



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Ripley Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Wentworth Close
Ripley
Surrey GU23 6ED

Previous SIAS grade: Good

Current SIAMS grade: Good

Diocese: Guildford

Local authority: Surrey

Dates of inspection: 6 July 2015

Date of last inspection: 7 July 2010

School's unique reference number: 125147

Interim executive headteacher: Kathryn Krynicki

Inspector's name and number: Andrew Rickett 201

School context

Ripley is a smaller than average primary school with 165 children on roll. It serves Ripley and surrounding villages. Most children are of white British heritage and from varied socio-economic backgrounds. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is in line with the national average. The number entitled to the pupil premium is below the national average. Attendance is in line with national expectations. Since the previous inspection the school has completed transition from an infant school to the full primary range. There have been significant changes in leadership since January 2015. At the time of the inspection, the school was led by an interim executive headteacher and day to day leadership was by two joint heads of school.

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

- A stronger emphasis on Christian values is making an increasing contribution to the rapid improvements in teaching and learning.
- New leadership in religious education (RE) is making a marked impact on the profile of the subject across the school and its contribution to the Christian ethos.
- The new leadership is successfully developing the confidence of the school community to positively express the school's Christian ethos.

Areas to improve

- As a priority, ensure that the outdoor and inside environment is improved so that it can more readily contribute to the children's spiritual development and wellbeing.
- Ensure that the core Christian values are clearly linked to themes in collective worship.
- Provide regular opportunities for children to be involved in planning and leading how worship themes are explored.

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

The strengthening of the Christian ethos by the current leadership, by placing greater emphasis on values such as perseverance and resilience, is making an increasing contribution to the improvements in teaching and learning. Lessons are exciting and pupils are becoming more engaged in their learning. Religious education lessons encourage them to ask questions and explore a deeper meaning to what they are studying. This is an aspect of teaching and learning that is improving as both adults and children have greater confidence to take risks. The school has accurately identified the need to review its approach to values by identifying a core set that the whole school community can identify with and which more explicitly reflect the church foundation. Staff training in social, moral, spiritual and cultural (SMSC) development has given a better understanding of these aspects and how they can be embedded more directly within the whole curriculum. A whole school SMSC day gave pupils the opportunity to explore what these aspects mean to them. Although still at an early stage, there is a higher profile of spirituality and clearer links to curriculum areas including RE. Relationships in the school are good and there is a positive attitude towards learning. Pupils say that they make good friends and feel confident to talk to an adult in school if they have any concerns. The school grounds and indoor environment are not conducive in providing pupils with sufficient opportunities to have space and a place for stillness and reflection that contributes to their overall wellbeing. Pupils are becoming aware of a range of beliefs and cultures through their RE lessons and in personal and social education. They are respectful of the views and opinions of others and understand the need to learn about the diversity of cultures and faiths in Britain and around the world.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is satisfactory

Collective worship is regarded by pupils as one of the most important ways that the school expresses its Christian ethos. They say that worship brings them together with time to pray and hear about stories from the Bible. Acts of worship are a well-established part of the life of the school and celebrate pupils' achievements both in and out of school. Worship is planned with a daily opportunity to pray and think about God. Themes include a broad range of topics and give pupils a good understanding of different religions. However, there is too little specific emphasis on the teaching of Christian stories from the Bible and the impact they can have on the pupils' lives. The structure of daily worship does not allow for themes to be explored in depth throughout the week in class groups. Pupils respond well in acts of worship and speak positively about them. They are respectful and engaged and show an appropriate reverence during times for prayer. The school attempts to create an atmosphere conducive to worship with a table and displays but the layout and decoration of the school hall does not help to create an environment in which adults and pupils have quality time to be still and reflect. Pupils have a good understanding of prayer and the various types of prayers that they say. They know that prayer is not a personal 'wish list' but rather asking God to help others less fortunate. Pupils have a growing perception of God as Father and Jesus as His Son. Older pupils, in particular, talk with some maturity about the relationship between the two. Their understanding of the Holy Spirit is less well developed. Pupils are increasingly confident to write their own prayers and have opportunities to do so for the celebration of Christian festivals such as Easter and Christmas. There are fewer opportunities for pupils to be involved in planning and leading how worship themes are explored throughout the week. Limited monitoring and evaluation of worship has taken place.

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

The strengthening of school leadership, with the appointment of an interim executive headteacher supported by two heads of school, has given the school the expertise to rapidly improve the quality of teaching and learning as well as develop a more overt Christian ethos that has meaning for all members of the school community. The recent reconstitution of the governing body has also given management greater involvement in the strategic direction of

the school and a clearer focus on school improvement. Together, the school's current leaders and managers have a good understanding of how to continue to develop as a church school and enhance its Christian ethos further. The school has accurately identified the actions needed to further embed explicit Christian values throughout the school and ensure that they impact on the pupils' learning and wellbeing. The establishment of a governors' Executive Working Board has significantly strengthened the leadership and management's ability to focus on improving the children's education. The vicar, following a long term of office as a governor, is currently not a member on the reconstituted governing body. The governors, working with the diocese, are in the process of finding the foundation governors required to complete the full complement of governors. The vicar supports the school through leading acts of worship and regular meetings with the RE subject leader to ensure that RE and other aspects of church school distinctiveness, are discussed and taken forward. The recently appointed RE subject leader has quickly gained a good understanding of the subject and the priorities needed for further improvement. The monitoring and evaluation role of the governing body of the school as a church school has not yet been fully embedded as an integral part of ongoing school self-evaluation. The school has growing relationships with the church. Pupils and parents speak positively of the celebration of Christian festivals celebrated in the church and members of the church volunteer their services to the school.

The school meets the statutory requirements for RE and collective worship.

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