



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Sutton Church of England (VC) Primary School

The Brook, Sutton
Ely, Cambridgeshire.
CB6 2PU

Previous SIAMS grade: Good

Current inspection grade: Satisfactory

Diocese: Ely

Local authority: Cambridgeshire

Dates of inspection: 19 March 2015

Date of last inspection: April 2010

School's unique reference number: 110802

Headteacher: Gill Gilbert

Inspector's name and number: Marion Betts 220

School context

Sutton school is a larger than the average-sized primary school for pupils aged 4 to 11 years who are taught in twelve classes. The school serves the village. A very large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. During a recent Ofsted inspection the school achieved the good grade in all areas. A quarter of the teachers are on temporary contracts. Despite rigorous attempts to recruit there are no foundation governors on the governing body at present. The parish church is just within walking distance. Pre-school provision, a breakfast and after-school club use the school premises.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of satisfactory as a Church of England school are satisfactory

- A strong emphasis is placed on the care, support and respect for all which promotes pupils' moral and social development very well
- Strong links have been made with the local church which explicitly communicates to all stakeholders the distinctiveness of the school as a church school
- The leadership of the headteacher and staff promotes very well the positive behaviour policy which is known and understood by all pupils and leads to their very good behaviour and attitudes.

Areas to improve

- Connect explicitly the Christian values underpinning the school rules to biblical teaching and monitor pupils' ongoing awareness of these links to ensure that pupils know and understand their Christian origins.
- Leaders, governors and pupils to evaluate the impact of collective worship and church school distinctiveness on pupils and staff so that strategies for improvement can be

made, implemented and monitored.

- To appoint two foundation governors, supporting their training and to develop, with them and within the school leadership and governing body, understanding of foundation governors' roles within the church school setting.

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

The culture of school life is built around school's superstar rules which pupils know well and strive to achieve ensuring effective development of their personal, moral and social attitudes and behaviour. When these rules were introduced they were linked to bible stories or passages of scripture which identified to adults and pupils that they were from Christian origins. However these links have not recently been promoted and pupils do not readily make the connection. In conversation with the inspector however, some pupils did articulate the rules as behaviour Jesus would want us to do. Staff recognise their role in living these rules and refer to them when promoting pupils' positive behaviour choices. Pupils are aware how by implementing the rule of "do the best you can" has impacted upon their achievements. The majority of pupils make good academic progress throughout their school life. Disadvantaged groups of pupils also achieve well because they are given appropriate academic and pastoral support. Each child's needs are known and catered for demonstrated by the many and varied extra programmes implemented. The school rule of being kind and helpful to others influences well the relationships and respect between all members of the school community who demonstrate this value in action. For example pupils praise the care of the staff who listen to them and help with any problems. Also this rule results in a culture of undertaking responsibilities, for example Year 5 pupils act as buddies to the Reception children on many occasions, one being aiding them to understand expectations required when being present at a church service. Pupils' achievements are recognised and celebrated. Opportunities for spiritual development are not clearly identified in the curriculum although the quality of work achieved in music and art emphasises that pupils' spirituality is being promoted through a range of experiences. The school has recently adopted an enquiry approach to RE which has promoted added interest for pupils and raised the standard of RE achievement. Pupils are beginning to be aware of Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith, the older pupils are at present studying the life of Christians in Vellore. RE contributes well to the Christian character of the school demonstrated by the time given to discuss moral issues connected to world events and cultures; by the use of the incumbent as an extra resource for learning; and by the RE displays for example the Lent presentations around the building.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is satisfactory

Collective worship (CW) is regarded by the teachers and pupils as a special part of each day. The headteacher and incumbent plan CW together using the Ely diocesan themes ensuring these reflect the Christian seasons as well as linked biblical material. Pupils therefore understand the Christian basis to the delivered message. Often questions posed challenge their thinking about their future attitudes and behaviour. The church is used for services connected to the main Christian festivals and leavers' event. Pupils are becoming aware through these services of Anglican practice. Key liturgical elements are not at present included within daily worship. At the church services pupils take an active role in writing and delivering prayers, presenting the readings and singing - the high quality of which enhances all worship sessions. Apart from this and preparing the CW environment pupils are not yet involved in planning or leading worship. Pupils are attentive in CW and respectful during the prayers. Visual presentation engages them well. Pupils articulate clearly their learning about God and Jesus but are less familiar with the part the Holy Spirit plays in Christian belief. CW delivery is usually undertaken by the senior teachers but pupils experience different styles of worship leadership through visiting Christian leaders and groups. Pupils occasionally write prayers as part of their RE learning and through this and CW they understand the purpose of prayer as giving thanks

to God. CW is monitored informally by senior leaders and governors who occasionally join worship on their visit to the school. Special welcome services for Reception children and their parents have been held which would have reinforced the Christian status of the school to newcomers.

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

The headteacher, governors and staff articulate how the school's ethos is underpinned by Christian values. Their effective leadership makes a sound contribution to the Christian vision of care and concern for all. The school is characterised by a positive sense of well-being; praise used effectively and staff and pupils valued and supported well. Governors, leaders and teachers are very committed to the school's aims and aspirations and work to fulfil these. For example strategic planning led to the appointment of a RE specialist teacher resulting in raising the profile of RE throughout the school. She supports and guides teachers well and this has raised their confidence in delivering this subject. The school encourages opportunities for the development of senior staff as leaders of church schools and two previous deputies have taken up church school headship posts. There has been some progress towards achieving the development issues from the last church school inspection and implementation is continuing. Having no foundation governors has impeded the development of the school as a church school and resulted in limited monitoring and evaluations of CW and church school distinctiveness. The headteacher's report to the governors relates the school's church school activities and CW themes. Parents appreciate the approachability of the staff and their involvement in some aspects of school life. Links between the church and the school are good and maintained through the committed support of the incumbent and other church members. One member ensures links between hymns learnt in school and by the church junior choir. The school uses diocesan training opportunities and pupils visit Ely cathedral. The school is considered a central part of village life and contributes regularly to the church magazine.

SIAMS report March 2015. Sutton CE (VC) Primary School. CB6 2PU