



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Mursley Church of England Voluntary Controlled School

Main Street
Mursley
Milton Keynes
MK17 0RT

Previous SIAMS grade: Good

Current inspection grade: Outstanding

Diocese: Oxford

Local authority: Buckinghamshire

Date of inspection: 29 June 2016

Date of last inspection: July 2011

School's unique reference number: 110444

Executive Headteacher: Carol-Anne McCollum

Inspector's name and number: Janet Northing 792

School context

This is a smaller than average infant school. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average. None of the pupils speaks English as an additional language. There is a below average proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school works in an informal collaboration with two other local schools and a pre-school under one executive headteacher. This grouping is referred to as 'The Three Schools.' Although managed by the school the pre-school is not included in this inspection.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Mursley Church of England Voluntary Controlled School as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The Christian leadership of the headteacher promotes a vision that nurtures pupil's personal development within the setting of a caring Christian community.
- Pupils readily make links between the school's values and biblical teaching, and this has a significant impact on their spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development.
- Beneficial links with St. Mary the Virgin Church enhance pupils' experience of worship and their understanding of the importance of Jesus Christ to the Christian faith.

Areas to improve

- Ensure governors are more routinely involved in the systematic monitoring and evaluation of the impact of the school's Christian character, collective worship and religious education (RE) on school life.
- Provide regular experiences for pupils to take responsibility for planning and leading elements within worship to broaden and deepen their spiritual development.

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

The school's Christian values are linked to those of Swanbourne, providing continuity and underpinning every aspect of school life. Pupils readily make links between the values and biblical teaching. For example, a Year 1 child used the old testament story of Noah's Ark to exemplify the value of hope. 'Noah hoped for dry land when he sent out the dove.' Children exemplify the school values in their positive attitudes to learning and in their relationships with each other. Where appropriate pastoral support ensures that the social and emotional needs of pupils are met. This enables all pupils make good progress from their different starting points with many exceeding national expectations. Pupils enjoy coming to school and as a consequence attendance is above the national average. Christian values impact positively on behaviour, contributing to a safe and happy learning environment. In explaining this one child said, 'The values help us know how to behave and to remember to be kind to each other.' The school environment reflects the Christian character of the school with Christian symbols and areas set aside for prayer and reflection. This provision nurtures pupil's spiritual awareness of God's presence in their school community and lives. High quality displays in classrooms exemplify the impact of children's learning in RE. This, along with the broad and balanced curriculum, contributes significantly to SMSC development. Adults appreciate the supportive and caring Christian ethos, and feel valued both as professionals and people. The school's support for a range of local, national and global charities is developing children's awareness of diversity. In addition, curriculum links with Ghana and participation in World Thinking Day mean that children have some practical experience of Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith. RE effectively supports the Christian character of the school through teaching and learning that deepens children's application of the values to their own lives.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship in school focuses on learning about the values in their Christian context, celebrating the Christian festivals and local, national or global events. The use of liturgical coloured cloths promotes children's awareness that the Christian church follows a cycle of seasons during the year. Biblical teaching is used to deepen children's understanding of the school values. In addition, teaching about prayer and reflection, including the meaning of the Lord's Prayer, enhances children's spiritual development. Pupils describe prayer as time to talk to God and to say thank you. Children are clear about the purpose of prayer, 'Prayer is about asking for what we need not what we want.' Giving an example of using prayer in their life one child shared, 'Last night I asked God for help to get to sleep and I did.' Daily collective worship takes place in a classroom and is an important time when the community gathers together. Worship has different liturgical elements and follows a pattern that the children are familiar with. A responsorial greeting is used to signify that worship is beginning and a candle is lit. Children readily articulate that the lighting of the candle represents Jesus the Light of the World. Other elements include teaching on the theme, singing, prayer and reflection followed by a responsorial dismissal. Given the age of the children their understanding of the Trinity is at an early stage of development. Blessings given by the clergy support their growing awareness of God who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The collective worship leader and clergy plan worship jointly. Pupils are able to give their views about collective worship though their experience of planning and leading worship is limited. Children experience a range of leaders for worship including members of staff and local clergy. Foci for development from the last inspection have been well addressed with themes for worship now fully promoting the school's distinctive Christian values. In addition the impact of worship on children and adults is now routinely evaluated resulting in its on-going development. This is instrumental in engaging parental support and increasing adult involvement in worship both in school and at St. Mary the Virgin Church.

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

The dedicated Christian leadership of the headteacher impacts significantly on the Christian ethos of the school and inspires the whole school community to have high expectations. Her clear Christian vision to give pupils qualitative educational experiences and Christian values to live by is supported by all stakeholders who readily illustrate their impact on the life of the school. The positive Christian ethos and the leadership's practical demonstration of pastoral care for the whole school community contribute to high levels of wellbeing and academic achievement for all pupils. The headteacher and deputy head, who has overall responsibility for RE and collective worship, effectively monitor the impact of these areas on school life. They also ensure that governors are kept fully informed about the strengths of the school and areas for further development. However, governors themselves are not sufficiently involved in regular monitoring and evaluation. This limits their capacity to make informed judgements about the impact of RE and collective worship on the Christian character of the school. Meetings of the full governing body commence with prayer, so reflecting the Christian character of the school. The school's self-evaluation as a church school is thorough and identifies areas for on-going improvement. Staff development is planned strategically and when appropriate effectively prepares church school leaders of the future. Leadership of RE is given a high priority and resources support good teaching and learning in the subject. Arrangements for RE and collective worship meet the statutory requirements. Links with St. Mary the Virgin Church are mutually supportive, contributing significantly to children's experience of being part of a church school community. The vicar is actively involved in the life of the school as a foundation governor and worship leader. Parents appreciate the inclusive nature of the school community and value the opportunities to contribute to school life. This is seen in attendance at church services, Friday celebration worship and their support for fundraising events initiated by the school.

SIAMS report June 2016 Mursley CE VC School, Mursley, Milton Keynes MK17 0RT