

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Cadmore End Church of England Voluntary Aided Combined School

Cadmore End
High Wycombe
HP14 3PE

Previous SIAMS grade: Good

Current inspection grade: Good

Diocese: Oxford

Local authority: Buckinghamshire

Date of inspection: 15 October 2015

Date of last inspection: October 2010

School's unique reference number: 110460

Headteacher: Lisa Fern

Inspector's name and number: Alan Thornsby 137

School context

Cadmore End is a smaller than average school that serves local villages and High Wycombe. The majority of pupils are of white British heritage and from out of catchment. The number of pupils supported by pupil premium is below the national average. The headteacher has been in post since 2013 and the subject leader for religious education and worship was appointed in 2014.

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

- Distinctive Christian values, woven through the practice and policy of the school create an inclusive and caring learning environment.
- The commitment of the headteacher staff and governors ensure that the distinctive Christian character of the school nurtures all pupils to achieve.
- The recently appointed religious education subject leader and worship co-ordinator has securely driven developments in of religious education (RE) and worship within the distinctively Christian ethos.

Areas to improve

- Enable pupils to further their knowledge and spiritual journey through greater involvement in planning, delivering and evaluating acts of worship.
- Further develop pupil's knowledge and understanding of other faiths through visits to other places of worship and meeting members of other faiths.
- Ensure that everyone can recognise, celebrate and communicate the theological backgrounds to the well-established values of the school to enhance their understanding of Christian distinctiveness.
- Ensure that the school improvement plan recognises the work of the 'Way ahead' group to ensure they continue to drive forward the development of the Christian character of the school.

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

The welcoming ethos of Christian love and care result in a family atmosphere in which all are nurtured to achieve. The reference to 'a small school with a can do attitude' is explained by the Bible verse 'I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me'. This indicates the foundation of the practice and policy of the school. Adults are committed to being role models displaying the six core Christian values and children can relate actions to specific values. However, they are less confident in explaining the links to Christian teachings. It also enables all staff to ensure that all children are given the challenge and support needed to achieve academically and personally. This supports the development of a spiritual and moral community. Children understand the stages and types of their learning through the use of 'a learning pit' and 'learning gems'. These are related to the Christian values of the school. Although the size of small cohorts impacts on data, results across the whole school are currently in line or exceed national figures. Attendance is good because pupils enjoy being in school. They are mature, confident and articulate, with a great sense of fun. They recognise the distinctive nature of the school, that love embraces all other values and that mutual love and respect between adults and children drives teaching and learning. Pupils are trusted to take responsibility in school. For example, the school council is involved in school improvement through discussion and learning walks to comment on the learning environment. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development is a strength of the school because of secure cross-curricular links. The school ensures that all children share quality experiences. For example, during a recent residential visit to France by older pupils, the rest of the school shared a French day that included a crawl through a tunnel. The rich outdoor environment enhances spiritual awareness through the use of Forest school, a quiet garden and a prayer trail. Religious education (RE) and worship have high profiles in the routines of the school and are enjoyed by children. They have a good knowledge of Christianity and other major faiths. This further develops their acute awareness of respect for religious and cultural diversity.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship is known as 'Praise' to ensure that everyone fully understands its purpose in spiritual development. Pupils experience an inclusive range of praise formats that explore Christian values and Bible stories. The enthusiastic worship coordinator has a good awareness of SMSC that underpins worship and the central role of reflection in the prayer space commenting 'don't do something, sit there'. Pupils have a broad experience of Christian worship because of the range of worship leaders, including staff and leaders from a number of local organisations. Personal Praise enables older pupils to explore the deeper relevance of religious icons and symbolism, guided by the vicar. 'Parent Praise' allows the whole school family to share the individual achievement, with pupils involved in presenting certificates and leading prayers. Worship reflects Anglican worship, with a call to praise, a spoken greeting and response, a central theme and time for reflection and prayer. Children have a good awareness of Christian symbolism and explain the Trinity using a range of illustrations. Prayer has a high profile in the life of the school and children make good use of the prayer corner and the outdoor prayer trail. They record their thoughts in books including 'Where is God?' Children are familiar and comfortable in church because of regular visits for weekly worship, festival services and learning opportunities. They are involved, for example, in planting poppy seeds for Remembrance and the creation of a church guidebook with the vicar and foundation governor. Staff recognise the close family feel of worship on the behaviours and attitudes of pupils. They also value the opportunities for personal reflection. On-going monitoring by the 'Way Ahead' group of staff and governors is shared with the whole governing body to inform development. This includes the comment from a child "We should lead worship to know what it feels like" recognising the need for greater pupil involvement in the planning and delivery of worship.

The effectiveness of religious education is good

Although only in post for a year, the subject leader has successfully driven developments in RE with great passion. After an audit of provision and skills, she has introduced the diocesan scheme of work and shared training. This has enabled staff to confidently deliver lessons with high expectations. On-going review of progress and learning ensure the scheme addresses the needs of the school. Children know what is expected of them because of the use of lesson objectives and success criteria. A range of effective teaching strategies are used to promote learning. These include Philosophy for Children, that encourages thinking skills to explore 'Big questions' and REsearchers, a project that promotes learning through debate, questioning and practical

involvement. A Year 2 class explored symbolic images and religious vocabulary to challenge their interpretation 'What does God look like?' This enabled them to produce their own images of God. Older pupils enjoy the use of a circus of activities to promote their understanding of Islam. Work in books is generally well presented and reflects a range of learning activities. Marking comments inform children of the next steps for learning and children regularly make written responses to these. Children and adults sharing their beliefs and practice enhance pupils' learning about other faiths. This allows everyone to compare and contrast beliefs and values with each other. The school has recognised the need to extend learning about other faiths through visits to other places of worship. Assessment tracking indicates that progress and attainment are in line with other subjects. However, the school recognises that the wider learning opportunities through reflection and thinking skills enable some pupils to make greater progress.

The school has worked on an art based RE project with a local secondary school to further spiritual awareness.

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

The headteacher has a clear vision of 'high aspirations for everyone, within a Christian context'. This is furthered by a well-established commitment to a small school with a can do attitude'. This reflects the dedication of staff and governors to the achievement of each individual in school. Governors understand the distinctive Christian character of the school because of reports from the 'Way Ahead' committee. This group of foundation governors and staff move the school forward as a church school and regularly report to the whole governing body. The involvement of foundation governors in learning walks ensures the impact of the school environment and prayer trails 'to drive pupils behaviour from within'. The on-going and insightful monitoring and evaluation procedures reflect the impact of Christian values on decision making and planning. Although the self-evaluation by the school is accurate and the development points from the previous inspection have been addressed, the current School Improvement Plan has little reference to development as a church school. However, the vision of the headteacher, drive of the RE/worship leader and commitment of the 'Way Ahead group indicate the school has a good potential for future development as a distinctive Christian school. Staff recognise that they are valued and supported in all aspects of their roles, because of the impact of Christian values. The profile of the ethos and commitment to well being enables new staff quickly to feel part of the team. All have opportunities for curriculum and leadership development at their own levels. Parents share with staff, governors and children the pride in the school. They recognise the impact of Christian values in action on 'our close community with family feel', commenting 'our children are polite and respectful. Please and thank you are normal'. They also relate how children at home refer to Christian values. The recently introduced Termly Learning Conversations (TLC) parents' meeting to discuss progress has been well received. It is another opportunity for parents to experience how 'children are encouraged, not pushed. They have the confidence to try'.

The school enjoys strong links with the church, diocese and local schools that support academic and spiritual developments.

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