Opportunities to fund raise for local and global communities through specific charities contribute to children's awareness of Christianity as a world faith but their understanding of multi ethnic Britain is limited.

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

The headteacher consistently articulates a clear vision based on distinctive Christian values. This is effectively promoted and impacts positively on the school community. She has accurately identified areas for improvement in order to move the school forward and has worked hard to improve staff morale after an unsettling period. The result of this can be seen in the committed way everyone works together and the good understanding of how the Christian ethos makes a difference to the lives of the children. This is an environment where Christian values are lived out. Governors are very supportive of the school's Christian character and regard it as central to the life of the school. As a result of their increased engagement with the school and challenging questioning, they are well informed and have a good understanding of strengths and areas for development. They support and monitor the Christian ethos effectively and appreciate the positive effect of the values on behaviour and standards. Governors visit the school on a regular basis and there are increasing opportunities for observing lessons and discussions with staff that are instrumental in moving the school forward. The quality of the relationship between the school and the church is strong and mutually supportive. RE and worship contribute to the Christian character of the school and have a positive effect on children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Parents are very supportive of the school. They are given opportunities to give opinions and feel their views are listened to. They particularly appreciate the school's open door policy. All stakeholders have a clear commitment in ensuring that children have every opportunity to develop as independent learners within a Christian environment and are prepared well for their future lives.

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