



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

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

### Colnbrook Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

High Street, Colnbrook,

Slough SL3 0ZJ

**Previous SIAMS grade: Good**

**Current Inspection Grade : Good**

**Diocese: Oxford**

Local authority: N/A

Dates of inspection: 29 June 2015

Date of last inspection: 30 April 2010

School's unique reference number: 110000

Head teacher: Susan Marsh

Inspector's name and number: Lynne Thorogood (799)

#### School context

The school is a one-form entry primary school with a part-time nursery and specialist provision for 12 pupils with learning difficulties. It currently has 219 pupils on roll. It serves a socially diverse area of Slough and has an intake that is ethnically and culturally mixed. An increasing proportion of pupils come from the local Polish community and they, along with a number of minority ethnic pupils, use English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs and the number eligible for the Pupil Premium grant are both above average. The school became a member of a Multi-Academy Trust in 1<sup>st</sup> June 2013 and the current head teacher has been in post since January 2015

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Colnbrook C of E Primary School as a Church of England school are good

- The head teacher and senior managers provide strong Christian leadership, with significant recent improvements driven by the Christian values that have been adopted by the school.
- The Christian character of the school promotes the inclusion of all pupils regardless of ability and background and forges good links with the local community and families, including those of other faiths and those who are harder-to-reach.
- Varied, sincere and lively worship, with opportunities for pupils to participate frequently, together with good teaching and learning in religious education (RE) promotes good understanding of Christianity and respect for diverse faiths.

#### Areas to improve

- Extend opportunities for pupils to plan, lead and evaluate collective worship in order to deepen their understanding of worship, prayer and the Christian tradition
- Develop environments or spaces in which pupils are able to spend time in prayer or reflection in order to provide enhanced opportunities for spiritual development.

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

The school's recently established Christian values are high profile on the website and visible in and around the school. The children understand these values and know how to apply them in day-to-day life. Parents, including those of other faiths, say that the school's Christian values have a strong positive impact on their children's behaviour and attitudes. Achievement has been varied over the past three years, but overall it is now good, and the data shows that carefully targeted work with disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs is bearing fruit, with very good progress being made. The success in these areas stems from the confidence and trust built up through the work of the well-established nurture group, strong and caring Christian relationships and consistently good teaching. The school's Christian values underpin the belief that it is important to work with 'the whole child' and to support families as well as children. Christian outreach to families is a growing strength, and parents speak very highly of the school. One parent said, "They encourage all the parents and help families. They have a Polish speaker to make sure everyone understands and can get involved in the life of the school." Relationships in school are based on mutual respect, and the understanding and acceptance of other cultures and faiths is impressive. A Year 5 pupil said that learning about other faiths is important 'so that we can understand and respect them'. The newly implemented RE curriculum makes a strong contribution to the Christian character of the school. It provides a convincing foundation for the values that drive the school, and provides opportunities for writing, reflection and discussion. Over the last 18 months the school has responded positively to the recommendation in the previous SIAS report and the school's Christian vision is developing well. As a result of their engagement with the school's Christian values and the challenging questions posed in their RE lessons, the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) is good. Pupils support and raise funds for a range of local and national charities, and through the work of 'The Green Team' (a group of pupils with an interest in environmental issues) understand the importance of stewardship of the world. Whilst they have good knowledge and understanding of Christianity, pupils have only limited awareness of its place and significance as a world faith.

### **The impact of collective worship on the school community is good**

Collective worship clearly holds a very important place in the life of the school. Pupils benefit from a varied experience of worship led by a range of people including the local vicar, the area Dean and ministers from other local Christian denominational churches. Worship is well planned and covers Christian themes with a regular emphasis on the school's Christian values, contextualising each in Bible stories and themes. Pupils from each class contribute something to the setting up of the altar for collective worship, for instance bringing and setting out a cloth, a cross, a Bible, or candles to make the school hall ready for worship. Important Christian festivals are also celebrated with services in the church. This enables children to have a very good understanding of the nature of worship, the Christian faith and Anglican traditions and practice. All staff attend and enjoy worship. 'Worshipping together as a school family brings us all closer together', is how one teacher explains it. Parents are invited to services in the church and some attend, saying they enjoy the church atmosphere at special times of the year. Others are reluctant because Christian worship is unfamiliar to them, and this restricts their involvement in some celebrations. Pupils enjoy worship, display positive attitudes to it and participate well, particularly in their pair discussions of 'big questions'. Older pupils respond with maturity to their responsibility for managing the ICT and participating with drama, readings and prayers. Worship clearly makes an impact on pupils' daily lives. They say they enjoy worship because, 'we're all together', 'we sing good songs', 'the vicars tell us really good stories' and 'it helps you to picture Jesus and learn more about him.' The school has worked hard over the last year in response to the development point in the last inspection report, and pupils now participate in many more aspects of collective worship. They do not yet have responsibility for planning, leading or evaluating worship. 'We would like to be able to do

more worship ourselves,' commented a year 6 pupil. Evaluation at the present time is mainly informal and whilst it involves a range of stakeholders, it is underdeveloped and there is limited evidence of impact. There are occasions when pupils are encouraged to undertake personal reflection and prayer, both in formal and informal contexts. Pupils said they would appreciate more time for reflection and private prayer. At the moment, although there are corners in each classroom where pupils can write or leave a prayer, the school does not have a prayer room or space, and pupils say that if they wanted to pray on their own or with a friend they would sit or walk outside or see if the library was available. All pupils know the Lord's Prayer but at the moment there is no school prayer and prayer before lunch and at the end of the day is inconsistent across classes. This limits pupils' engagement with prayer and the development of higher levels of spirituality. Some older pupils have an understanding of the Holy Trinity at an impressively mature level, describing Father, Son and Holy Spirit as like 'each part of a plant, the leaves, petals and inside part of the flower where the seeds are, all attached to the one stem, which is like the one God with three aspects', and then going on to describe other deities such as the Hindu God Brahman as being similarly Trinitarian. Worship enables pupils to recognise their responsibilities to others and to reflect on community and personal values. Pupils make very good progress in their moral development and display a sense of wonder and awe about God's creation.

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

There have been significant recent changes in staff and governance, and the leadership and management have effectively rebuilt the distinctively Christian character of Colnbrook school over the past 18 months. The focus for development identified in the previous SIAS inspection has been fully addressed. There is now strong governor input and involvement, and governors have a strong commitment to the school's Christian foundation. Governors visit the school regularly. The vicar is also a regular visitor and is a member of the influential 'values committee', whose work underpins many of the notable improvements over the past year. Governors have a good understanding of the standards of attainment and achievement of all groups of pupils and hold leaders to account for their progress. Through detailed and accurate church school self-evaluation the head and senior leaders are able to evaluate effectively the impact of the school's Christian values on pupils' achievements and well-being. The school's Christian ethos is influential in decision making and strategic planning. For instance, all school policies are reviewed in the light of the school's Christian values. The Christian values also influenced a decision to enable a vulnerable pupil to remain in the school despite the constraints of numbers on roll. The governing body ensures that appropriate support, encouragement and challenge are given to the senior management team and staff. Governors regularly challenge senior managers, a recent example being about the need for interventions and additional support not only for year 6 but also in year 5, to pre-empt any slippage in standards. Continuing professional development (CPD) of all staff and governors is a high priority within the school and is contributing to the improved standards. All staff, including support staff are included in training, so mutual understanding and consistent messages are evident in all aspects of the life of the school. CPD is driven by school priorities, including the development of RE and worship, and the training of middle managers. This effectively supports the successful implementation of school development plans. The school's links with the wider community include close links with a local hotel, inviting elderly visitors into school and fund-raising for charities. The school has good links with the diocese and with the partner school in the Academy Trust. It is still at an early stage of developing links with other local schools to share good practice. Established links with the local churches ensure that pupils understand the involvement of the churches in local life. Parents feel that the school listens to their views and that the school prepares their children very well for life in a multi-cultural, multi-faith world.

