



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

St Peter's Church of England (VA) Primary School

Little Green Lane, Farnham, Surrey GU9 8TF

Previous SIAS grade: Outstanding

Current SIAMS grade: Outstanding

Diocese: Guildford

Local authority: Surrey

Dates of inspection: 3 November 2015

Date of last inspection: 27 September 2010

School's unique reference number: 125182

Headteacher: Sarah Dunning

Inspector's name and number: Marcia Headon 761

School context

St Peter's Primary School is a larger-than-average sized primary school with 420 pupils aged from 4 to 11. The majority are of white British heritage and the percentage of pupils with special educational needs and or physical disabilities fluctuates around the national average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for additional funding known as the pupil premium is below the national average. Since the last inspection a new headteacher and senior leadership team have been appointed and extensive building works taken place to expand the school to two forms of entry.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Peter's as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The evident and measurable influence on the whole school of the outstanding leadership of the head teacher and the example which she sets in living out the school mission and values.
- The high quality challenging questioning in Religious Education (RE) lessons encourages pupils to think deeply and express their personal ideas freely.
- The opportunities for reflection provided for pupils within the curriculum and in specially designed spaces around the school deepens pupils' spirituality.

Areas to improve

- Develop the regular involvement of pupils in planning and leading collective worship.
- Ensure that pupils develop a greater understanding of the role of the Anglican Church in Britain.

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

The school's mission statement of having 'high expectations where all achieve and succeed within a safe and inclusive Christian community' is lived out in daily practice. Pupils and staff readily understand that Gospel values underpin the school's work and speak of the love, friendship, respect and kindness which drive all actions and policy. As one Year 2 pupil said 'we believe in God and we want to treat others as He taught us to treat them.' Despite this endorsement, the school wishes to be certain that its values are fully embedded in the life of the school and is currently carrying out a review. The Christian ethos of the school influences its highly inclusive nature. The great majority of pupils make good or better progress from their starting points. In 2015 attainment at the end of Year 2 was above average for reading, writing and for mathematics at most levels. This is a significant improvement on last year. Overall, pupils in Year 6 have exceeded national results for two levels of progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Disadvantaged pupils or those who have special educational needs made good progress from their starting points. The latest data indicates that pupils achieve well as a direct result of the care and attention given to them. This matches the school's philosophy that each child has talents which are unique in the eyes of God and they should be celebrated and supported. Relationships within the school are excellent. There is respect between all and the staff speak warmly of the care shown to them, especially when they face difficulties. Pupils' spiritual development is outstanding. Children demonstrate it through spiritual journey books where they reflect joy and wonder at a variety of topics covered in RE and the whole curriculum. Behaviour is outstanding. Pupils know when they do wrong there will be consequences but the behaviour policy is well linked to reflection and Christian forgiveness. Pupils show tolerance to those of all faiths and none. Through charity work they support Water Aid, Christian Aid and Traidcraft in order to have an impact on the lives of others globally. Culturally the school has well developed links with Ghana as well as the local Farnham community and is recognised nationally as a Fairachieving School. However, pupils are less aware of the role of the Anglican church within Britain.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Worship is totally central to the life of the school. Children say class worship is their favourite time of day as there, they are like a family and enjoy the opportunity to be quiet and to pray. In both whole school and class worship, a candle is lit as a focal point and in the hall a reverent atmosphere is created by a cross and music. Singing is a very important part of worship to the pupils. The headteacher has enriched this by her emphasis upon the pupils' understanding the meaning of the words of hymns and songs and by there always being a Christian message to the worship, to which the pupils can relate. Worship is carefully planned in conjunction with the local clergy and is based around the liturgical calendar and values. Bible stories are widely used. The headteacher or deputy headteacher lead the whole school worship and weekly key stage school worship is led by the Vicar, Curate or Baptist minister. Simple Anglican responses are used. The worship is made relevant so pupils understand the messages and act upon them. For example having heard the story of Daniel in the Lions' Den, one boy explained he had had the courage to attempt a difficult piece of work. However, currently pupils are not sufficiently involved in the planning or leading of collective worship. Services are held at the local church five times a year. Two of these are during Advent and Lent to reinforce the importance of these times in the Church's Year. Pupils in Key Stage 2 show a very good understanding of the Trinity and it is developing in Key Stage 1. Pupils have a very effective worship committee which works with another local church junior school to evaluate worship. Prayer is very important to the school. There are many quiet reflective corners which are very well used. The school prayer is said by children and relevant to them and there are opportunities for prayer throughout the day. Staff appreciate the monthly prayer group led by the local clergy as a 'moment here with God'. The school makes excellent use of Pause Days, designed by the Diocese which allow the opportunity for prayer and reflection for all.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

RE enjoys an important status in the school. Standards in RE are high in all key stages and are at least in line with other core subjects. Pupils make excellent progress in both knowing and understanding about beliefs and practices and in discussing 'big questions', reflecting and bringing their own ideas to the lesson. In a Key Stage 2 lesson on Hinduism pupils showed excellent knowledge of different faiths, which was exemplified by them comparing differences and similarities between Hindu beliefs and the Trinity. In a Key Stage 1 lesson pupils learnt from their favourite stories including Bible stories in sharing ideas such as particular stories that showed that it is wrong to take other people's things, or things are not always what you might expect. The overall quality of teaching and learning over time is outstanding. Teachers demonstrate high levels of subject knowledge, and their questioning skills require children to explore ideas and to think deeply. Challenging questions are asked which encourage children to look at issues from different perspectives. Pupils do not feel threatened by this, but as one pupil said 'I particularly like RE as it is always made clear there is no wrong or right answer and I can express my opinions.' Pupils enjoy the variety of activities in RE such as role play, hot seating, drama and art work, all of which develop their ideas as well as making a strong contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Marking is very thorough and helps children to understand how they can improve their work. The deputy head's leadership of RE is outstanding. The school has adopted the new Diocesan materials for RE and she has carefully planned the work and is monitoring it closely. She provides excellent support and guidance to staff and has a depth of understanding of the nature of the subject. She has developed an assessment scheme which mirrors that used by the school. RE is taught in discrete lessons, and although Christianity is the major religion studied there is an appropriate emphasis on other religions. The RE leader keeps herself totally up to date by attending national conferences and courses run by the Diocese. RE is well resourced.

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

The headteacher provides outstanding leadership and is an excellent role model for all. She is a very visible presence around the school and the children describe her as 'a very special person'. She is sustained by her own strong Christian beliefs which are clearly articulated. She wants children to live by the principles of the Christian faith and has an overriding belief that it is good to give and to put others first. Since her appointment the school has been completely transformed and with her deputy, who provides excellent support has been the driving force for change. The staff value their leadership and have the utmost trust in them. The curriculum is carefully planned to give opportunities to develop the whole child. The school's strategic planning is exceptionally strong with elements about the church school distinctiveness skilfully woven into the plans. It rigorously evaluates all it does and a recent parental questionnaire about the church school ethos and direction was highly positive. Governors are highly committed to the school. They are constantly extending their understanding of the school, are regular visitors and take their role seriously, regularly attending training sessions and holding the school to account. They have addressed the areas for development from the previous inspection very thoroughly and are ambitious for the school. The headteacher nurtures and develops staff. Staff professional development has been a high priority with training on RE and leading class worship, and mentoring is provided by the RE leader. Links with St Peter's church are very strong. It provides support for the school through prayer and the work of the clergy. The parish newsletter includes articles from the school and recently the pupils gave the proceeds of half of their charity day to the church building fund. Occasional church services are held in school and the school worship band occasionally plays at church. Parents are fully supportive of the school and value the support they are given. As one wrote 'We feel very fortunate to be part of this Christian community and to be so supported by this school which certainly puts its Christian ethos into practice'. The school meets the statutory requirements for RE and Worship.