



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Acle St Edmund Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Fletcher Way,
Acle,
Norwich

NR13 3RQ

Previous SIAMS grade: Good

Current inspection grade: Outstanding

Diocese: Norwich

Local authority: Norfolk

Dates of inspection: 2 October 2015

Date of last inspection: 20 October 2010

School's unique reference number: 121024

Headteacher: Paul Henery

Inspector's name and number: Jean Johnson 608

School Context

Acle St Edmund Primary, which takes its name from the local Anglican church, has 180 pupils on roll. Pupils come from Acle and the surrounding villages and are predominantly of White British heritage. The school is situated within walking distance of both the Anglican and Methodist churches, both of which are used for services by the school.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Acle St Edmund as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The school's key Christian values underpin its ethos and are recognised and promoted by all stakeholders in a variety of ways. Pupils demonstrate their understanding of these values in their everyday lives.
- Strong and effective links between the school and the local Church communities promote the school's Christian character and ethos.
- The Christian leadership shown by the headteacher, staff and governors ensures an ongoing focus on the school's Christian vision.

Areas to improve

- Increase pupils' awareness and understanding of the purpose of personal prayer so that they are able to choose to use prayer independently in their everyday lives.
- Ensure that all staff are able to support the future development of the school's Christian character by sharing good practice both from within the school and from other schools.

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

Christian values are made explicit in collective worship and the reflection spaces in each classroom. They are central to the life of the school. They underpin the strong Christian ethos that is evident in the way that pupils' unique talents and abilities are valued and nurtured both academically and in a wider context of extra-curricular clubs. Pupils say that they believe that everyone is special in some way, and that everyone is kind to them and they all help each other. Older pupils talk about acting as role models for younger pupils when, for example, they act as 'buddies'. Parents say that their children, including those with special educational needs, feel valued and well cared for. As a result, attendance is above average and all groups of pupils make good progress during their time at the school.

The reflection space in each classroom includes a focus on a Christian value, for example creativity. Relevant quotations from the Bible are displayed together with pupils' personal responses to the value. Pupils talk about how they use these spaces and the prayer space in school to think about God and what he would want them to do. Displays throughout the school show pupils' responses to questions such as 'What would it be like if refugee children came to our school?' These activities effectively support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development and demonstrate their understanding of the relevance that Christian values have to their everyday lives. This understanding is also evidenced in their general behaviour and attitudes and the good relationships that exist within the school. Achievements are recognised in weekly 'rainbow' assemblies and pupils say that they feel proud when their friends get an award.

Pupils have a strong sense of caring for each other and are given, and enthusiastically accept, a number of responsibilities. Older children particularly enjoy caring for younger pupils. This sense of caring for others is also evident in their fundraising and support for charities for example the Food Bank.

Pupils see Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith through their links with schools in other countries. They have developed respect for and an understanding of the beliefs and traditions of other world faiths and can compare them to those of Christianity as a result of the recently introduced enquiry based approach to religious education (RE)

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

All staff attend collective worship which is recognised and celebrated by all members of the school community as an important part of the school day. Careful planning, monitoring and evaluation by the collective worship team, which is made up of staff, local clergy and foundation governors, has ensured that the themes and bible stories chosen from the Values for Life materials reinforce the school's key Christian values. These values are also reinforced during the regular reflection times which take place in each classroom. As a result, pupils develop a deeper understanding of these values which they display in their behaviour and attitudes. Major festivals in the Christian year are led by the local incumbent and are celebrated in school or in one of the local churches.

The school makes good use of outside support to extend pupils' Biblical knowledge. Pupils particularly enjoy 'Open the Book' acts of collective worship which are led by local parishioners. They make links between the stories they hear for example Noah's Ark and values relevant to their own lives for example courage and determination. They say that collective worship helps them to think about their own behaviour and attitudes and how they can care for others.

Pupils value the opportunities they have to contribute to collective worship. They act out stories to illustrate the theme for example harvest and prepare prayers, as well as taking responsibility for setting up the worship space. Displays illustrating the current theme act as a visual focus for collective worship. The pastoral worker, who works with the school, helps

Year 6 pupils plan collective worship. She also spends time with groups of children in the school's prayer space helping them to explore their own spirituality.

Pupils have a sound understanding of the purpose of prayer within the context of collective worship and the prayer space. They talk about how they can think about God and Jesus in reflection times and thank God for what he has put in the world. They say that the candle that is lit at the start of reflection time points up to God and helps them to think about him. However, they are less sure about how they could use personal prayer in their everyday lives and have limited awareness of the Holy Spirit.

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

Senior leaders and staff have established a clear Christian vision for the school in which each person is unique and valued within the context of Christian faith. They have been supported in this by foundation governors and local clergy. Leaders, including governors, are committed to the future development of the school's Christian character. Regular monitoring by all stakeholders is part of the improvement cycle, and self-evaluation is used to identify appropriate areas for development. Foundation governors ensure that Christian ethos is a key feature of recruitment and staff act as role models, exemplifying the school's Christian values.

The school has developed strong and effective links with the local church communities which are highly supportive of the school's Christian character and vision. They provide practical support, for example for worship at all levels, and run a holiday club which is promoted in school and attended by a number of pupils from the school. Few parents are able to attend the school's celebrations in church as the building is not large enough to accommodate them as well as the whole school. However, parents say that they, and their children, value the opportunities pupils have to visit the church and the greater awareness of Christianity that they gain from them. The school works with other schools in the cluster, including two other church schools, to enhance learning for all.

The RE subject leader has worked closely with the deputy head to successfully raise the profile of RE within the school and embed the subject into cross-curricular planning. She has received support from the diocese to develop an enquiry based approach to RE and supported all staff in the implementation of the new scheme of work. She ensures that Christian values are effectively promoted within RE. Pupils enjoy this new approach to RE, which challenges their thinking, and, as a result, they make good progress in RE in line with core subjects.

The school's web-site and brochure are clear about the Christian values that shape the ethos of the school. Parents say that these values positively influence their children's behaviour and attitudes. Signage, an area for development from the last inspection, now clearly proclaims the school's church foundation.

SIAMS report October 2015, Acle St Edmund VC Primary School, Norfolk NR13 3RQ