



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

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

### **Durrington All Saints Church of England Voluntary Controlled Infant School**

School Road  
Durrington  
SP4 8HJ

**Diocese: Salisbury**

Local authority: Wiltshire

Date of inspection: 14 February 2014

Date of last inspection: 26 February 2009

School's unique reference number: 126323

Headteacher: Joanne Andrews

Inspector's name and number: Andrew Rickett 201

#### **School context**

Durrington All Saints is a smaller than average infant school with 147 children. The large majority of children are from a white British heritage. About a third of children come from families at nearby military bases. The number of children with learning needs is well above the national average as is the proportion eligible for the pupil premium. Children enter the school with levels of attainment below national expectations. The school has joined other local schools to form a charitable trust which has enabled additional support for vulnerable children. There has been considerable staff turnover since the previous inspection.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Durrington All Saints as a Church of England school are outstanding**

- A strong emphasis on explicit Christian values and the development of a personal spirituality make a significant impact on the children's learning and personal development.
- There are clear links between the school's core Christian values, collective worship, religious education and the whole curriculum.
- The commitment from the headteacher, her senior leadership and management team and the governors, ensures that the school is continually reviewing and developing its Christian vision.

#### **Areas to improve**

- Embed the school's growing understanding of spirituality by ensuring that children have consistently high quality encounters across the whole school curriculum.
- Develop the children's ability to reflect and respond to their spiritual encounters through the use of key questions to enable engagement at greater depth.
- As the school develops its understanding of spirituality, ensure that leaders and managers adapt current monitoring systems so that they evaluate its impact on the transformation of children's lives.

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

The well-being and academic progress that children make in their learning is a central principle of the school's approach to its Christian ethos. This is evident in the way that the school has devised a pastoral system and a whole school approach to teaching and learning which places an emphasis on the development of each child's sense of 'who am I'. Through the promotion of core values, each explicitly rooted in Christian teaching; the school very successfully supports children to build self-esteem, confidence and to raise their aspirations. The school is outstanding because of its success in achieving this vision. For example, in all the religious education (RE) lessons seen during the inspection, children had opportunities to reflect on their learning and were given the encouragement to change their opinions in the light of what they had learnt. Thus building confidence and the sense of 'who am I'. The Christian ethos is the driving force behind this approach. The school's own monitoring of children's academic achievement reflects the vision's emphasis on the individual. Children make good progress in their learning in relation to their starting points when they join the school. There is already a very good shared understanding of what spirituality means among the staff and how it can become part of the everyday life of the school both in the curriculum and through the school's excellent pastoral provision. The school is aware of the need to continue to develop its understanding of spirituality and ensure that it offers all children the highest quality experiences and equip them with the ability to express their thoughts and ideas with increasing sophistication. The confidence of teachers and children to ask and explore difficult questions, often relating to the intangible, contributes to the good progress that children make in their learning. Relationships in the school are excellent and are characterised by mutual trust between all members of the school community. The children's understanding of Jesus helps them to apply their understanding of His love to everyday experiences. For example, children are clear that, if they have upset someone else, Jesus would want them to say sorry to that person before they said sorry to Him in a prayer. The young children in the school are developing their appreciation and respect for the diversity of cultures and beliefs and show a willingness to talk openly about issues that concern them. The school environment provides a safe place in which children feel that they are allowed to do this. They say that they are all friends and that teachers are there to help them. Religious education challenges children by giving them the opportunity to tackle difficult questions about faith and belief and they respond with enthusiasm and in considerable depth.

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

Acts of worship are outstanding at All Saints because they are an integral expression of the school's Christian ethos through the strong focus on core values that are explicitly rooted in Bible teaching. The messages that children hear in collective worship are clearly given and made relevant to the children's own experiences. Children understand that worship is a special time in the school day and that it gives them the opportunity to talk to God through prayer and to learn about Jesus. By developing this understanding of a relationship with God and Jesus, the school is supporting these young children in their growing understanding of the Trinity. There is a strong emphasis on Bible stories and children have a very good knowledge of a range of stories through which they are developing their understanding of values such as wisdom and generosity. Worship themes are based around the school's core values each of which is specifically related to a Bible quotation. The weekly pattern of worship allows for children explore the theme in greater detail with their own class. The class led acts of worship give children regular opportunities to plan and lead worship as well as the responsibility to interpret the current value in their own way. Collective worship is distinctively Anglican in its nature with simple words of welcome and dismissal that follow the church's tradition. Children know about the church seasons, its major festivals and the real meaning of their message. Children have an excellent understanding of prayer and the place it has in the life of someone who has a faith or for those who don't. For example, children speak confidently about God listening to everybody regardless of who they are: 'He made us all the same and we are all

equal'. Teachers and children are confident to lead acts of worship. There is a good range of people from the church and other Christian groups who regularly lead worship. School leaders ensure that worship is very effectively monitored and evaluated. This includes feedback from children and parents which contribute to the creation of an action plan which identifies areas for further improvement. The collective worship seen during the inspection was an inspiring occasion which had moments of wonder for the children, time to sing joyously and the opportunity to be still for quiet reflection and to think about God.

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

The headteacher is passionate that the school places its Christian ethos at the heart of its vision and ensures that the school's church status has a high profile to all members of the school community. The headteacher clearly expresses the school's purpose as a church school and this is fully supported by her senior leadership, the staff and governors. Parents spoken to during the inspection agreed that the school gives their children opportunities to encounter faith and that this is done in a way that allows their children to begin to discover for themselves what they believe in. This positive view of the school is supported by regular feedback from parents which gathers their views on the impact of the Christian ethos. The school's leaders and managers have put in place secure methods that very effectively monitor and evaluate the impact of the Christian ethos and which accurately identifies areas for future improvement as a church school. The fact that these are part of the school's overall improvement plan is a reflection of the school's interpretation of its distinctive ethos being integral to all aspects of school life particularly with regard to the children's learning. Governors have an excellent understanding of the school's Christian ethos and the chair of governors has a very good grasp of what the school needs to do to continue to move forward. The school's leaders and governors are keenly aware that as the school continues to develop its Christian ethos so they will need to adapt the way it monitors and evaluates new initiatives and the impact they have on making a difference to the children's lives: particularly with regard to the development of the children's spirituality. Children and parents have very positive views about the school's relationship with the local church and say that they value the times when the school celebrates major Christian festivals at the church. The vicar has very recently re-joined the governing body and is open to exploring ways that the school and church communities can work together. The headteacher has ensured that teachers and other members of staff receive relevant training to develop their understanding of what it means to be a church school and this has led to improvement in the leadership of collective worship and in the assessment of RE. Religious education has a high profile within the school and the subject leader shares the headteacher's passion and commitment for the school's Christian ethos.

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