



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Misterton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Misterton
Crewkerne,
Somerset
TA18 8LZ

Previous SIAMS grade: Outstanding

Current inspection grade: Good

Diocese: Bath and Wells

Local authority: Somerset

Dates of inspection: 6 October 2015

Date of last inspection: 22 November 2010

School's unique reference number: 123769

Head Teacher: Carol Wills

Inspector's name and number: Revd. David Hatrey (NS No 844)

School context

Misterton Church of England VC First School is a small school of 51 children, all White British, taught in 2 classes. The school draws children from the local village and the nearby town of Crewkerne. The school is federated with another local school and shares an Executive Head teacher.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Misterton Church of England First School as a Church of England school is good.

- Excellent relationships exist between the children and also between staff and children, supported by the caring Christian ethos of the school.
- Children have a good understanding of prayer and are confident in expressing their thoughts in different contexts.
- Religious Education (RE) is making a significant contribution to children's understanding of the school's Christian values.

Areas to improve

- Create a programme for the monitoring and evaluation of collective worship by children, staff and governors so that actions are recorded and acted upon and there is ongoing improvement.
- Ensure that there is a more formal and systematic review undertaken by the school and governors regarding their development as a church school.
- Extend opportunities for spiritual development to include all curriculum areas, ensuring that there is a common understanding of spirituality, so that learners are developing the ability to express their thoughts clearly.

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

The school has effectively reviewed the Christian values which underpin its work as a church school. Involvement of all staff, governors and the local church working together has ensured that this has high priority. These values are explored in collective worship and religious education (RE) lessons. The children have a growing understanding of the importance of these values and beginning to recognise the difference that it makes to their daily life. The school is quite clear that it wants children to understand how Christian values influence their daily lives. This is a recent initiative so the impact is yet to be fully realised.

RE makes a good contribution to the children's understanding of Christian values. The leadership of RE is good and there are strong links between RE and Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE). RE is taught in a creative manner that engages children's interest so that they respond thoughtfully and think through the ideas for themselves. For instance, in one lesson children were exploring justice and what they felt when they were not treated fairly. In another they were asked to reflect and record what they were thankful for each week, over a period of time. The displays around the school enriched these ideas and supported children's understanding.

The relationships which exist amongst the school community is one of its strengths. These are based upon distinct Christian values and how Jesus would want us to treat others. Learners are well behaved and have developed good attitudes towards learning; the children enjoy coming to school and are proud of their school. They show care and respect towards each other and value the contribution that each makes. The school has a good team who are dedicated and work well together, providing excellent role models for the children. They are enthusiastic and want the children to be successful.

The school's Christian character is reflected in the support and provision it has made for all learners, recognising how special each is. For example, one teaching assistant has received specialised training to support children with emotional needs. These and other individual support programmes have made a difference to the children's development and attainment.

There is some provision for spiritual development with quiet areas in the school's grounds. In collective worship and RE some time is given to reflect on the ideas shared. At present though few children are able to express what these experiences meant to them or what they have gained from them. Spirituality has been recognised by the school as an area that it needs to review, considering the impact that its provision is making upon the lives of the children.

Children have a growing appreciation of Christianity as a multi-world faith as they explore the beliefs held by other faith communities and learn how people in other cultures live and work. The children could compare themselves with these communities showing respect for the differences and diversities.

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

Children have a good understanding of prayer; they are confident and comfortable writing prayers to be used in a range of contexts. This varies from grace before meals to prayers used in collective worship, including those at special festivals held in the church. Children see it as natural to want to share and talk to God, being thankful or asking for help. They have a tree in their quiet garden to which they attach a ribbon as a symbol of a prayer that they have made. This is well used by children at the school.

Collective worship plays an important role in the life of the school. It often draws upon Biblical material and focuses clearly on Jesus. Children have a good understanding of who Jesus is and his importance within worship. Poems in the hall reflect their thoughts about how he influences their daily lives. It also contributes towards children's understanding of the school's Christian values. Children take a positive role in collective worship and recognise it as a special

time. As one child said, 'When we light the candle it enables the Holy Spirit to join us in our worship.' Anglican greetings are used at the start of these times and children are encouraged to reflect upon the key messages. Children celebrate the main Christian festivals and enthusiastically play a significant role in these services which are held in the parish church. Parents enjoy coming in to school to join in the class worship held each term. Significant numbers of the village community also join with the school for the special celebrations.

The themes developed in collective worship contribute to the children's understanding of the key Christian values that they have adopted and the ideas from this are often taken back into the classroom where they have been developed further. There are a variety of leaders who undertake collective worship; this enriches the experiences that the children have.

One of the targets from the last inspection has not been fully achieved. There has been some monitoring of collective worship, but this has not been sufficiently robust to make a greater impact. At present the children are not involved in this process nor are evaluations recorded. A systematic and formal approach recording these evaluations and the actions is not in place. Discussions with the children have not yet taken place to ascertain how they feel about collective worship.

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

The drive and commitment of the Executive Headteacher and the school team has played a central role in the raising of standards. This has been a major initiative for the school which the Executive Headteacher has led very effectively. The result of this has seen progress accelerate and attainment rise significantly in comparison with the previous year's results. The school has been effectively led through a time of challenge and uncertainty with significant changes to staff and governors. This has been a factor in the monitoring carried out. The Executive Head teacher has a clear vision for the school based distinctly on Christian values which permeate down through the ethos, RE, collective worship and the staff team. The staff team work well together and the contribution of the HLTAs support this well. The Executive Headteacher has supported the RE co-ordinator, identifying further training which is making a difference to the provision, as well as the quality of teaching and learning.

The school has established good links with both the community and the church. School events are shared with the village through the monthly village magazine. Clergy from the parish church and beyond visit school taking part in a range of activities. Parents are pleased with the school and feel it provides their children with a good understanding of the basic values. Some parents have sent their children to Misterton from outside of the village due to the ethos they have created. The school has benefitted from federation with another local school, as this has enriched continuing staff development and curriculum leadership. Joint camps, sporting events and leavers' service have enhanced the children's understanding of being part of a wider Christian family. The school's links with the diocese are positive with the children enjoying the Year Four pilgrimage and visit to Wells Cathedral. Good use is also made of diocesan training and the expertise offered by advisers in supporting church school development. The school has effectively nurtured the children's responses to global issues. These are seen in displays around the school where fund raising by the children for different Christian charities have supported the church's role in a global setting.

The school's self evaluation has not been robust and systematic enough to have made a greater impact on the school's distinctive Christian character. The role of the governors in this needs to be developed as their monitoring has not been effective. The school is now in a better position and has begun to move forward with this with the creation of an ethos committee.