



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Queen Anne's Royal Free Church of England Voluntary Controlled First School

Chaucer Close
Windsor, Berkshire
SL4 3EH

Previous SIAMS grade: Good

Current inspection grade: Outstanding

Diocese:

Local authority: Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

Dates of inspection: 9 March 2016

Date of last inspection: 6 January 2011

School's unique reference number: 109997

Headteacher: Judith Street

Inspector's name and number: Lynne Thorogood 799

School context

The school is a one-form entry First School with 144 pupils on roll. It serves an area on the edge of the town of Windsor. The majority of pupils come from a white British heritage, but a proportion are from other ethnic or cultural backgrounds. The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs is higher than in most schools and the number eligible for the pupil premium grant is below average.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Queen Anne's Royal Free Church of England First School as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The school's Christian values are understood by all in the community of the school. Pupils and staff, including those of other faiths, live them out in their daily lives in school and beyond.
- The conviction with which the school's clear Christian vision is promoted by the head teacher and governors ensures the school's success in meeting the academic and spiritual needs of all pupils
- Through collective worship, the encouragement of prayer and the teaching of religious education, spiritual and moral development are promoted very well and this has a strong positive impact on behaviour, attitudes, achievements and standards.
- Strategic planning and decision making by leaders and managers are driven by the high moral and ethical standards embedded in the school's Christian values.

Areas to improve

- 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.
- Develop the assessment of RE to inform strategic planning and promote ongoing improvement.

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

The school's core Christian values, established since the last Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools (SIAS) inspection, and their linked "fruits of the spirit" are evident all around the school and on documentation. They shape the thinking of the school and are understood, articulated and embraced by all members of the school community. The Christian character of the school makes a significant impact on the high academic achievement and progress that the children make across the curriculum and on their exemplary behaviour. This has resulted in a recent very positive Ofsted inspection. This success is due to high expectations, a clear focus on the Christian values and the focus on every child as an individual. Pupils from all groups including those with special educational needs or those eligible for the pupil premium do equally well from their different starting points. All groups of stakeholders are able to give positive examples of how school values are lived out on a daily basis. One parent remarked that her son had reminded her of the fruit of the spirit "patience" as they were getting ready that morning! Pupils, parents and staff from all faiths and backgrounds feel particularly secure and happy, and readily confirm that their beliefs and circumstances are respected. Parents say the school has a strong pastoral ethos, and this is borne out by the recent appointments of inclusion manager and Play Therapist and the school's work with families. The school's approach to religious education (RE) is engaging and interactive. Pupils reflect on the implications of what they are learning in RE because they are challenged by the types of questions their teachers ask them. Pupils explore their ideas, enriching their knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith. Pupils have developed a deeper understanding of other faiths and awareness of Christianity as a world faith as a result of a greater focus within the RE curriculum in response to recommendations in the previous SIAS report. Currently the approach to assessment in RE lacks the detailed scrutiny required to inform future planning, and the school recognises this as being the next step in continual improvement. Pupils enjoy coming to school, describing it as a place where "there's lots of trust between people". They articulate their faith in a mature manner, and show in their actions and in their writing that their spiritual and moral development is strong. Pupils readily connect the Christian nature of the school with the charitable fund-raising they help to organise, for instance for a Down's Syndrome charity. Parents of all faiths and none value the school very highly and many are active in supporting their children's learning in and out of school. Parents' views are summed up by one comment: "There's a lot of joy in this school; that's a gift."

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Daily collective worship has a good impact on spiritual development, and pupils say they look forward to services. One child said, "Assemblies are the best part of the day on some days!" Collective worship is planned around the Christian year and coloured cloths representing the church's seasons are used to prepare the hall for services of worship. Weekly 'God's Storyteller' services ensure that pupils hear Bible-based stories regularly and that the school's values are contextualised in their Biblical sources. Members of the worship team from the local parish church contribute to worship regularly, with their 'Open the Book' service, and this helps to cement the already strong links between the school and the church, and enables pupils to experience a variety of worship styles. Pupils say they enjoy participating in these acts of worship because they enjoy hearing, seeing and acting out "stories of goodness and kindness." They are happy to contribute to worship by reading or leading prayers. Services are regularly held in the church, and are well attended by parents, who value these opportunities to share worship, Christian festivals and celebrations with their children and other members of the school community. Evaluation by pupils has helped to refine and develop worship. Their suggestions about music, contribution to prayer and class assemblies have been influential in planning for collective worship. Pupils say the visits of the local Rector and other clergy are important to them because that reminds them God is looking after them and their school. The local incumbent is a regular, welcome and supportive visitor to the school but she has not yet been involved in either the planning or evaluation of collective worship. Collective worship is consistently and recognisably Christian, whilst remaining sensitive

to the beliefs and traditions of other faiths represented in the school community. Older pupils show an age-appropriate understanding of the nature of the Holy Trinity as a result of their worship and prayer: "God the Father, Jesus his son and the Holy Spirit are like three sides of a one triangle," said a Year 4 pupil. Prayer and reflection are central to the life of the school, and pupils have regular opportunities to write and share their own prayers. They know the Lord's prayer and the school prayer, but have limited familiarity with the Anglican liturgy. Pupils value opportunities for quiet prayer, and say they use the library or sit on a bench outside when they want to pray or reflect on their own or with a friend. At the present time the school does not provide a dedicated area or room for personal prayer or reflection.

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

The caring, dedicated head-teacher has ensured that the Christian vision for the school is lived out across the whole school community. Her personal faith shines through everything she does. She is ably supported by staff and governors. Members of the recently re-constituted governing body are fully aware of the distinctive nature of the school, have received governor training in line with recommendations in the previous SIAS report and are increasingly involved in self-evaluation. In a recent review of the governing body committee system, changes have been made which reflect the importance of Christian distinctiveness within school planning. Governors are enthusiastically led by the chair of governors who ensures that they are well informed and provide an effective balance of support and challenge. The head-teacher clearly articulates the aims and vision of the school. Because she is well supported by dedicated staff, the Christian values which underpin the school's excellent achievements are effectively translated into all areas of school life. Self-evaluation is rigorous and effective because senior managers, staff and governors all have an excellent understanding of a church school's distinctiveness. Christian values and principles are the major drivers when prioritising spending; for example the decision to allocate funding for the employment of a Play Therapist to develop "the whole child". When considering future developments, for instance about which local schools could be acceptable as partners in a potential local academy partnership, other schools' Christian ethos was a major consideration. It is very evident that a strong partnership exists with church, school, families and community working together, which enables the school to go from strength to strength. All governors, including foundation governors carry out their responsibilities very effectively and whilst proud of the school, are not complacent, voicing a range of ambitions for developments and further improvements. Regular newsletters and informal meetings ensure that parents feel well-informed and that their opinions are sought and acted upon. The traditionally good links between the school and the local community are constantly evolving, including links with local and national businesses, Eton College, Windsor Castle and St George's Chapel. The teaching of RE and collective worship meet all statutory requirements in both time allocated and breadth of coverage, and are developing and improving because senior leaders and managers view them as priorities. The school works hard to ensure that staff and governors are given opportunities for training that will be of benefit both to individuals and the school, whether as governors, curriculum leaders or future leaders of faith schools. Good links between the school and the diocese and productive links with other schools in the area support the sharing of best practice. The school's capacity for sustained improvement is excellent.

SIAMS report March 2016 Queen Anne's Royal Free Church of England First School, Windsor SL4 3EH