



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Overbury Church of England Voluntary Controlled First School

Overbury
Tewksbury, Gloucestershire
GL20 7NT

Previous SIAMS grade: Outstanding

Diocese: Worcester

Local authority: Worcestershire

Date of inspection: 26 January 2015

Date of last inspection: 23 November 2009

School's unique reference number: 116837

Headteacher: Pernilla Pascolutti

Inspector's name and number: Stephanie Boulter 785

School context

Overbury is a smaller than average village school that serves the villages of Overbury, Conderton and Kemerton. Many pupils from neighbouring areas also attend the school. There are 61 pupils on role and attainment for most pupils is above the national average. The new buildings have made a significant difference to the life of the school, especially in worship.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Overbury CE VC First School as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The leadership and vision of the headteacher and the strong 'Christian family' ethos result in an atmosphere where all pupils are valued as 'children of God' enabling them to always aspire to do their best
- Distinctively Christian values impact on the lives of all members of the school community which is evident in the behaviour and attitude of pupils who show the utmost love and respect for each other
- The relationships between the school, church, parents and the wider community consistently allow pupils to grow in confidence and develop a strong moral compass and an acceptance of everyone

Areas to improve

- Further develop the role of governors in embedding a more formal approach to the monitoring and self-assessment of the school's distinctiveness and effectiveness as a church school so that this has a greater impact on strategic planning
- Ensure that spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development is incorporated into staff planning so that the impact this has on pupils can be monitored and evaluated
- Develop the role of pupils during their time at school in leading and planning acts of collective worship in a variety of settings, both formal and informal, so that their own spiritual journeys can be enhanced and strengthened

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

Christian values have been a foundation of the school for many years, but ten distinctively Christian values have recently become more explicit. They are celebrated regularly and strongly underpin the life of the school. These values are covered in depth through collective worship, as a part of the curriculum and are exemplified by teachers and adults in the school. They are rooted in Bible teachings and are known and understood by the whole school community. This results in pupils who are kind and considerate and who understand why it is important to give to others. One pupil said 'when we share we are giving our love to others and helping Jesus'. The headteachers vision, 'each child is a child of God', is lived out by all staff with the result that pupils value each other, make good choices both in their behaviour and academic work and strive to be the best they can be. Staff have a good understanding of spirituality and ensure that pupils' SMSC development needs are met across curriculum areas. There is a need, however, to develop this further and for staff to regularly incorporate SMSC into the curriculum for pupils to gain a deeper understanding of themselves and their role in God's world. Staff have begun this process and the impact needs to be monitored and evaluated by all leaders and be firmly embedded in school planning. Through religious education (RE) lessons pupils explore a range of Bible teachings and stories; for example, the Parable of the Good Samaritan, highlighting how to show 'love' to others regardless of differences. Pupils are regularly encouraged and challenged by outstanding questioning in RE lessons to talk about good choices in behaviour and they begin to understand challenging ideas about equality. The excellent monitoring and tracking of RE has improved standards and has ensured consistency in teaching and learning. This has had a positive impact on pupils' attainment and enjoyment of the subject. Pupils have a strong awareness of social justice and diversity, rooted in Christian values, through their school link with Morogoro in Tanzania, and are also establishing links with a multi-cultural school in Birmingham which will enable them to experience a multi-cultural environment. The close links with St. Faith's church supports the school and the pupils' spiritual development and parents appreciate the times when children take part in church services. Parents state that the school's Christian ethos has had an impact on their children's use of prayer and reflection at home, and describe how the school has created an environment where their child feels part of a 'loving Christian family', who always look out for each other.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Pupils have a high respect for collective worship and it plays an important part in the life of the school. The themes used are linked to the school's distinctive Christian values and pupils often relate messages heard in collective worship to their own attitudes and behaviours. As a result, the positive impact of Christian values and teachings on pupils is observed during the school day, including at play and lunch times, as well as beyond the school day. The innovative way of using a 'Big Question' to measure the impact of collective worship both with pupils and parents identifies where future changes need to be made and ensures that all stakeholders have a voice. Prayer and reflection are becoming more embedded features of the life of the school and pupils readily write their own prayers for the prayer tree, which is used in daily worship. Most pupils are acquiring a developing understanding of using different prayers as a way of talking to God. Pupils are beginning to take more responsibility for planning and leading worship in a variety of settings and are gaining confidence both in school and in local church services. Learners have some understanding of Anglican worship but this is not fully explicit with the result that pupils cannot confidently link the major festivals within the church year to significant colours laid out on the worship table. Pupils have a developing understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit but have not explored outside of worship what this means to them. Parents fully support the services in the church and affirm the important role of the church in the life of the school.

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

The headteacher has a clear and firmly held vision for the school as a church school. This vision is known, understood and owned by all members of the school community and is fundamental to the school's educational mission. Self-evaluation involves all stakeholders with the governors having a clear understanding of their role within a church school. However governors' monitoring procedures of the school's Christian distinctiveness and effectiveness have not been formalised. This means that they are not able to challenge the impact of the headteacher's vision robustly enough. All members of staff provide excellent role models for learners and the trusting relationships they have enrich the school by providing mutual support and pastoral care. Parents say that, like their children, they are known individually and feel valued in the life of the school. A parent commented, 'the school is a real family unit' and they testify to the quality of provision saying that the school recognises people's gifts and talents and develops them. They say that they are listened to, and that any concerns they have are dealt with quickly. The school's links with the community and the local church ensures it is constantly evolving as a distinctive Christian school. These close links also ensure that the school is very much at the heart of the village. The harmonious and supportive relationships between all members of the school community are clearly rooted in the school's Christian values and contribute to a school which is both distinctive and highly effective.

SIAMS report January 2015 Overbury CE VC First School Tewkesbury GL20 7NT