



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

The Chandler Church of England Junior School

Middlemarch,
Roke Lane,
Godalming
GU8 5PB

Previous SIAMS grade: Outstanding

Diocese: Guildford

Local authority: Surrey

Date of inspection: 14 January 2015

Date of last inspection: November 2009

School's unique reference number: 125200

Headteacher: Hugh Rawson

Inspector's name and number: Glyn Willoughby 637

School context

The Chandler is a larger than average school serving the parishes of Witley and Milford. The large majority of pupils are of a white British heritage and the proportion speaking English as an additional language is well below the national average. The proportion of pupils who trigger additional government funding and with different levels of special needs is above the national average. An experienced headteacher was appointed at the start of this academic year following the previous headteacher and deputy leaving the school.

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

- The commitment of the headteacher, supported by governors, clergy and staff, in developing the explicit Christian values that are becoming more evident throughout the life and work of the school.
- Respectful staff who model the school's Christian values and the impact of their nurturing care on pupils' well-being and personal development.
- The impact of collective worship and the strong partnership with the local churches upon pupils' spiritual development and the school's Christian ethos.

Areas to improve

- Crystallise the way in which core values underpin the distinctive Christian ethos and monitor how well opportunities for spiritual development are used and promoted throughout the school.
- Embed the new programme of study for religious education and develop a rigorous system for assessing progress in both attainment targets that involves pupils and informs planning.

- Governors to develop and embed a strategic programme that involves all groups in the school community in evaluating the impact of the school's Christian character on pupils' personal development and academic achievement.

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

This is a happy school where pupils are welcoming and the headteacher and staff model Christian values and strong relationships. Pupils feel safe and supported by 'a feeling of togetherness' because of the impact upon them of these values which are becoming increasingly recognised as they are promoted in the school. The values, such as 'belonging', are evident in the sense of community and calm behaviour evident throughout the school.

Pupils recognise the characteristics of the school's values and appreciate how they affect their daily lives. One explained how worship helped an understanding of the Christian value of honesty and 'helps me to be a good person' and 'help others'. Increasing familiarity with different Christian values is providing the opportunity for pupils of all abilities to develop a vocabulary which enables them to discuss the meaning for them personally.

The supportive family ethos motivates pupils to aspire to succeed academically and to develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally. However the school cannot yet be judged good in meeting the needs of all learners as there is insufficient evidence to demonstrate accelerated academic progress.

Across the curriculum, including religious education, there is not yet a consistent approach to how pupils reflect on spiritual issues. This was a focus arising from the previous inspection. The school plans to crystallise the way in which core values underpin the distinctive Christian ethos and monitor how well opportunities for spiritual development are used and promoted throughout the school.

The broad and creative curriculum includes a wide range of activities and clubs, including sport and music tuition, providing many opportunities for cultural and social development. Collecting for charities, links with the Diocese, churches and the wider community, such as a school in Uganda, enable pupils to develop as responsible citizens. In this secure and welcoming environment, they enjoy coming to school and develop a good understanding of Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith and a growing respect for other faiths.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship is at the heart of what the school does in making its Christian values explicit to the whole community. Pupils have positive views saying they enjoy worship and see it as an important occasion in the life of the school. Since the appointment of the headteacher the worship programme is being rewritten and the themes are each based on a different Christian value linked with Bible stories and the teachings of Jesus. In this way pupils explore and gain a growing understanding of the meaning of each value. Those spoken with recalled stories they had heard and could relate the meaning of the value to their own lives.

In the worship observed, pupils entered the hall quietly, spontaneously singing along to the guitar music being played by the headteacher. They showed they valued the importance of the occasion as they listened attentively and responded enthusiastically as the headteacher explained the meaning of the Christian value honesty through narrating the story of The Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector.

Worship consistently helps pupils to grow spiritually. This is because the themes capture their interest. There is fun as well as reverence and behaviour is exemplary. An atmosphere of honesty and trust enables pupils to reflect on their own feelings. Pupils spoke of the importance for them of the regular period of quiet prayer when they 'take a minute' to calmly

reflect and explained that the impact of this continues throughout the rest of the day.

The local clergy lead worship regularly. These occasions give positive messages about the strong relationship that exists between church and school as well as providing a good understanding of church tradition and developing a growing understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Currently governors informally monitor the effectiveness of worship and plan to ensure the impact upon pupils is systematically monitored and evaluated.

The effectiveness of the religious education is satisfactory

Pupils have positive views about religious education (RE) and demonstrate a good understanding of the main concepts of the Christian faith. In lessons observed sound levels of teacher expertise, combined with a supportive learning environment, resulted in pupils being engaged and interested. In a lesson exploring a version of the Hindu creation story and making a comparison with the Jewish and Christian creation stories, targeted support, enhanced through a Teaching Assistant, enriched personal, social and cultural development and secured good learning. The school plans to increase opportunities for pupils to apply their knowledge in RE as they explore and discuss important questions about religion and beliefs.

While a programme to measure progress achieved by pupils in other core subjects is being adopted, the assessment of RE remains at an early stage. The school recognises the need to develop strategies to ensure that both Attainment Target 1, 'learning about religion', as well as Attainment Target 2, 'learning from religion', are fully assessed, involve pupils and also inform lesson planning.

At present there are only modest links to aspects of the school's Christian ethos and these are not made explicit and not yet consistently identified in the programme of study. Identifying skills specific to RE and mapping their development throughout the scheme of work was a focus arising from the previous inspection that has not been implemented. The subject co-ordinator, appointed this academic year, has started to implement a revised programme of study, including within it the previous focus for development. She has a clear grasp of the steps that need to be taken to implement the areas to improve and is starting to use the training opportunities available through the partnership with the Diocese.

There is insufficient information to provide a clear picture of standards across the whole school. Evidence suggests pupils are reaching levels broadly in line with their age. Their knowledge of Christianity is comparatively strong because of the understanding gained from worship.

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

The headteacher has a clear Christian vision for the school and how this can positively impact on pupils and their personal and academic development. The partnership with parents is strong and they feel encouraged to be involved in school activities to support their children. Parents spoke positively of how their children are 'proud' of their school and have a 'real sense of community'.

The partnership with the two parish churches is also strong. This has ensured that policies and decisions have continued to be shaped by Christian values. Since the last inspection the attention of governors and senior staff has been focused on raising standards across the school. Improvement strategies for RE are not yet sufficiently developed and embedded to bring about sustained improvement.

Led by the experienced chair, the governing body has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and a strong commitment to implement identified areas for development. They are

actively supportive and regularly visit for worship and other events. Systems for self-evaluation have been informal and not sufficient to inform identified priorities for improvement. Formalising the self-evaluation programme was a focus for development arising from the previous inspection and governors developed this focus by encouraging the involvement of local clergy in the life of the school. This has advanced the partnership between school and church and formed the foundation upon which many linked activities have been planned. The clergy are regular visitors who are highly respected as a visible presence of the church and whose pastoral care is valued. With the support of the clergy, the headteacher has been able to ensure worship continues to enrich pupils' personal and spiritual development.

The school now plans to embed a programme that involves all groups in the school community in evaluating the impact of the school's Christian character. Determined leadership by the headteacher, combined with reflective governance and effective partnership with the local churches, provides the potential to considerably strengthen the school's capacity to improve.

The school meets the statutory requirements for Collective Worship and RE.

SIAMS report, January 2015. The Chandler Church of England Junior School, Middlemarch, Roke Lane, Godalming, GU8 5PB.