



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church**



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Ford End Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Main Road
Ford End
Chelmsford
Essex
CM3 1LQ

Previous SIAMS grade: Good

Diocese: Chelmsford

Local authority: Essex

Date of inspection: 27 November 2014

Date of last inspection: October 2009

School's unique reference number: 115115

Headteacher: Hazel Arnill

Inspector's name and number: Pamela Draycott 161

School context

Ford End is a much smaller than average sized Church of England voluntary controlled primary school. The vast majority of pupils are White British with around 5% coming from families who worship in church regularly outside of school time. There are more boys than girls. The proportion with special educational needs is above the national average. The proportion for whom the school receives Pupil Premium funding due to social disadvantage is below the national average.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Ford End as a Church of England school are good.

- The worship programme is good, effectively supporting the school's Christian ethos and the spiritual and moral development of pupils well
- Prayer is recognised as important which results in pupils recognising its significance to them and their school
- There have been improvements in the depth of the relationship with the parish church since the previous denominational inspection ensuring mutual and prayerful support

Areas to improve

- Refine the school's Christian values so that they are linked more overtly to explicit Christian and/or biblical teaching
- Extend opportunities for pupils to be involved in the planning of the worship programme
- Include in the worship programme more opportunities for pupils to reflect in greater depth on key Christian concepts such as that of the Trinity

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

Ford End school is a very small, caring school with a purposeful atmosphere. Self-esteem and resilience, good attitudes to work and mutual support are based on the school's Christian and inclusive foundation. Pupils are very well known by staff who support them appropriately in their academic and

personal development. There are effective strategies in place to monitor pupils' academic progress. This supports them in achieving standards at least in line with their capabilities as befits the school's Christian service to its pupils. Consequently, pupils of all ability levels make good progress. This is well supported by the school aims which are to ensure that children from different and diverse backgrounds thrive and learn to be 'confident, independent, tolerant and respectful individuals'. Behaviour in and around school is excellent and pupils display a caring nature which reflects its Christian values. However, whilst some good development work has taken place around the school's Christian values these are not explicit enough or linked effectively to Christian and/or biblical teaching.

The school is an inclusive place which takes the well-being of its pupils seriously based on its Christian foundation. It supports the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of its pupils well, irrespective of their background. It effectively encourages pupils to reflect on the significance of religious and ethical issues. Pupils respond well to this through worship, in religious education (RE), following the Locally Agreed Syllabus and more widely in the school. The wide range of extra-curricular activities as well as charitable and fund-raising opportunities help pupils take responsibility for themselves and others.

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

A daily worship programme linked to themes addressing the Christian year, biblical stories and school priorities takes place. It is well planned by the headteacher and parish clergy. Whilst pupils take a lead in some worship and review worship periodically they are not as involved in the planning process.

There is a positive attitude towards worship. As one pupil said, "Worship is important because it helps us to think about God and Jesus" The quality of worship in school and at specific festival times in the parish church has a significant impact on pupils' spiritual and moral development. The decision has rightly been taken to increase the focus in worship on Old and New Testament stories. This has broadened pupils' knowledge of the importance of these stories as a basis for Christian belief and with regard to their cultural significance in the United Kingdom. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on the meaning of the stories for themselves. Teaching staff recognise the importance of worship in supporting the school's Christian ethos and parents are given appropriate opportunities to join in with worship in the school and at the church.

Consideration of key Christian concepts and beliefs such as the Trinity as part of worship is under-developed. Elements of Anglican worship for example lighting a candle and using a phrase like, 'Peace be with you', with the response, 'and also with you' at the beginning of worship are well established. Pupils respond well to these elements. They enjoy singing Christian songs and hymns which they do with understanding. Pupils know The Lord's Prayer which is said regularly. Pupils also volunteer to say a prayer during worship. They do this confidently, without embarrassment and with understanding. Prayer is integral to the school day. Classes say a prayer before lunch and at the end of the day. There is a 'prayer tree' to place prayers and concerns on. Pupils understand that there are different types of prayer, such as intercession (asking prayers) and thanksgiving prayers. Whilst worship is explicitly Christian it is presented sensitively and is inclusive of those of other faiths and none.

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

The headteacher and governors have a clear understanding of the nature of their voluntary controlled school. They have a secure understanding of the next steps in their development as a Christian school. This is based on their accurate self-evaluation. The headteacher is well supported by her staff who are highly committed to the well-being of the whole school community in line with its Christian foundation. Overall, pupils of all abilities make good progress. This is based on good tracking of progress and appropriate challenge and support from teachers which is monitored well by both the headteacher and governors. Shared training opportunities between staff and governors are profitable and focus on the school's Christian foundation as well as on progress and monitoring issues. There is a profitable relationship with other primary schools in the area. The school has used diocesan training courses to support their teachers.

There are positive and mutually beneficial links enjoyed with the parish church of St John the Evangelist.

Parish clergy are regular visitors and have an active interest in the well-being of the school community. Parents value the school as a caring and inclusive community: they recognise and many appreciate its Christian foundation. A large proportion of parents live outside the immediate catchment area and send their children to the school which indicates their support for this church school. The school works well with its parents in supporting the education of all the children based on its inclusive nature as a church school.

Arrangements for worship meet statutory requirements as do those for RE showing the school's commitment to their importance within a voluntary controlled school.

SIAMS report November 2014. Ford End Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School, Main Road, Ford End, Chelmsford, Essex, CM3 1LQ.