



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Kensworth Church of England Primary School

Common Road, Kensworth, Dunstable LU6 3RH

Previous SIAMS grade: Good

Current inspection grade: Good

Diocese: St Albans

Local authority: Central Bedfordshire

Dates of inspection: 4th November 2015

Date of last inspection: 9th July 2010

School's unique reference number: 109602

Headteacher: Annelore Kentish

Inspector's name and number: Juliet Lyal NS 829

School context

Kensworth Church of England (VC) Primary School is a small village school with 76 pupils on roll, most of whom are White British. 86% of the pupils live in the village. The school is located 1.5 miles away from the parish church and shares the rector with another church school in the benefice. In September 2014 the school converted from a Lower to a Primary school and has four classes: reception, key stage one, lower key stage two and upper key stage two. There is a Pre-School where early years pupils attend in a part-time capacity. In December 2014, Ofsted judged the school to require improvement. Following a period of considerable change, a stable staff team is now in place including a newly qualified teacher.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Kensworth Church of England Primary School as a Church of England school are good.

- The school has an open, distinctively Christian character and, through this, a positive impact on the attitude, behaviour and achievement of the pupils
- The strong relationships between all members of the school community are based on their commitment to maintain and develop the strong Christian ethos of the school
- Longstanding and strong links with St Mary the Virgin Parish Church contribute to the pupils' developing understanding of Anglican tradition and the Christian faith
- The reflective and creative atmosphere fostered by Christian text and imagery and the explicit Christian ethos within the whole school environment enhances the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils

Areas to improve

- Develop a strategy for pupils to plan, lead and evaluate worship regularly to strengthen the whole school ownership of collective worship
- Enable governors to fulfil their statutory responsibilities in relation to the distinctive Christian character of the school by ensuring this is regularly included as an agenda item in their programme of meetings
- Ensure that the leadership of RE is given a high priority in order to develop highly effective practice

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

Kensworth's distinctive Christian ethos is recognised by visitors, and expressed by all members of the school community. The staff and governors promote the school's Christian character through their actions and the environment within which the pupils learn. A school councillor described how talking about God and Jesus was an 'everyday thing' and all pupils know that this is a church school. Parents commented on how families have benefitted from the time the headteacher is willing to give them to support their well-being. Pupils can explain the diversity of faith and belief in their school and understand that Christianity is a multi-cultural world faith. Parents who are not practising Anglicans know that this is a Church of England school and that their children feel included. Pupils say 'it's ok if we are not all Christians' and a Year 6 pupil said 'we are all good friends, we all get on well together'. The relationship between pupils and staff is strong and underpinned by their shared 'living' Christian ethos. The mutual trust was born out recently on World Teachers' Day when all Year 6 and Year 5 pupils took on roles of teachers and teaching assistants: planning, delivering and evaluating. Staff commented on how the 'teachers' approach reflected their own. Behaviour of pupils is very good; described by a grandparent as 'impeccable' and attributed by others to the school's Christian ethos. Pupils understand the importance of forgiveness and reconciliation. The recent development of the values education programme is securing this attitude and behaviour into a direct Christian context. Pupils know where they can go in school to be reflective and they respect others who choose a quiet place during play times. They understand the importance of prayer which contributes to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and understanding and say that the 'Lord's Prayer banners', made by Years 3 and 4, help them to focus when praying in the school hall. Pupils enjoy religious education and say that it is 'an important subject'. Whilst not yet challenging all pupils it is beginning to play more of a role in determining the Christian character of the school. The commitment of the stable staff and governor team is reflected in the way everyone is determined to raise the attainment of their pupils, welcoming support from Ofsted, the diocese and local authority. The 2015 end of Key stage 1 assessment shows a rise in attainment compared with 2014. Teacher assessment indicates good progress and by the end of key stage 2 pupils should meet, and in some cases exceed, their age related expectations. Pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs are well-supported and make good progress. The attendance rate of pupils is good and there have been no exclusions in the last five years.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good.

The school community values, understands and expresses the importance of collective worship. Held in the 162 year old school hall, collective worship is attended by every pupil and, on the majority of days, all members of staff. Collective worship is led by the school and church adult community. However, its' planning is not yet a collaborative exercise, which sometimes means a lack of continuity. Since the previous inspection, evaluations of the impact of collective worship on the school community have been undertaken, recorded and reported by staff and governors; this has led to the school's action to develop pupil involvement. Year 4 pupils take on the daily responsibility as technicians whilst other pupils prepare and tidy away. Some pupils are invited to participate in role play. The school's action for this year is to develop opportunities for pupil-led collective worship, working with another local church school where this is already in place. Pupils understand the structure of a simple act of Anglican worship. Biblical readings are included and increasingly linked to the school's value of the month. Pupils participate in the greeting, Lord's Prayer and School Prayer with confidence and say that this is all part of being a Christian school. Pupils know that their worship often focuses on the person of Jesus and helps to develop their understanding of the Church year and most Christian festivals. Worship is often creative and pupils recall when the rector took the whole school outside on Ash Wednesday where any 'bad thoughts' were written down,

shredded and burnt. Pupils remarked “we shouldn’t live in the past, but live in today” and showed some understanding about repentance with forgiveness from a Christian perspective. Some pupils can express an understanding of different Christian traditions. They are aware of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit although their understanding of this is undeveloped. During collective worship, pupils and teachers like to reflect upon the wooden cross. The recently made Lord’s Prayer banners, hanging along the hall windows, were designed and made by Yr 3 and 4 pupils because ‘they help us reflect and pray’. Pupils say that sharing a prayer before lunch and at the end of the school day is important to them. Parents comment on the impact of prayer on their home life and that their children will pray at home. Parents, governors and other members of the village and church community are invited to special acts of worship. One parent commented “It’s often standing room only.” Worship in the local church is limited due to its location; however the rector is a frequent visitor to the school and is clearly known and much loved throughout the community. ‘Messy church’ and ‘holiday clubs’ held in the church and school hall are very well attended by Kensworth pupils as are the festival services at the church. Parents, staff and governors liken the relationship between the school, church and village to that of a huge family.

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

The overriding impression of any visitor to this school is that it is a good church school in which there is a real sense of Christian belonging, identity and involvement. The governors say that the Christian ethos ‘hits you when entering’ and that ‘Christian values underpin everything we do’. Everyone in the school recognises these strengths, within and between the school, village and church community, which have a strong impact on the pupils’ spiritual development and outlook on life. Leaders and managers alike articulate what working in a school that is distinctively Christian means to them and can readily describe the positive impact Christian values make on their pupils. However, this is not yet recorded sufficiently enough to permeate the school development plan, action plan and agenda of governors’ meetings. Since becoming a primary school, leaders and managers have worked hard to tighten up their use of pupil progress data and have developed a more secure understanding of the school’s performance as a church school. Monitoring, recording and evaluating mechanisms are in place and now leading directly to the school’s improvement planning. After a two year decline in the attainment of pupils at the end of KSI, the school’s action showed improvement in June 2015.

Collective worship and RE meet statutory requirements and, as with much of the curriculum, planning in these areas is informed by the school’s Christian values. This contributes well to the good behaviour and attitudes of the pupils alongside their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Leaders and managers are aware that they have not given RE as high a priority as they should and since September have taken action to rectify this. The headteacher is currently leading RE until the recently appointed subject leader takes over. This term a new senior leadership team has been established thus distributing more of the school leadership role and enabling the headteacher to have more time for headship duties. Governors’ visits have increased and now include curriculum learning walks. They ask challenging questions to each other, the headteacher and her team. The governing body is committed to the school and the majority to the church. Charity links, visits to other schools, places of worship, contributions by parents and the welcoming of visitors enable pupils to gain a good understanding of local, national and global communities. All staff are given opportunities to attend diocesan and district meetings and say that they have valued networking and sharing training. The newly qualified teacher feels welcomed and valued and is receiving the appropriate induction training.

SIAMS report November 2015 Kensworth CE (VC) Primary School LU6 3RH