



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Stoke Row Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Stoke Row
Henley
Oxfordshire
RG9 5QS

Previous SIAS grade: Good

Current inspection grade: Good

Diocese: Oxford

Local authority: Oxfordshire

Dates of inspection: 25th June 2015

Date of last inspection: 13th May 2010

School's unique reference number: 123136

Headteacher: Charlotte Harris

Inspector's name and number: Joanne Daly Quality Assurance assessor: Allyson Taylor 768

School context

Stoke Row is a small primary school with 81 pupils on roll. There have been changes in school staff and leadership since the last inspection and the substantive headteacher has been in post since January 2014. Most pupils are white British and speak English as their first language. The number of pupils eligible for pupil premium is well below the national average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs is slightly below average. In 2014 the school completed a building project of two new classrooms.

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

- The committed Christian leadership and drive of the headteacher, effectively supported by staff and governors, has greatly strengthened the Christian distinctiveness of the school in a short period of time
- There is a strong and mutually beneficial relationship with the local Church that secures the school's understanding of itself as a Christian community
- The school's Christian values are made explicit and result in behaviour and relationships that are strong and positive and enable learners to flourish and develop spiritually and academically

Areas to improve

- To extend and formalise the role of the current SIAMS sub-committee to include clear terms of reference and so enable it to plan for future developments as a church school
- To develop the learner's understanding of the central attributes of Christian worship by the regular use of biblical materials and different Christian traditions in worship and through a strong focus on God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- To develop a clear definition of spirituality that is shared across the school community to increase opportunities for spiritual development

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

Christian values are clearly expressed on the website and around the school and in some of the school's documentation. Most of the school community recognise and can articulate their Christian origins. These values are central to the ethos of the school and impact on its daily life resulting in good academic achievement and well-being of learners and good behaviour. However, the new initiatives including the Christian values are not yet fully embedded and not everyone can recognise their distinctive Christian characteristics. Relationships between all members of the community are strong and parents speak very warmly about the difference the new headteacher is making to the Christian distinctiveness and effectiveness of the school and to the lives of their children. They commented that the new emphasis on values 'gives the school a very special feel' and that the school 'celebrates the beauty of every single child'. Attendance is good and Christian care is given appropriately to support the good attendance of all. There is a very close relationship between the school and the local church and the church building is used as an extension to the school for physical education and school worship. This beneficial link secures the school's understanding of itself as a Christian community serving the village and beyond. Staff describe the school as a 'nurturing school with a strong sense of community' and a school 'with an ethos that is very special'. Although spiritual, social, moral cultural development of learners is strong and ensures their all-round development, the school does not yet have a highly developed interpretation of spirituality which is shared across the school community. Learners are aware of Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith through the school's strong global links with Africa and India. These links, along with religious education (RE) and visits to other places of worship such as the local Sikh temple, have developed the learner's knowledge and understanding of diversity and difference within the church and within other faiths.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship plays an important role in the school and has a positive impact on the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of learners and on parents and staff. The place of worship and the important messages it gives is reflected in the good behaviour and positive relationships within the community. Learners see worship as 'a time to pray and reflect and have quiet.' In singing worship learners listen attentively and sing with enthusiasm and are encouraged to make links between the words in the songs and the school values. Staff and clergy plan and lead worship although not always together. This means that worship is not always systematically planned to ensure continuity and cohesion between the school's core values, the Christian calendar and the 'Values for Life' worship resource used by the school. Representatives from the local Baptist church occasionally lead worship and so learners have some experience of different Christian traditions. Parents commented that school worship held in the church three times a week is always full and that they enjoy the special time put aside for reflection and quiet in worship in the church. Although worship sometimes includes biblical materials it is not regular enough and therefore learners have fewer opportunities than they could do to make links between the Bible, their own lives and the school's core values. Learners can identify some aspects of Anglican practise and demonstrate an awareness of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit but they are not able to talk about the Trinity with any measure of understanding. Learners understand the purpose of prayer and reflection and say prayers at lunchtime and at the end of the school day. They make use of prayer outside of school and one pupil said 'we can pray anywhere we want'. Learners enjoy contributing to worship with prayers that they write and classes have led worship on the school's five core values. However, there are limited opportunities for learners to plan and lead worship independently. Feedback on worship is gathered from learners and parents and the headteacher and governors observe worship. This monitoring and evaluation prompts some changes to worship but does not yet clearly identify where improvements would enhance provision.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

The profile of RE is rising in the school and within the curriculum. Standards reflect those of the other core subjects of the school in that they are good overall. However, lessons do not challenge more able learners on a regular basis. Learners have some knowledge and understanding of the Bible and the planned introduction of the diocesan scheme of work, which incorporates the agreed syllabus from September, will improve learners' knowledge and understanding of the Bible and of other faiths and cultures. Learners enjoy the subject and have an understanding of the value of RE and they mostly learn well. They are developing some skills including skills in enquiry and reflection. Assessment is in place and this enables the school to track achievement and progress and allows teachers to use assessment to inform their planning for next steps. The headteacher, as RE leader, effectively communicates her expectations of RE and monitors some aspects of the subject. However, monitoring is not regular enough and does not sufficiently inform school improvement planning and result in well informed actions plans for RE. Through RE learners learn about other religions which has contributed to their multi-cultural awareness and understanding of and respect for diverse faiths and cultures.

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

The school's Christian character is clearly articulated and promoted by the headteacher and governors who have rapidly developed the Christian distinctiveness of the school. The headteacher consulted widely in selecting the five core Christian values for the school which are 'kindness, respect, perseverance, achievement and excellence.' While learners can name the school values they are not able to describe the values as distinctively Christian in origin. The headteacher, governors, staff and parents can describe the impact of the chosen values on the personal development and well-being of the learners. They can say how the values impact upon achievement by giving learners the confidence to overcome challenges in their work. Leaders describe how the values create strong, nurturing relationships within the school community. One governor said 'there is evidence of kindness wherever you go' and another commented that 'every member of the school community is valued'. All the areas for development from the last inspection have been addressed. Leaders have involved all groups of the school community in evaluating aspects of the Christian character of the school which has led to improvement in distinctiveness and this is included in the school development plan. A new sub-committee of governors have begun to focus on elements of church school distinctiveness within its preparation for inspection. To be even better this sub-committee needs to be formalised and extended to include clear terms of reference with effective systems for reporting to the full governing body. Identified improvements in RE, worship and distinctiveness can then be incorporated into school development planning for the future. Partnerships between the school, the church, the local community, global communities and the diocese contribute fully to school life and give substantial benefit to all parties. Examples include how learners created prayer spaces in the church and the school choir singing at the chapel's two hundred years celebratory service and flower festival. The professional development of the headteacher and staff is linked to the school development plan and appraisals. Although this has benefitted the current leadership of the school, additional professional development opportunities for teachers and governors would further support the school to be outstanding overall. Worship, RE and the curriculum are underpinned by the school's Christian values. As a result, the spiritual, moral, social, cultural development of learners and their well-being are enhanced. Governors ensure that the headteacher, as RE and worship leader, is given time and support from the diocese to fulfil her role.

SIAMS report June 2015, Stoke Row (VA) Church of England School, Stoke Row, RG9 5QS

