



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Eastchurch Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Warden Road
Eastchurch
Kent

ME12 4EJ

Previous SIAMS grade: Outstanding

Current inspection grade: Good

Diocese: Canterbury

Local authority: Kent

Dates of inspection: 22 June 2015

Date of last inspection: 26 April 2010

School's unique reference number: 118644

Executive Headteacher: Pauline Shipley, Head of School St Clement Michelle Crowe, Head of School All Saints Sarah Hunt

Inspector's name and number: Jane Garrett 618

School context

Eastchurch Church of England Primary School is a larger than average school, situated on two sites on the Isle of Sheppey. All Saints in Eastchurch is about three miles away from the recently built St Clement. There is a nursery and two full time reception classes at All Saints. The majority of pupils are from white British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who receive support through pupil premium and special educational needs is above the national average. The substantive executive headteacher has been on sick leave since September 2014 and the school is currently run by the two heads of school. Both sites combine to work in close partnership. Ofsted graded the school as good in May 2015.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Eastchurch as a Church of England school are good

- The school's Christian values support the excellent relationships between staff and pupils.
- The leadership of the school has brought about significant improvements both to academic standards and the teaching of RE.
- The raising of standards in RE is due to the new RE leader's positive and enthusiastic impact on the teaching of Religious Education.

Areas to improve

- Involve a wider range of stakeholders in monitoring and evaluating collective worship.
- Strengthen the role of governors in holding the leadership of the school to account and make sure policies reflect the Christian ethos of the school.
- Embed assessment procedures for RE.
- Improve pupils' spiritual and cultural development by providing more opportunities to learn about faiths and cultures other than their own.
- Make sure the school website communicates the school's Christian character.

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

The school is marked by the excellent relationships amongst pupils and staff. Children are able to refer to school/Christian values such as tolerance and respect when discussing relations. Christian values are prominently displayed around the school as reminders to staff and children. Each value is linked to a Bible passage. The pupils are enthusiastically able to tell stories that illustrate the values and they regard them as a set of rules. The values permeate across the whole curriculum and are regularly referred to in worship and RE. Results in Maths and English at the end of KS2 have improved and are now broadly in line with the national average. At KS1 there is some underachievement but strategies are in place to support these pupils. As well as learning interventions, the school supports pupils by having counselling and behaviour facilities available to pupils. Poor attendance is a characteristic of the locality. Many initiatives have been instigated to address this and data suggests that these have had a positive impact. Attendance is now 96.1%, excluding persistent absence. Pupils demonstrate that the RE curriculum contributes to their social, moral, cultural, and spiritual development. Standards across all subjects are at least in line with national expectations. Marking procedures are well established for RE and marking is developmental. Assessment of RE is carried out. This now needs to be further embedded in order for it to have an impact on teachers' planning. Additional activities such as the 'Easter Experience' and Christian values workshops augment the teaching of RE by providing cross curricular workshops that help children understand and practically apply biblical truths to their own lives. The school website does not communicate the Christian values and involvement pupils have. Children understand that not all people share the same faith or viewpoint. They are respectful of this. An annual cultural week celebrates diversity of different faiths. However, opportunities to explore other faiths and cultures are somewhat limited, so children do not have a real insight into multi-cultural communities living alongside one another. The school council decides which charities to support and how this is done. Some charities the school supports, directly help individual children within the school, such as the British Heart Foundation and the Neurofibromatosis Association, therefore making support of these charities very meaningful.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Pupils understand worship as an important part of the day when they can pray and quietly reflect. Pupils talk enthusiastically about collective worship and the importance it plays in their lives because they understand its relevance and so they respond positively and enjoy taking part in worship. They are able to articulate what worship means to them and how it affects their behaviour and relationships. A comment made was worship gives, 'a sense of want for Christianity', another explained that God had given her confidence in a difficult situation. Pupils write prayers and some of them are read out. Stories are linked to the Bible for example; the story of Abraham and Lot. Children linked this to thinking about people they could trust and then putting their trust in God. Children recognised the school values in the story and were then encouraged to identify the same values in situations that affect them. Pupils know the Lord's Prayer and are familiar with a range of Anglican responses which they can confidently say. Images were shown on the data projector whilst the children entered the hall. These helped to provoke thought about trust. The Reflective areas in each classroom enabling pupils to write prayers or express their thoughts are well used. Various clergy including the vicar from All Saints church lead worship weekly, so children are familiar with them. Pupils have a clear understanding of the Trinity, one child explained it as, 'being like a plait with different colours of wool,' another as looking at a person from different angles and their appearance seems to be different. Worship is based on the Diocesan scheme. Staff regularly evaluate worship and this informs planning. This has not yet been extended to pupils or governors. A newly created spiritual garden contributes to the spiritual development of the school community.

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

Since the last inspection the school's Christian character has been made more explicit through the distinctive Christian values that permeate the life of the school. Thus underpinning the nurturing of the Christian faith in its pupils and providing good support for pupils' well-being. This is evident in the day to day organisation of the school and in the good relationships among adults and pupils. The school policies do not reflect the Christian values of the school. The school has undergone a period of considerable change since September 2014. This has been managed carefully and sensitively. The governors are involved in the work of the school and they are supportive of the school's vision. Monitoring of RE and worship by governors is not in place. Foundation governors have received diocesan training and this has helped to make them aware of areas for development. All governors are well disposed towards the Christian values of the school. The RE leader was appointed in September 2014. Since then she has been proactive in auditing needs and providing necessary training. Consequently staff now feel more confident in the delivery of RE and worship. The school has therefore started to support its future needs as a church school. Both RE and collective worship meet statutory requirements. Children feel safe at school and they know that their voice will be heard. Both sites foster strong links with local churches, the 'Island Chaplaincy' and the Family Trust. This means that both children and parents identify closely with them. The school operates an 'open door' policy towards parents. Recent questionnaires indicate that parents are aware of the Christian status of the school and feel well supported by the school. Pupils take part in the local Remembrance Day service, blessing of the 'Island Schools' service and messy church. This helps to create links with the local community.