



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Great Clacton Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior School

Craigfield Avenue
Great Clacton
Clacton-On Sea
Essex, CO15 4HR

Previous SIAMS grade: Good

Current inspection grade: Good

Diocese: Chelmsford

Local authority: Essex

Date of inspection: 26 January 2016

Date of last inspection: 24 June 2010

School's unique reference number: 134718

Headteacher: Alison Syred-Paul,

Inspector's name and number: Andrew Binnell 665

School context

This school is a larger than the average-sized junior school. The school became an academy in March 2014. It is now a member of the Diocese of Chelmsford's Sower Multi Academy Trust with three other church schools. The current headteacher has been in post since September 2015. The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds, with very small numbers of pupils who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupil's eligible for pupil premium funding, due to social disadvantage, is well above average.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Great Clacton as a Church of England school are good

- The strong leadership and management of RE and collective worship.
- The school's gospel values which are lived out by the whole school community regardless of background.
- The behaviour and respect for others as demonstrated by the pupils and the school community.
- Overall progress in developments as a church school since the previous inspection.

Areas to improve

- To develop cultural provision so that it is as strong as spiritual, social and moral provision.
- Include a wider range of members of the school community in planning the future worship programme and to ensure a greater clarity of coverage accessed by pupils over time.

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

Great Clacton makes its gospel values clear and explicit. These values are displayed in the school entrance, in the hall as a wall display with relevant biblical passages, and in artwork seen above the focal area for school worship. They are also displayed in every classroom. This immersion in the values of the Gospel has resulted in a calm, reflective and happy school. Pupils' achievements are improving at speed because they feel confident and secure in their school. Pupils across the age range can discuss the importance of the values of love, faith, forgiveness, equality, kindness, respect, courage and truth, with maturity. One pupil in discussions named all eight in one breath, another talked of her courage in completing her 200 metres swimming badge. Pupil behaviour is good and a clear reflection of the school's Christian ethos. Evidence for this includes pupils stating how safe that they feel at the school and pupils being polite and courteous at every opportunity. The behaviour of and respect for others, as demonstrated by the adults and pupils in this community, is a real strength of this school. It is because there is a strong focus on the acceptance and inclusion of all and this has resulted in a harmonious community with high aspirations for everyone. As a result of this pupils want to be at school with evident improvements in pupils' attendance and in the increased popularity of the school within its own community. Applications for places are now higher than places available. Provision for social, moral, spiritual and cultural education is good overall. Pupils are now given opportunities to develop their spirituality in a variety of ways. The music played in assembly by both adults and pupils supports the uplifting nature of worship. Pupils see the relevance of religious education (RE) to their own lives. They have regular opportunities to learn about other religions including Hinduism, Islam and Judaism. They have opportunities to visit places of worship from other religions and to hear of experiences from visitors to the school from other faith groups. For example, a recent visit from a member of the Islamic community to talk about Muslim worship and dress and a member of the Jewish community talking about synagogues and artefacts used in worship. These experiences all contribute to pupils' understanding and respect for other world religions. The school rightly recognises that there is a need to further develop its planned cultural provision through the creation of a well thought out and resourced cultural enrichment programme for pupils across the school.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Acts of collective worship form a central part of the school day and have impact on the school as a whole and on the lives of the individuals within the community. Worship is planned, delivered and evaluated so that it is Christian in character. It is also inclusive and sensitive to all in the school community. Through worship pupils develop a good understanding of principal Christian festivals. They also develop an appropriate understanding of the Christian concept of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Lord's Prayer, joyful singing and the use of candles and set responses at the start and end of the worship are now established practice. Opportunities for joining in with prayer and reflecting on spiritual issues takes place through worship and in the school's reflection area. This helps pupils understand aspects of Anglican worship well. Singing and music play an important role in worship. Pupils' participation in school worship has improved significantly since the last denominational inspection. The introduction of pupils as worship leaders is a good example of this. There is some variety in the groupings in which worship takes place. Whole school and class worship elicit different responses from pupils due to the group size. Pupils particularly enjoy the excellently planned class-based worship and the celebration assembly at the end of the week. A range of different people lead worship, including members of the local Christian community and members of the staff team. Worship in school is enhanced by worship in the two local parish churches reflecting the major Christian festivals. Pupils enjoy these and find 'a calmness' as they enter the church. There is a good balance of biblical material and Christian teaching, enabling pupils to deepen their understanding of Jesus and his importance for Christians. All pupils, irrespective of faith or non-faith background, participate well in the worship programme which enhances the community feel of the school well. Older pupils are now involved in the delivery of worship and the school has successfully drawn them into a pattern of evaluation. This was an area of focus following the previous denominational inspection and has been well received within the school community.

Involving a wider variety of the school community in the planning of worship could further develop this. It could include pupils, a wider range of staff and the clergy and ensure that there is an even greater clarity of coverage accessed by pupils at the school. However, the planning of worship does not include a wide enough range of different members of the school community. Neither is the content sufficiently planned to ensure a wide variety of topics

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

The subject leader, who also has responsibility for collective worship, demonstrates strong leadership and management. She has a thorough and up to date knowledge. The leader demonstrates great enthusiasm and passion for these areas of responsibility. There are planned opportunities to attend training and to share this new knowledge with the staff team. An effective monitoring approach is now in place enabling the leader to have a very good understanding of provision accessed by learners across the school. This includes monitoring pupils' learning in the classroom, looking at pupils' books, analysing pupils' progress data and talking to learners to gain their views of their learning in RE. Pupils' learning now demonstrates raised attainment in writing and in basic skills. Current standards of attainment, specific to RE, show that a large majority of learners are at least in line with national expectations. In the current year six, 10% learners are attaining above these expectations. Regular assessments of learning are now in place and show that pupils are making generally good progress, including pupils from disadvantaged groups. The subject leader's monitoring shows teaching and its impact on learning to be good. This is supported by inspection evidence. RE display is good. Teachers have a good overall subject and as a result pupils show interest and enthusiasm for their learning in RE. There is an appropriate balance between learning focused on Christianity and other faiths, for example Hinduism, Islam and Judaism. The subject area is well-resourced. For example, all learners across the school having their own copy of the Rainbow Good News Bible to nourish their Christian learning.

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

The RE and collective worship leader, ably supported by governors and an enthusiastic staff team, has spearheaded the school's response to the two areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection. These have been well addressed. The new headteacher, who joined the school in September 2015, has supported this vision for further improvement. She has added impetus to this journey. All members of the staff team feel valued and respected. In turn they inspire high expectations of behaviour and trust in pupils that are characteristic of the school. There is detailed and accurate self-evaluation of the school as a church school. Partnership with the Diocese and local deanery, together with outreach opportunities provided by the Sower Multi Academy Trust is strong. Leaders from the four schools in the Trust meet to share expertise and there are clear plans in place for this to continue. The governors have taken an active role, using their expertise to influence improvements since the previous denominational inspection. This includes the chair and members of clergy observing RE lessons and acts of collective worship. A recent innovation, which is already having positive impact, has been the appointment of a Church Home School and Families Support Worker. This qualified teacher contributes to RE teaching across the school and also supports pupils at lunchtime in the school's reflection area. Parents see the school as a caring and inclusive community that puts their children at the heart of its work based on its Christian values. Statutory requirements for RE and collective worship are met. The school provides effective professional, spiritual and personal development for staff and governors within the context of being a church school. It also has built up very strong relationships with the wider community through a variety of initiatives to bring people into the school such as special assemblies and school presentations.