



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Wreningham Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Ashwellthorpe Road
Wreningham
NR16 1AW

Previous SIAMS grade: Good (2)

Diocese: Norwich

Local authority: Norfolk

Dates of inspection: 13 November 2014

Date of last inspection: 24 November 2009

School's unique reference number: 121095

Headteacher: Rob Jones

Inspector's name and number: Philip Knowles 795

School context

Wreningham VC School is a small village primary school that serves the rural areas of Wreningham, Ashwellthorpe and Fundenhall. Increasingly, the school is drawing in families from a significantly wider area. There are currently 98 pupils on roll and almost all of these are of white British origin. The Headteacher has been in post since January 2011 and the Incumbent since June 2013. She works part-time and currently has care for all of the 8 churches and 4 church schools in the Upper Tas Valley Benefice.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Wreningham VC as a Church of England school are outstanding

- This is a very happy, inclusive and successful environment where the work of the school is built upon clearly articulated Christian values which are understood and valued by all
- The school offers an exciting, engaging curriculum which is concerned with encouraging the children to value God's gifts and understand themselves as custodians of these
- Religious Education (RE) is well led, taught creatively and given a high status within the school, enabling pupils to apply their skills and knowledge in their own context.

Areas to improve

- Formalise the strategic development and regular monitoring of the Christian ethos and teaching of RE that already exists.
- Develop the involvement of pupils in collective worship by ensuring that there are regular opportunities for pupils to plan, lead and evaluate whole-school collective worship
- Build on the success and impact of the prayer space week by establishing a permanent quiet area where members of the school community may go during the school day to pray

or reflect.

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

All stakeholders have a clear understanding that this is a church school. Many parents say that they actively chose this school because of its strong church ethos and the way it promotes Christian values such as compassion and forgiveness and how these impact in specific ways upon individuals' interactions with each other within the school community. Children have a deep understanding of what being part of a school with a distinctive Christian ethos means. One child said "We follow Jesus's footsteps" and another said "In assembly we lead prayers and learn about following God – we're Christians."

This is a highly successful school. Validated data shows that Wreningham was amongst the very highest performing primary schools nationally in 2013, yet this is also a fully inclusive school where the child's every need is met regardless of how complex and significant those needs are.

RE is very successfully led and taught across the school, often utilizing the enquiry approach. In a Reception class's RE lesson, the atmosphere of encouragement and trust that was established by the teacher meant that even very young pupils felt secure and confident in sharing their insightful views and observations. They were able to link the value of friendship with the acts of friendship that Jesus performed when he was alive as well as to the way that Christians believe that Jesus is still a good friend to them now and how they can still turn to him in prayer. At KS2, teaching widens to include a comprehensive variety of experiences that are carefully pitched and give the children a good knowledge of Christianity, including the Trinitarian nature of God, and of world faiths, many of which they can name and talk about in some detail.

Spiritual, Moral, Social, Cultural (SMSC) education is given high priority and it threads through much of the curriculum as well as the wider work of the school. The behaviour policy, built upon the 'Seven Bees' initiative, is visible throughout the building and in every classroom. It contributes to the outstanding standards of behaviour and mutual respect that exist at the school. The school is the recipient of a number of awards including three Eco Awards; the school community is justifiably proud of this. The children are also challenged to apply the Christian value of compassion in a practical way by engaging successfully in a wide variety of charitable activities.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Pupils and staff say they value collective worship as the time each day when the entire school meets together as one community and where they clearly relish the sense of belonging. Pupils enjoy collective worship and identify why it is important. One pupil said: "We talk to God and if we are concentrating we can hear him talk to us." Members of staff take it in turns to lead collective worship, which is based upon Christian values such as thankfulness and forgiveness. These clearly inform the children's dealings with each other and their daily lives in school. On the day of inspection, teaching from the Bible was successfully used to link the idea of looking after and enhancing our world because it is a gift from God, strongly linking this act of worship to the ongoing school priority of encouraging everyone to be custodians of the world that God has given us.

Worship is distinctly Christian and follows a pattern throughout the week that the children recognise and can describe. Governors monitor acts of collective worship and this is recorded. On the day of inspection, the children sang a hymn and a candle was lit before the teacher encouraged a time for reflection. This familiar routine was participated in silently and thoughtfully by the entire school community, having a palpable effect on readying them for the day ahead as they were sent from the main hall following collective worship.

Wreningham All Saints and Fundenhall churches are used as venues to celebrate the key

Christian festivals. The school's link with these churches has been carefully and meaningfully developed so that the limited availability of the Minister to be involved in the school is utilized for maximum impact. She was actively involved in the prayer space week and, more recently, she worked alongside a group of pupils in preparing and delivering an act of collective worship for the school's harvest service at Fundenhall church. This has served to support the children's understanding of these festivals in the context of the Christian calendar. Pupils know the value of prayer in their lives and have an enthusiasm for prayer that has been enhanced by the impact of the school's recent prayer space week. They all know, understand and value The Lord's Prayer. They also write and read their own prayers in collective worship and they say grace, which they have also written themselves, and is said when the whole school sits to have lunch together.

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

The Headteacher and key leaders have adopted a strategic approach towards developing the Christian ethos of their school. To this aim, all stakeholders collaborated to produce the school's vision statement entitled 'TEAM' (Together Everyone Achieves More) which clearly states that the school's values are based upon Christian principles. The development of the school's Christian ethos has been very carefully considered and managed over time so that it has become properly embedded and will be sustainable in the future. The school has also worked with the Diocese on articulating Christian values, ensuring that these are linked to the wider work of the school and on developing the teaching of RE. This has helped to ensure that the Christian ethos underpins, in a meaningful way, all that the school does. It is particularly well integrated with the school's new curriculum and this ensures that the curriculum is always given a firm context within the Christian distinctiveness of this church school.

Signs and symbols, including a large Salvadoran cross, a colourful stained glass window that was designed by the children and a church board that includes prayers and information about the churches within the benefice provide a focal point within the school hall. These work as statements in supporting the school's proclamation of its church school status on its website and in its prospectus.

There is a real sense of belonging that is shared by all stakeholders and is openly expressed by them in conversation. The environment is tidy yet exciting, colourful and inspiring; this is truly a church school in which every one of its community is proud to play a part. There are a significant number of displays throughout the school and in the classrooms that focus on recent SMSC teaching as well as elements of stewardship and Christianity. A recent focus has been Black History Week, where children learnt about the major historical figures responsible for promoting racial equality throughout history such as Nelson Mandela and Rosa Parks. This work has clearly inspired the children and has engendered in them a great sense of justice that they are keen to articulate.

Leaders and governors are evaluative about the impact of the school's Christian values and of RE, which they see as central to the aspirations of the school. While there is some written evidence of the regular monitoring that takes place, this has yet to be developed and used systematically as a tool to inform future developments and improvements.

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