



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church**

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

### **Wickham Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School**

Buddens Road

Wickham, Fareham

Hampshire PO17 5HU

**Previous SIAS grade: Good**

**Current SIAMS grade: Outstanding**

**Diocese: Winchester**

Local authority: Hampshire

Dates of inspection: 29 June 2015

Date of last inspection: 29 June 2010

School's unique reference number: 116325

Headteacher: Helen Castle

Inspector's name and number: Andrew Rickett 201

#### **School context**

Wickham is smaller than the average size primary school with 194 children on roll. The number of students 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 majority of children come from a white British heritage. The school community reflects the broad socio-economic range of backgrounds in the catchment area. Attendance is above the average for primary schools nationally. The headteacher, previously the school's deputy head, became head in January 2015.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Wickham as a Church of England school are outstanding**

- Core Christian values make a considerable impact on the whole school community.
- Children have a clear understanding of how spirituality contributes to their wellbeing and supports their learning in the classroom.
- The commitment of school leaders and managers ensures that the Christian character is continually moving forward.

#### **Areas to improve**

- Develop opportunities in the whole curriculum to promote children's spirituality by identifying questions of meaning and purpose and explore them in depth.
- Create greater ownership of collective worship by children by involving them in exploring the direction in which worship themes are explored.
- Engage the whole school community in raising awareness of the school's core Christian values and their links to spirituality.

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

Love, courage and respect are the three core values that lie at the heart of, and make a significant impact on, the school's Christian ethos. The whole school community know them and have been involved in choosing them. The core values have become embedded in the everyday life of the school through the language used to reward successes and to help children deal with relationships and behaviour. Children are very confident to articulate how these core values make difference to their learning and in their friendships. They explain how courage helps them to tackle challenging work in the classroom by giving them the will to persevere. Likewise, they can explain how you may need to be courageous to love or be respectful at difficult times. Children are able to make links between the core values and understand the relationship between them. The explicit Christian nature of these values is clearly understood by children who link them to Bible stories and the example set by Jesus as reasons why they are important 'not only to Christians - but everyone'. The core values have made a significant contribution to the children's learning attitudes and the more positive approach to their work which is reflected in improving academic standards and higher quality teaching. A particular strength of the school has been considerable improvement in developing a whole school understanding of spirituality and in providing high quality opportunities for children to develop a personal spirituality. Older children especially can articulate different aspects of spirituality that help them to understand relationships and appreciation of the world around them. The school is beginning to identify where these opportunities might occur in the whole curriculum but this is an aspect that has, as yet, not been fully explored. However, some subjects, such as religious education (RE), make a very good contribution to the development of the children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural (SMSC) education. Children respond with enthusiasm when challenged to think deeply about abstract concepts and have the confidence to share their thoughts and ideas and listen with respect to the views of others. Opportunities through SMSC, RE and worship help children to develop an appreciation of a range of faiths and cultures.

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

Collective worship has improved since the previous inspection. Children are more confident to write prayers and contribute to the evaluation of the impact of worship messages. Children have a good understanding of different types of prayers. They appreciate that prayer is a time to talk with God or Jesus to ask for help for others or ourselves, to say thank you or sorry. Opportunities to pray and reflect both in the classrooms and around the school are seen by children as part of what makes them a church school. Children are reflective and are developing their views of difficult concepts such as the Trinity. They have a clear grasp of God as Father and Jesus as Son. Older children explain how the Holy Spirit helps guide our actions and is 'like the little voice in your head telling you not to be naughty'. Acts of worship are well planned around explicit Christian values that promote the school's core values as well as reflecting the church year and celebration of major Christian festivals. A successful part of the weekly worship programme is the use of key questions to focus reflection in class based worship. At the moment, these questions are generated by school leaders and children have little say in how these times are used to think more deeply about what worship messages mean to them. Children respond well when asked to engage and participate in acts of worship. They readily offer their views and opinions and have good opportunities to do so. Local clergy make a valuable contribution to the planning and leadership of collective worship and the celebration of Christian festivals at the church has become a more important part of the life of the school for both children and adults. School leaders, including governors have become more involved in monitoring acts of worship since January 2015 and children themselves, through the school council, now regularly evaluate worship with some insightful and pertinent comments. Collective worship at Wickham brings the school community together to hear messages about God. Children understand that these elements make these times a distinct and

special part of the school day.

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

The school has made excellent efforts to look at its Christian character and develop its ethos so that it has greater meaning and purpose for the whole school community. The involvement of all members of the school in choosing the core values and the exploration of them in a family values day means that there is a shared articulation of them and what they mean to the school's Christian ethos. Furthermore, the involvement of parents in developing an understanding of spirituality has meant that parents are more able to engage with their children at home because they share in that understanding. Staff training in January and February 2015 in values and spirituality and the involvement of governors in gathering evidence of the impact of them through learning walks has given school leaders at all levels a part to play in the development of the Christian ethos. There is a secure understanding across leaders and managers of the purpose of being a church school. The commitment of the headteacher, supported by key staff such as the RE leader and governors, are crucial elements of the success in developing the Christian ethos. The headteacher has an accurate evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for development as a church school and these form an integral part of school improvement planning. The need to continue to involve all members of the school community in developing their awareness of the Christian ethos as it continues to grow is a good example of the inclusive approach to the church foundation. During the current vacancy at the parish church, local clergy have stepped in to ensure that there continues to be a church presence on the governing body. Clergy from a range of Christian denominations support the school by leading acts of worship. The school has good links with the parish church and local community and has effectively used support from the diocese to take them forward as a church school. The school meets the statutory requirements for RE and collective worship.

SIAMS report June 2015 Wickham CE VC Primary School Fareham PO17 5HU