



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

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

### Churchfield Church School

Burnham Road  
Highbridge  
Somerset TA9 3JF

**Previous SIAMS grade: Not previously inspected as an Academy**

**Diocese: Bath and Wells**

Local authority: Somerset

Dates of inspection: 23 September 2015

Date of last inspection: not previously inspected as an Academy

School's unique reference number: 139278

Headteacher: Wendy Nelder

Inspector's name and number: Jane Tibbs 226

### School context

Churchfield is a larger than average primary school with 452 pupils. The new building was officially opened in April 2013 providing spacious accommodation for the school community in sympathetically landscaped grounds. However, two classes are already housed in mobile class rooms. The school converted to sponsored Academy status within the Bath & Wells Multi-Academy Trust in April 2013 and the Nursery, housed in an adjacent building, was taken over by the school in September 2015. Pupils enter the school with below average attainment. The proportion of pupils supported by pupil premium is above average. The majority of pupils are from Highbridge which is in the 10% of most deprived wards nationally.

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

- There are good opportunities for pupils to develop a moral and social understanding based on Christian values
- The relationships between all members of the school community reflect the school's values led Christian ethos, which creates a positive learning environment
- The headteacher and senior leadership team have a good understanding of the purpose and meaning of being a church academy and have a clear understanding on how to move forward

### Areas to improve

- Develop a more coherent understanding of spirituality across the school community
- Develop the school's ethos to include the Nursery
- Embed all the procedures that have been put in place to move the school forward toward outstanding

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

The Christian character of the school is lived out in an exciting and joyous way by the whole school community. An explicit set of Christian values is embedded at the heart of the school through the mnemonic PRAISE, representing perseverance, respect, acceptance, independence, selflessness and empathy. This was chosen after consultation with all members of the school community, who clearly articulate these key values that lie at the centre of the school's ethos and have an excellent understanding of how they make an impact on the pupils' learning and their personal development. The underpinning of the Christian nature of these six values through explicit teaching of Bible stories in collective worship and religious education (RE) means that pupils are able to relate a Christian understanding of these values to their own learning. Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning. There are opportunities for pupils to reflect in the school day through the reflective areas provided in every class room. The school could take this further by developing a more coherent understanding of spirituality across the school community and use this to add greater depth to the quality of the pupils' reflections across the whole curriculum. Parents are also included in times of reflection through the provision of a large tree in one of the entrance areas to which they can attach their aspirations for their children. One parent commented, "If children try to be the best they can, then the world can be their oyster." Pupils are involved in charitable work both nationally and abroad, have an understanding of social justice, and show respect for and understanding of other faiths and cultures. They say they make good friends with other children of any age and that they know that teachers care for them and will help them.

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

Collective worship is an important time in the school day and one that pupils are positive about. Acts of worship are vibrant and exciting times during which pupils have the opportunity to explore the school's core values through Bible stories and links with Christian festivals. This ensures an enjoyable experience for all pupils and has a discernable impact on relationships, behaviour and the spiritual and moral development of pupils. Parents say that their children benefit from collective worship and talk about it enthusiastically. Pupils have a clear understanding of the difference between worship and assembly. The school is assiduous in the use of Anglican liturgy to open and close worship. Pupils understand this and say that this is one of the ways through which they express their status as a church school. Pupils have a basic understanding of the Trinity and this could be further developed to enable them to share their thoughts on how the concept relates to them. The collective worship co-ordinator is passionate about the place of collective worship and ensures it has a high profile in the daily life of the school. Worship permeates throughout the school day with areas for reflection in all class rooms and the inclusion of prayers at the beginning and end of the day. Pupils also pause to give thanks for their lunch. Pupils have a mature appreciation of the purpose of prayer and articulate sensitively how it can help a person in times of need. The mnemonic PRAISE gives a firm framework through which all staff help to lead worship confidently. Pupils are involved in the planning, delivery and evaluation of collective worship, and a comprehensive set of planning and evaluation records gives staff confidence when preparing their own times of worship. The excellent systems to monitor the impact of acts of worship, through regular visits from governors and feedback from groups of children and parents, are used to inform improvements. Pupils experience a variety of worship with regular visits from local clergy. The location of the church enables it to be used for worship and as an integral part of lessons. The quality of singing is evidence of the emphasis placed on music as an integral part of the curriculum and its ability to open doors for pupils.

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

One of the strengths of Religious Education (RE) is the creative way in which lessons are delivered. Pupils enjoy the subject because they are offered a range of learning activities and

experiences. They are encouraged to think and to reflect and this has produced confident, articulate and thoughtful pupils. Their work illustrates the breadth and depth of their learning which is illustrated in the probing questions they ask. Religious education is outstanding because of the consistent, very high quality of teaching and learning which places high expectations on the outcomes for pupils. Teaching seen during the inspection in both Key stages carefully guided pupils through the investigation of challenging concepts that deepened understanding by skilfully encouraging pupils to explore their own thoughts about faith and belief. For example, in a Key Stage 1 lesson, pupils were given the opportunity to interpret a miracle through the making and sharing of bread and exploring the story using puppets. In a Key Stage 2 class, the teacher challenged pupils in their understanding of both Christianity and Sikhism by using their knowledge of these two religions in creative ways. Pupils have very positive attitudes towards RE and respond with enthusiasm in lessons. They are keen to participate in discussion and have the confidence to express their own views. This is because all pupils listen to each other in an environment of trust that no one will be less respectful of the views of others. Religious education has a high profile in the school and makes a significant contribution to the promotion of the school's Christian ethos. Lessons refer to the school's emphasis to "Learn to love; love to learn" and there are strong links to other curriculum areas. Subject leadership is of the highest quality. The RE co-ordinator has ensured that RE has not just been maintained but has moved forward, developing plans and schemes for further improvement as well as monitoring and the scrutiny of pupils' work.

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

The school has been successful in addressing the areas for development from the previous report and has made very good progress in developing a distinct church school ethos that makes a difference to the lives of all those in the school community. Leaders and managers are committed to the school's ethos and feel strongly that this is lived out and is evident through the quality of care and kindness that underpins relationships between all members of the school community. The headteacher is passionate about exploring the distinct ethos so that it adds depth to the children's educational experience, both academically and personally. She has a good understanding of the links between the school's core values and work in the classroom and is keen to explore, with the school community, a wider interpretation of how spirituality can further enhance the quality of education. Governors fully support the school's Christian character and have a good understanding of the core values and the impact they have on the learning and personal development of pupils. For example, they clearly articulate how the PRAISE values are evident in the school's planning, evaluation and development. The school's relationship with the church community is strong, and the contribution of the vicar to school life is significant and greatly valued. This is recognised by all the school community as an important expression of being a church school. Robust systems for monitoring and evaluation are now in place. Links with the Diocese are good and effective use has been made of training opportunities. The school has benefitted from collaboration with other church schools within the Diocesan Multi-Academy Trust and this has been a key factor in the school's improvement. The opinions of pupils are respectfully heard through the School Council. Parents appreciate how the school encourages their children to ask questions about faith and belief. They are particularly pleased that their children do this with confidence and from an informed position in which they do not make judgments, but have an acceptance of people of all faiths and those who have none. When asked about their children's enjoyment of school and their academic and personal progress, parents were unanimous in referring back to one factor: the impact of "PRAISE".

SIAMS report September 2015 Churchfield Church School, Highbridge. TA9 3JF