



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Salhouse Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Cheyney Avenue

Salhouse

Norwich

NR13 6RJ

Previous SIAMS grade: Good

Current inspection grade: Good

Diocese: Norwich

Local authority: Norfolk

Date of inspection: 2 February 2016

Date of last inspection: 24 January 2011

School's unique reference number: 121053

Headteacher: Karen Dukes

Inspector's name and number: Stephen Green 809

School context

This small rural primary school has 106 on the roll and is federated with Neatishead VC Primary School which is seven miles away. It is close to the city of Norwich. It offers care for pupils both before and after school. Although the headteacher has been at the school for seventeen years, the incumbent only arrived earlier this year. The parish church of All Saints and the local Baptist chapel are both used for services. The children are mainly from white British backgrounds.

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

- There is a strong focus upon the development of a set of distinctively Christian values which underpin most aspects of school life.
- Extremely strong relationships exist between staff and pupils in the school.
- Staff, parents and governors have worked hard to develop excellent relationships between the school, parents, the church and the local community.

Areas to improve

- To create more opportunities for parents to share in day-to-day worship, so that they are better informed and can contribute to the monitoring process.
- To develop a system for regularly monitoring collective worship by all groups in its community, in order to better inform school leaders about what is going well and what needs changing.
- To make more opportunities for pupils to experience planning as well as leading worship, so that they have a greater sense of ownership of their worship.

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

Distinctively Christian values, based upon the Values for Life scheme, are made explicit and obvious to pupils, parents and visitors to the school. The school's Christian vision is shared by all staff and has the backing of the parent community. The values are becoming deeply embedded in all aspects of the life of the school, and are having a significant impact upon pupils' achievements and attitudes. Attainment and progress is almost always above the norm for similar schools. When questioned, pupils demonstrated an excellent knowledge of both the value currently being focussed upon (justice) and the last one (compassion), and had excellent understanding of what these mean in practical, Christian terms. Pupils are proud of their school and the many contributions they have made to charities. One girl described how "pupils get on well, treating each other with justice and compassion" (their last two value focusses). Another said that "we treat everyone as we want to be treated. We don't look down on people because they can't do things." A circle assembly was watched when pupils worked in small mixed-age groups to explore the meaning of one of the values together. The sessions were focussed on a picture and some key questions, and offered opportunities for pupils to feed back their ideas afterwards. One parent spoke of her child sorting out toys they no longer play with so they could be given to those without any at Christmas. Another explained that they "chose this school because we wanted a school which had a strong moral compass." Parents praised the school for its "warm, comforting environment," and appreciate both the supportive attitude of staff and the pastoral care that is in place. The school employs a part-time Pastoral Support Officer. When asked how many hours she works, the headteacher responded that "the needs of the child come first. If she is needed, then the school makes sure she is available." The school's Christian character has a significant impact upon pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education (SMSC), and pupils behave well. The school uses the Go Givers scheme to build its Christian values into a scheme for SMSC which all pupils can access and benefit from. Pupils have a very strong understanding of Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith and have obvious respect for both different denominations within the Christian faith and those who have different faiths. This has been generated by effective partnerships with schools in Gambia and Zimbabwe, and regular contact in school with leaders from other Christian denominations. One of the leaders of the local Baptist chapel runs a weekly Bible study group in the school, and services are held at least termly in both All Saints Anglican Church and the village Baptist chapel. Pupils have highly developed individual spirituality, and there are many examples around the school of pupils' prayers, hopes and reflections being collected and shared. A cross made of collected pupils' hopes and prayers, is on permanent display in the hall, and has attracted praise from the diocese. Parents praised the school's safeguarding, saying that they always feel their children are safe and valued, and that any incidents of bullying or misbehaviour are challenged effectively and promptly. There is much evidence to show that all children are valued very highly, and this is appreciated by parents and responded to by pupils. There is a large trophy cabinet in which a variety of excellence is recognised, from craft skills (making bosses at the cathedral) to successful sports teams.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship (CW) has a sound Biblical basis and follows the teachings of Christ. It is led by a good mixture of people representing different denominations within the Christian faith. Pupils have a positive view of worship and participate enthusiastically. The school hall is used for CW as well as a number of other activities during the school day. This has led to some difficulties (e.g. making space so that parents can join in regular worship, and leaving artefacts on display), but the school has nevertheless managed to create an appropriate atmosphere in the room, with displays, collections of prayers, candles, crosses and Bibles. There have been a significant number of children who are Plymouth Brethren, and the CW co-ordinator has worked closely with them to ensure that when these children are withdrawn from CW they have valid alternative activities to work on. Two of these parents were particularly positive about the school, saying how much they value the pastoral support and the Christian values that the school has in place. Pupils were not able to demonstrate an appropriate understanding of

the Holy Trinity, which the school has plans to address with the support of the vicar later this term. Pupils attend services in both the local Anglican church and the Baptist chapel at least termly, and these are well supported by parents. The local church runs fortnightly Open the Book assemblies which are very popular with pupils and allow them many opportunities for role play. However, parents do not regularly have the opportunity to join in worship in the school, and have few opportunities to provide formal feedback to school leaders. Instead the school has an open door policy, with school leaders endeavouring to speak to parents as often as possible. Whilst this is effective at maintaining the excellent relationships seen between parents and school leaders, it does not provide an evidence base for school leaders to use when evaluating the strengths and areas needing to be developed in CW. Pupils enjoy leading roles in weekly circle assemblies, when values are explored in small mixed-age groups within the broad context of an act of worship. Older pupils led prayers and fed back outcomes of discussion to the rest of the school. However, one of the development points from the last inspection was for pupils to begin planning acts of worship, and although the school has tried to do this, there is no evidence that this has yet been successful. Although pupils provide instant feedback in circle assemblies, they have not yet been given the opportunity to formally monitor other CW. Worship is inspirational and inclusive, with themes raising aspirations and leading to greater spirituality. Worship plays a major role in exploring and developing the school's Christian values, and in setting the overall Christian character of the school.

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

School leaders consistently and clearly articulate and promote a vision for their school rooted in Christian values. Their work reflects the Christian values they are encouraging pupils to adopt, and so justice, compassion and forgiveness can be seen in the daily organisation of the school; consequently attendance is very high (98.2% in 2015-16), behaviour is generally good and there have been no recent exclusions. Pupils are encouraged to seek help and to support each other, and as a result standards of achievement are also high. School leaders have demonstrated their genuine care for all members of the school community, a care which was recognised and greatly appreciated by the parents spoken to. The school has a history of supporting student teachers from the nearby college, and young teachers. This support has been of benefit both to the students and to the children of the school, and is another example of the school looking to help other people. School leaders have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas needing further development, although because there is as yet no regular and formal monitoring of CW by pupils, parents and governors, self-evaluation cannot yet be said to represent all groups from its community. The school's values are reflected widely across the curriculum and have a major part in developing SMSC. There is a close and supportive partnership with the diocese and the local church, and the newly-appointed vicar is a valued member of the school team. The leadership of religious education (RE) and CW has a high priority within the school, and this leads to very effective practice in both areas. The co-ordinator works closely with her counterpart in Neatishead and with governors and other teachers. RE and CW are both well-resourced and well represented with good quality displays and artefacts around the school. Staff training in RE has been thorough. The federation has generated many opportunities for staff professional development and for pupils to work together. Senior staff confidently and competently deputise for the headteacher when she is not in school, and frequently share decision making with her when she is. As a result, the school is well placed to cover any period when the headteacher might not be available. Governors have organised opportunities to bring staff together socially in both schools, and for parents and pupils to work and meet together. The foundation governors have been particularly active leading reviews of matters relating to the school's church status (e.g. a recent review of the RE policy). Arrangements for RE and CW meet statutory requirements.