



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

### **St Andrew's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School**

Church Lane Cromhall, Wotton-under-Edge,  
GL12 8AL

**Previous SIAS grade: Outstanding**

**Current inspection grade: Satisfactory**

**Diocese: Gloucester**

Local authority: South Gloucestershire

Date of inspection: 29 June 2016

Date of last inspection: 12 July 2011

School's unique reference number: 109181

Headteacher: Helen Green

Inspector's name and number: David Crunkhurn Quality assurance assessor: Allyson Taylor 768

#### **School context**

St Andrew's CE (VC) Primary School is a smaller than average-sized primary school set in a rural location. There are currently 63 pupils in the school, with the vast majority being of white British heritage. The headteacher has been in post since September 2015. This is her first headship. Very recent changes in staffing have been managed well in order to minimize the impact on pupils. The percentage of pupils for whom the school currently receives pupil premium funding is 14%. Overall attendance has risen from below the national average to almost in line.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Andrew's Church of England Primary as a Church of England school are satisfactory**

- Parents hold the school in high regard and are proud of the strong partnerships that exist with the local churches, which support their children's spiritual development.
- The school's recently agreed core values are contributing to the caring and supportive relationships that exist between all members of the school community.
- The headteacher's commitment and determination to shape the school's Christian character and vision encourages all members of the community in a shared mission that every child can be the best that they can be.

#### **Areas to improve**

- Ensure that the school's values are rooted in biblical references, so that all members of the school community can articulate how they are distinctively Christian.
- Develop an engaging approach to the teaching and learning of religious education (RE), including the quality of task differentiation, so that all pupils make at least good progress.
- Establish robust systems for school leaders, including governors, to monitor and evaluate the impact of the school's Christian character on pupils' development.

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

Teachers are good role models for children. Their supportive and caring guidance helps pupils feel cared for and valued and reflects the school's Christian character. Pupils say that most pupils behave well in school. While they recognise that there are a few pupils who find good behaviour difficult, they know that any difficulties are resolved well and with an opportunity to forgive. This results in pupils who enjoy school and who care for each other. Parents feel that the school offers their children a caring and nurturing environment. One parent commented that the headteacher is 'children focused, children first.' The desire for all pupils to achieve is indicative of the headteacher's commitment to the school's Christian ethos. She is determined in her approach to develop systems to bring about necessary improvements in standards of achievement in all pupils, including those for whom the school receives pupil premium funding. Due to the drive of the headteacher, staff and governors, staff training provided by the diocese and local authority is bringing about improvements to pupil progress. Her commitment to tackle issues around absence has resulted in an improvement to the school's overall attendance figure this year. Opportunities to engage in times of reflection and prayer are developing pupils' spirituality; for example, saying prayers before eating lunch and at the end of the day, as well as during collective worship. Plans are in place to extend this work into developing dedicated reflection areas around the school and include the completion of a spiritual garden. Whilst this demonstrates a commitment to develop personal spirituality, these plans are at an early stage. Consequently, the impact of this on spiritual development is limited. Recently, the headteacher carried out a review of the school's Christian values which involved staff, governors and representatives of the local church, parents and pupils. This has resulted in a set of five core values: friendship, forgiveness, courage, respect and truthfulness. The school has begun to use these values, to underpin its work developing the Christian character, vision and academic standards of the school. As this work is at an early stage, it is too soon for it to have had a measurable impact on pupils' academic achievements. Attractive displays serve as visual reminders of the values to all members of the school community, as they live them out together. Children have some opportunities to explore these values as part of their learning in RE and during worship. However, whilst values are at the heart of the school's life, they are not explicitly known as Christian. Consequently, pupils do not confidently articulate the links between the values and biblical teaching. RE lessons, provide some opportunities for pupils to explore the school values, but are not sufficiently challenging enough to enable them to make better than satisfactory progress. Tasks do not allow pupils of differing abilities to go deeper in their exploration of world faiths and understanding of Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith. As a result, RE makes a limited contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school has future plans to address this through developing links with a larger multi-ethnic school, so as to deepen pupils understanding of diverse communities.

**The impact of collective worship on the school community is satisfactory**

The majority of pupils enjoy worship, which is planned around the 'Roots and Fruits' material and key Christian festivals. It provides opportunities for pupils to make basic connections between values and Bible stories, as well as to develop their understanding of the Trinity. For example, the lighting of three candles helps children to reflect on the presence of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. However, pupils' confidence to articulate their understanding of how values and Bible stories are connected is not strong enough. Pupils say that worship has helped in their behaviour and relationships with their peers, for example, by providing an understanding of how to forgive one another if things go wrong in friendships. However, children do not always articulate how values have a direct impact in many other areas of their own lives. All teaching staff lead worship, but not all attend worship regularly, which affects how adults engage with worship. Collective worship is supported well by members of the local churches. The retired incumbent of St Andrew's Church and the pastor of Cromhall Chapel make very positive contributions to the school's worship, supporting the opportunities for developing pupils' spirituality through activities such as Experience Easter and Experience

Christmas. Parents value these opportunities and speak fondly of the many occasions when they are able to join their children in worship at the local church. Opportunities also exist for them to attend class and celebration assemblies, where awards are given in recognition of achievement. Pupils' involvement in the planning and leading of worship was a development point at the last inspection. Since her appointment, the headteacher has begun work on implementing plans to involve more pupils in this area. There are now occasions when pupils, in their house groups, are working with the headteacher to lead worship. Although this area features as a specific priority focus in the school's development plan, it has not been evaluated robustly enough in order to demonstrate impact. Recognising this, the headteacher has worked with governors to survey pupils' attitudes towards worship. In addition, not enough opportunities exist to gather parents' views on worship. Consequently, the effectiveness of worship on the wider school community is not fully known.

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

The headteacher has engaged positively with parents since her appointment. Parents appreciate the pastoral support that all members of the school community provide to their children. They recognise the school as a church school. For example, one parent commented that the school provides the children with 'the best foundation we could ask for,' whilst another said she was attracted to the school because it offered a 'Christian foundation.' Despite the current vacancies within the local church of St Andrew's, partnerships between the church and the school are strong and mutually beneficial. For example, with the school contributing to the local flower show and fete, as well as the contribution that the church has made to the wrap-around care for pupils of the school. This is impressive and appreciated by parents. These links, and those with other denominational fellowships, are enabling children to understand the diversity of Christian communities within Christianity and are supporting pupils' spiritual development. The headteacher has begun to put in place some initiatives that are raising the profile of the school's distinctive Christian character and she has made a significant contribution to the life of the school. She has worked hard to engage with local authority and diocesan advisors, in order to improve pupil's achievement, develop worship and her own understanding of what it means to lead a Church school. This is supported by governors, thereby demonstrating a commitment to develop the leadership in church schools. RE and collective worship meet statutory requirements. The headteacher is also developing a shared ownership of the recently reviewed vision and has involved all members of the school community in the creation and implementation of core values. These values, whilst not securely known as explicitly Christian, have been shared, celebrated and taught in worship and RE as well as in other areas of the school's curriculum. All leaders show clear pride in the school as a church school. Governors know the school well and are aware of the improvements needed to move the school forward. However, the vision statement and some policies do not clearly reflect the Christian character of the school deeply enough. As the areas identified for improvement in the last inspection are only now being addressed, this limits the judgement on the leadership and management of the school as a church school. This is understood by governors and plans are in place to develop these areas further. Formal systems to monitor the effectiveness of the Christian distinctiveness of the school using the current SIAMS evaluation schedule and self-evaluation tools are not sufficiently robust. Consequently, this is not informing the strategic planning of the school as a church school. Current guidance in Church of England documentation entitled 'Valuing all God's Children' and 'Working together: The future of Rural Church of England Schools' are known to the chair of the governing body and recommendations from these reports are being considered for the life of St Andrew's Church of England Primary School.

SIAMS report June 2016 St Andrew's Church of England Primary Wotton-under-Edge, GL12 8AL