



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Kingshill Church School

Pound Lane
Nailsea
North Somerset BS48 2NP

Previous SIAMS grade: Not previously inspected as an academy

Current SIAMS grade: Outstanding

Diocese: Bath and Wells

Local authority: North Somerset

Dates of inspection: 24 April 2015

Date of last inspection: not applicable

School's unique reference number: 139205

Headteacher: Jan Thomson

Inspector's name and number: Andrew Rickett 201

School context

Kingshill is smaller than the average size primary school with 128 children in roll. The majority of children are of a white British heritage. The number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above the national average as are the numbers who are entitled to receive support from the pupil premium. Attendance is broadly in line with the national average. The school became an academy in April 2013 sponsored by the Diocese of Bath and Wells. The headteacher took up her post in January 2014.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Kingshill as a Church of England school are outstanding

- Children talk with confidence about matters of faith and belief in a learning environment that encourages reflection and openness.
- Acts of worship make an important contribution to the children's understanding of explicit Christian values.
- The headteacher, together with staff and governors, ensures that the Christian ethos has meaning and purpose for the whole school community.

Areas to improve

- Further develop children's personal spirituality by providing consistent opportunities across the school to deepen their understanding of big questions through greater precision in the vocabulary they use to express their thoughts and ideas.
- Build on existing good practice in religious education (RE) to develop teaching and learning by giving children greater ownership of their learning through opportunities to discuss and debate key concepts in greater depth.
- Building on existing effective systems, ensure that the ethos committee develops the appropriate skills and strategies to accurately monitor and evaluate new initiatives.

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

The impact of the Christian character on the learning and personal development of children is outstanding because of strong links between explicit Christian values and other aspects of school life. Rapid improvements in academic attainment have been made because of the high level of understanding by teachers and children of the links between the school's 6Rs (which relate to behaviours for learning) and its Christian values. This has been particularly successful in creating a learning environment that engages children more in their learning. For example, children clearly articulate how the link between resilience, one of the 6Rs, and their value of endurance helps them to persevere in their learning and not give up. Similarly, resourcefulness and wisdom are linked through challenging children to ask good questions to further their understanding. The recent focus on embedding the fifteen explicit Christian values to an even greater depth has enabled all members of the school community to acquire a richer vocabulary through which they are exploring what these values mean to them. The production of fifteen beautiful banners, each representing how children, staff, governors, parents and members of the local church community interpret the values, is a reflection of the importance that they have in the life of the school. Children have very effective opportunities to reflect in lessons and at other times in the school day. They talk with confidence and maturity about matters of faith and belief and are comfortable to share their views and disagree at times with each other in an atmosphere of openness and respect. As the fifteen values continue to be explored in depth, children still have the potential to acquire greater precision in how the language that they use helps them to more accurately express their views and to ensure that these opportunities are of a consistently high level across the school. Relationships throughout the school are excellent and based on care and respect for each other. Children say that they feel safe and make good friends. Strong links with a school in Bristol and another in Malawi are mutually beneficial and contribute well to the children's growing understanding of the diversity of life in modern Britain and around the world.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship is outstanding because of the central place it holds in the life of the school and the contribution it makes to the children's growing spiritual awareness and understanding of how the school's values are based on explicit Christian teaching. Furthermore, the messages learnt through acts of worship have a relevance to the lives of children because they are closely linked to their personal and social education (PSHE) and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL). From September 2014, worship themes have also identified links with British values. It is this close interlocking of themes which gives collective worship its impact across all areas of school life and beyond. Parents, for example, explain the impact of the school's values on them and their families. Worship themes are thoroughly planned and place an emphasis on Biblical stories that help children to understand the school's values. Children have a very good knowledge of Bible stories and are able to use them in their learning to give examples of the 6Rs and values in action. For example, in one lesson children used their understanding of the stories of Moses and St Paul to discuss equality and responsibility. Feedback from children has enhanced the worship experience by creating more opportunities for them to learn about faith in action through inspirational stories about leaders such as Nelson Mandela and Mother Theresa. Again, children use these stories in their lessons to help understand their values. Children are very responsive in acts of worship and engage with enthusiasm in the many opportunities to sing and pray. Older children in particular have a mature understanding of the purpose of prayer and the difference that it can make. For example, they explain how prayer can bring hope to those in need. The prayer rota gives children regular opportunities to write their own prayers and the school has already identified ways in which children can play a greater role in planning and leading acts of worship on a more regular basis. Collective worship provides very good opportunities for children to develop their understanding of the Trinity. Children talk with confidence about 'God being alive in Heaven' and 'Jesus living on earth but now also alive in Heaven'. The Holy Spirit, they say, is also alive, 'but in our hearts'.

The effectiveness of religious education is good

Standards in religious education (RE) are good for most children by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6. Attainment is at least in line with national expectations and this represents accelerated progress from their starting points. Achievement in RE compares favourably with other core subjects in the curriculum. The profile of RE and attitudes towards the subject have improved significantly in the last year. A new scheme of work, closely linked to the RE syllabus, has reinvigorated both teaching and learning by introducing more creative and exciting approaches. Feedback from children shows that they enjoy the opportunities to debate and learn through art and drama in RE. Teaching is at least good. At its very best, the strongest teaching challenges children to explore concepts and helps them to develop the skills to enquire at greater depth. Children respond to these opportunities with enthusiasm and relish being given the time to share their views and opinions on complex religious ideas whether it be about Christianity or another world faith. The consistency of the quality of these opportunities for children to be more involved in leading the highest level exploration of ideas across the whole school is an area that needs to be developed. Assessment of children's attainment and progress in RE has improved significantly since the start of the academic year. A robust system to assess children's knowledge and understanding has been implemented and data from assessment is used to track progress and identify trends. Assessment is not yet fully embedded particularly with regard to moderation of levelling to ensure accuracy across the school and in identifying next steps for children to improve their work. Religious education makes an excellent contribution to the promotion of the school's Christian values and provides very effectively for the development of the children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development (SMSC). The RE leader has recently taken up responsibility for the subject and has received appropriate professional training that has given her a good understanding of the place of RE within the curriculum and an accurate picture of what needs to be done to improve the subject further.

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

Leadership and management as a church school is outstanding because the headteacher has successfully led the school community in a process that has made the Christian ethos more meaningful to the children's learning and wellbeing. The headteacher, fully supported by senior leaders and staff, is committed to the continual development of the school's Christian foundation because she and the staff have a very clear understanding of the difference that a Christian ethos can make to the lives of children. The leadership and management, including governors, articulate this mission very well and it therefore underpins the strategic direction of the school and informs decisions made at every level. An essential element of this commitment to the ongoing promotion of a distinctive Christian ethos is that all actions have the welfare of children at the centre. This is evident in the recent drive to raise the profile of the fifteen Christian values among the whole school community which has resulted, for example, in parents being more aware of the language that children are using to articulate these values. There are excellent systems in place through the ethos committee for the ongoing monitoring and evaluation as a church school. The ethos committee, as a fully constituted subcommittee of the governing body, has a clear understanding of its role and ensures that areas for development are accurately identified and form an integral section of the current school improvement plan. As the school continues to implement ever more challenging areas for development, the ethos committee is aware of the need for it to also develop its skills in order to continue to monitor and evaluate new initiatives effectively. The school has excellent relationships with the local church and particularly through the rector who is also chaplain to the school and associate member of the governing body. His contribution, through leading acts of worship, weekly parents' prayer meeting and running a school club for children, are a reflection of his commitment to the life of the school. The school meets the statutory requirements for RE and collective worship.