



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Scalford Church of England (VC) Primary School

School Lane
Scalford
Leicestershire
LE14 4DT

Previous SIAS grade: Good

This inspection grade: Outstanding

Diocese: Leicester

Local authority: Leicestershire
Dates of inspection: 16 January 2015
Date of last inspection: 19 March 2010
School's unique reference number: 120156
Headteacher: Marie Waring
Inspector's name and number: Brenda Davies (661)

School context

This is a small primary school serving a rural area. There are 69 pupils on roll, drawn from local village communities and from a nearby market town beyond the school's catchment area. All pupils are of White British heritage. The proportions of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are below average. The headteacher was appointed during summer term 2014 following a lengthy period of significant leadership change.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Scalford Church of England Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding

- Christian values are clearly evident in relationships throughout the school community and make a significant contribution to pupils' academic, social, moral and spiritual development
- The exceptionally strong partnership between the school and church has a very positive impact on the spiritual development and well-being of the whole school community
- Behaviour is outstanding and makes a positive contribution to pupils' consistently good academic progress and attainment
- Collective worship is a strength and contributes very effectively to the Christian character and ethos of the school
- Leadership at all levels is united in a strong Christian vision which is highly effective in enhancing the engagement of the community in both the school and the church.

Areas to improve

- Establish firmer national and global school and church links to support pupils' appreciation of diversity in culture and faith
- Re-organise elements of the School Development Plan to give greater emphasis to school development as a church school

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

The school provides a very positive atmosphere in which all children can develop, feel safe and show respect for one another and themselves. In each class a quiet area provides focussed space which children say helps them to think and reflect. Christian values displayed on crosses, prayers written by children and displays linked to Biblical teaching enable children to apply the school's Christian character to their day to day lives. The school makes the very best use of all available shared display space to showcase children's work and to celebrate their achievements. Younger children spoke enthusiastically about their 'Fruits of the Spirit' display and could relate this to Biblical teaching. Older children were keen to share their scrap books of personal prayers and their reviews of acts of collective worship. Christian values are thoroughly embedded in the life of this school. Pupils, staff, parents and governors speak with knowledge and enthusiasm about the ways in which these values support children's social, moral and spiritual development. Children spoke of their enjoyment and learning gained from whole school 'Messy Fiesta' days. In these events children actively learn about Christian values and ways in which they can apply them to their lives. Messy Fiestas are organised and led each half term by the headteacher and the staff with the help of the vicar and church members. Children articulated their understanding from activities linked to 'Trust' with confidence and clarity and explained Christian values as, 'Jesus' code for living my life'. The secure application of Christian values supports consistently high standards of attendance, behaviour and achievement in each key stage and across the spectrum of abilities. Pupils are polite and show great respect for each other, adults in school and the school environment. They work exceptionally well together and relish opportunities to take responsibility for additional tasks, such as 'Green Monitors' which children were readily able to associate with the Christian value of 'Service'. Children show kindness to others. Older children take their 'buddy' role for the younger children very seriously, taking good care of them at play and lunchtimes. The Diocesan framework guides the teaching of Religious Education (RE) through which children learn effectively about Christianity and other world faiths. In recent years children have visited various of places of Christian worship. They have also travelled to Leicester to extend and deepen their appreciation of diversity in faith and culture through visits to a Hindu Free School and to a mosque. RE and collective worship strongly supports the children's appreciation of the needs of others and their respect for other faiths and cultures. Children spoke enthusiastically about their efforts to help others through fund raising for causes special to them, including a charity supporting those suffering from cerebral palsy. Parents are wholly supportive of the school's Christian character. Many spoke freely about the impact that the school's Christian character has on their home lives, such as children asking to say grace before family meals and families beginning to attend worship at the local Anglican church with their children.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

The whole school community greatly values the opportunity to worship. All are able to identify and speak of ways in which they are inspired and engaged by worship. They understand the positive impact that worship has on their spiritual growth and readily articulate how worship helps them to reflect on distinctively Christian values which they try to apply to life. Worship is arranged in termly themes and highlights the importance of significant times in the church year. Prayer, including the contribution of pupils' personal prayers, together with periods of quiet reflection, strongly enhances the effective development of children's spirituality. The school prayer and the Lord's prayer are known by children and are spoken daily. Children keenly enjoy singing a variety of traditional and modern worship songs and hymns and understand praise as an important part of worship. They can explain how worship helps them to understand links between Bible stories and Christian values. They confidently articulate how they apply this understanding to their daily life both in school and at home. Frequent, high quality contributions to worship from the vicar and the church's 'Open the Book' team have supported the children's rapidly improving understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The children love to make active contributions to worship. They have

developed the confidence to read or act Bible stories and to read personal prayers. Older pupils set up the worship space, provide appropriate music for children to enter and leave worship and operate ICT facilities. They prepare the worship table with cross, candle and liturgical colour. Year 5 and Year 6 children wrote the script for a traditional Nativity play which took place in church. Year 3 and Year 4 children narrated and the youngest children acted the parts. This was appreciated by families and the wider community. Following a request from children during a governor monitoring exercise, Year 5 and Year 6 pupils are preparing to regularly plan and lead whole school worship. Children experience a variety of approaches to worship planned and led by the headteacher, teachers, the Anglican vicar, the Methodist minister and the Open the Book team. This helps children to recognise and appreciate distinctive features of worship in different Christian traditions and to identify and explain the significance of many aspects of Anglican practice. Friday worship includes a celebration of children's special achievements. Parents and members of the church welcome the opportunity to join in monthly 'Together in Worship' celebrations in church and join with school and church to celebrate a range of Christian festivals. Many children are members of a joint church and school choir which attracts families into church every month. Parents speak of their children's developing awareness of a personal faith which is leading towards baptism and preparation for confirmation. Secure processes for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness and impact of worship have a clear purpose and are managed efficiently. Views of staff, governors, parents and children provide clear insight into how worship positively influences the life of the community and leads directly to effective improvement.

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

Leaders at all levels are totally committed to the Christian foundation of the school. They work together very effectively to ensure that the school's explicitly Christian values are fully embedded in its ethos and are understood by all. Leaders passionately articulate the positive impact of Christian values on children's lives and on the whole life of the school. Thorough and effective self-evaluation activities involve the whole school community. School leaders' insightful analysis of the outcomes of these activities identifies effective practice and areas to be developed. The headteacher has ensured that staff training and school resources have been updated to meet the needs of recent statutory changes in the content and expectations of the National Curriculum. An exciting and engaging curriculum is guided by the school's distinctive Christian vision and meets the needs of all children. This has a noticeable impact on their consistently high standards of attendance, behaviour, attitudes and progress. The Headteacher has introduced regular whole school themed learning days, including Messy Fiestas. These enhance and enrich the whole curriculum very effectively, providing excellent support for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all children and extending their knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the schools Christian ethos and of life in the wider world. Following a lengthy period of leadership change which was managed well by governors, the headteacher has swiftly grasped the opportunity to secure excellent partnerships with the whole school community. She demonstrates an unswerving commitment to further develop the school's effectiveness as a church school. Since the appointment of the headteacher the school and church have worked closely together to develop an incredibly positive and effective relationship that benefits the whole community. The engagement with the school of the vicar and other members of the Anglican church, together with support from the Methodist minister, are highly effective in developing the Christian character of the school. Issues arising from the previous inspection have been successfully addressed. Staff and governor training organised by the Diocese and through partnership links brings clarity and focus to development planning priorities which further enhances school effectiveness. The headteacher is deepening her knowledge and understanding of effective school leadership, including in relation to church school priorities, through engagement in the National Professional Qualification for Headship, and in training opportunities provided by the Diocese.