



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Jolesfield Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Littleworth Road
Partridge Green
West Sussex
RH13 8JJ

Previous SIAMS grade: Outstanding

Current inspection grade: Good

Diocese: Chichester

Local authority: West Sussex

Date of inspection: 11 July 2016

Date of last inspection: 21 January 2010

School's unique reference number: 125985

Headteacher: Sue Uff

Inspector's name and number: Hilary Ferries 276

School context

Jolesfield is a small school in the village of Partridge Green. The majority of pupils are of white British ethnicity. A smaller than average number of pupils is entitled to the pupil premium and a greater than average number are identified as having special educational needs. The headteacher was appointed to the substantive post in 2014 following a period of shared headship. The parish priest retired at Easter 2016.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Jolesfield CE Primary as a Church of England school are good

- Strong Christian leadership at all levels articulates a clear vision, Christian values and ambition for all pupils which contributes to the success of the school as a church school
- The Christian values of the school have created an inclusive, caring ethos for every pupil
- Pupil voice in the development of the school as a church school has led to relevant and meaningful improvement in religious education (RE) and collective worship.
- RE contributes to the pupils' understanding of what a religious faith can mean to people and of their respect for diversity and understanding of similarities.

Areas to improve

- Involve pupils in the planning, leading and evaluation of collective worship to give them more ownership of worship themes and impact on their own lives.
- Formalize self-evaluation as a church school to inform more fully how strategic planning identifies improvements
- Articulate the Christian values more clearly to parents and the community, so that they all are aware of their importance to the school

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

Jolesfield has a very strong Christian ethos. In collective worship, RE and reflection time, pupils explore the key Christian values that underpin everything they do, believe in and inform the way they should live their lives. The values, clearly displayed on the website are: humility, thankfulness, koinonia, love, trust, wisdom, friendship, compassion, justice, peace, service, reverence, hope and honesty. These underpin the 'RAISE' values (respect, aim high, independence, skills for life-long learning, environment school and community) and have motivated the school community so that academic standards are rising.

The school's vision, that 'we are all children of God and all are valued', is reflected in the inclusive nature of the school, the high level of support for vulnerable pupils, the Christian care that every child receives and the commitment to an education for the 'whole child'. For example, the recently appointed diversity governor has led an equalities day which has helped pupils think about inclusion more deeply. Parent surveys and interviews show that they recognise and appreciate the Christian influence in the school, but are not always aware of the Christian values. In a recent questionnaire, parents were asked whether their children talked about the Christian ethos of the school and although the majority of those who responded said that this was the case, the headteacher has identified this as an area for development.

Christian distinctiveness makes a contribution to the positive relationships between all members of the school community. One example of this is the buddy system that pairs pupils from Year 6 to reception; forming friendships that last beyond primary school. Governors and parents talked of the difficult journey that the school has been on, but how members of the community have come together to support the school, using their skills. The leadership of the school have welcomed this and it has made the school family stronger.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good. Every classroom has a reflection area which gives pupils the opportunity to think, reflect and pray. Pupils say they welcome these opportunities as it helps them become more thoughtful. A recent focus on spirituality has encouraged pupils to reflect more deeply on puzzling questions. This was apparent in discussions in lessons where pupils responses demonstrated sophisticated levels of reflection. RE contributes well to the development of spirituality in the school. Pupils have a good understanding of the world faiths that they have studied. The revised curriculum has an appropriate balance of Christianity and other world faiths. A recent visit from an Imam supported the previous learning in RE and gave the pupils more opportunity to learn about Islam. The school has made great efforts to enable pupils to appreciate the diversity of modern Britain and the importance of respect for all faiths.

Displays are linked to biblical references, which make the Christian ethos explicit, strengthening the sense of the school as a church school and celebrating its distinctive Christian character.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship is important to the school community. School leaders have listened to feedback from pupils and introduced some of the changes that they have suggested, such as making worship more focussed, having more modern songs and enabling pupils to play a more active role. There is still more to do to involve pupils fully in the planning and leading of collective worship. The headteacher, who is the worship coordinator, has reviewed worship themes so that each core Christian value is now explored over a half term. Pupils are now able to explore them in more depth and therefore have a deeper understanding. In a survey with pupils one year 4 pupil wrote: 'We are like sponges – we take (soak) all the words in: If you were a sponge, you'd like, clean the table – spread words out to our parents'.

There are good links with the parish. The school community was sad to say goodbye to the parish priest at Easter 2016. His farewell celebration recognised the valuable contribution his leadership made. The governing body has planned for the vacancy whilst a new vicar is

appointed with a foundation governor taking over this weekly worship. As a result, good links with the two churches are being maintained.

Prayer is important to the school community. In addition to prayers said during the day, there are class prayer books and prayers written by pupils in the reflection areas. The place of prayer has been strengthened by the recent theme of prayer in worship. Pupils talk about having a 'direct line to God' and that they can 'talk to God at any time'. The nature of the Trinity has been explored in collective worship and pupils are able to articulate an appreciation of this, which further shows the impact of collective worship.

Parents welcome the opportunity to come to worship and questionnaires show that many of them hear about collective worship from their children, who talk about it at home.

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

The headteacher clearly articulates the Christian vision of the school and is well supported by her senior leadership team and staff. This has created a strong and positive learning community based on Christian values. The development of these values has reinforced the importance of the school as a church school, although links between the Christian values and the RAISE values are not clear to all, as reflected by the parent survey. RE in the school is strong. Pupils are enthusiastic about the subject and it contributes well to their spiritual development. The subject leader supports teachers well. Similarly, collective worship promotes the school's Christian values and spirituality.

Over the last year governors and school leaders have carried out a number of surveys with parents, pupils and staff on a range of areas important to church schools. These have included collecting parent views on aspects of collective worship, RE and Christian values. These have been used to develop areas of school life. The school has also involved pupils in developing different aspects of school life, such as the behaviour policy, which has given the pupils ownership of this. Behaviour seen in the inspection was excellent. The strong pupil voice shows that the issue from the previous inspection has been addressed, enabling them to identify areas for development of the school as a church school. A small number of governors have been involved with self-evaluation of the school as a church school, but it has not been discussed by the whole governing body. Although there is a clear strategic plan that outlines direction, which is regularly reviewed and evaluated, there is no systematic planning that identifies next steps as a church school, to ensure that all aspects of church school distinctiveness are reviewed on a regular basis.

There is a strong village community that is very supportive of the school. There is a high level of commitment and desire to support the school community to help it move forward and members of the community have used their skills to support the school. The arrangements for RE and collective worship meet statutory requirements.

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