



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Old Catton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Junior School

Church Street, Old Catton,
Norwich
NR6 7DS

Previous SIAMS grade : Good

Diocese: Norwich

Local authority: Norfolk

Dates of inspection: 27 November 2014

Date of last inspection: 01 December 2009

School's unique reference number: 121050

Headteacher: Ashley Best - White

Inspector's name and number: Judith Ruff 528

School context

Old Catton Church of England Junior School is smaller than most junior schools, but it is growing, with an increase in numbers by a third over the past three years. The school is federated with White Woman Lane School, a non-church school. There is one governing body across the two schools and an executive headteacher in place, who was present for the previous inspection as an interim headteacher. The school's population is predominantly White British. The number of pupil premium children is average. The school is a short walk away from St Margaret's Parish Church.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Old Catton VC Junior as a Church of England school are satisfactory

- RE makes a good contribution to the Christian character of the school. It is well led, organised and taught in an engaging and enquiry based way, which promotes learners' enjoyment of the subject successfully
- The positive impact of a wide range of strategies and programmes to support the emotional and learning needs of vulnerable children results in progress being at least in line with expectations
- High quality relationships amongst the school community and good opportunities provided to take on responsibilities at pupil level enable learners to feel secure and thrive

Areas to improve

- To develop a clear Christian vision for the school that is owned by all stakeholders and can be successfully communicated beyond the school through the website and during visits made to the school by visitors, including prospective parents
- To make the school values more explicitly Christian, as well as being shared human

values, so that learners can make links more confidently with Christ's teachings and other Bible stories

- To develop the strategic role of the whole governing body in understanding, supporting and developing the distinctiveness of the school as a church school
- To develop learners' understanding of diversity within the Christian faith at a local and global level so that they are able to appreciate the richness that these differences bring
- To deepen learners' understanding of worship and extend their opportunities for spiritual development by enabling them to actively participate in the planning and delivery of collective worship

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

The positive human values that the school promotes are greatly valued by the parents, who speak of 'a lovely friendly atmosphere' within the school, where values such as 'respect', 'kindness' and 'caring' are developed through 'Big Talk' opportunities taking place both within the home and during class time. These discussions enable parents to support and develop focused values within their homes. However, links between these values and those that are explicitly Christian are not yet sufficiently strong and overt. Pupils required prompting before making links between the school's values and Bible stories such as 'The Prodigal Son' and 'The Good Samaritan'. The school works extremely hard to ensure that every child is nurtured and emotionally ready to learn. A most impressive range of strategies are used to enable pupils to learn effectively, including intervention and therapy opportunities. These have a positive impact, enabling vulnerable pupils to make at least expected rates of progress in their learning within the school. Overall, pupils' attainment is good. Relationships within the school community are strong and pupil behaviour is good. Pupils are encouraged to take on responsibilities through School Council, the 'prefect' system and as 'Playground Buddies'. They take these responsibilities very seriously and are diligent in their roles. For example, during the inspection, one prefect spent part of lunchtime explaining to a child some strategies for prayer and reflection. Attendance is high with no pupil exclusions. Understanding of spirituality is developing across the curriculum and pupils' ability to respond to these experiences is at an early stage of development. However, pupils do value the opportunities for reflection already in place across the school in religious education (RE) and collective worship. RE makes a good contribution to the school as a church school. Pupils enjoy these lessons and appreciate opportunities to ask questions and learn about Christianity and other world faiths. Pupils do not have an understanding of the diversity between Christian denominations or about Christianity being a multi-cultural world faith.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is satisfactory

Collective worship is well planned by an experienced worship leader. At present, there has been no training for staff on leading worship and the less experienced teachers have not yet had the opportunity to lead whole school worship. Pupils' understanding of worship is at present under-developed. They know that there will be a song and a prayer. They like and appreciate the opportunities for reflection that they are given within the worship. They are not familiar with any phrases from the Anglican liturgy. Pupils interviewed said that often personal, social and health education (PSHE) issues are covered at this time. 'Open the Book' (OTB) worship is very popular, with pupils expressing enjoyment and a growing understanding of Bible stories through opportunities for their dramatic involvement. This OTB development is a very positive impact from the two foundation governors' monitoring and growing understanding of the need for pupils to become more actively involved in worship. Prayers are part of worship with pupils knowing the Lord's Prayer and the School Prayer well. Pupils said that they would like greater opportunities to write their own prayers. They are keen to take more responsibility in the planning and delivery of worship. Some pupils have written their reflections on collective worship experiences, but these have neither been widely shared across the school community nor built upon in terms of future developments. Pupils'

understanding of the Trinity is limited to upper Key Stage 2. In the act of collective worship observed during the inspection, pupils behaved and listened well and sang with great enthusiasm. Visits to Norwich Cathedral are greatly enjoyed with pupils excitedly talking about opportunities to sing with the choirs there and to participate in the Harvest celebrations. The local church of St Margaret's is used for worship at Christmas and Easter.

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

The vision for the school as a unique church school is not yet sufficiently clearly developed, particularly in the light of the federation with a non-church school. Leaders express a commitment to the school's Christian foundation and there has been some training for senior leaders, including governor representatives, on the church school inspection framework and how judgements will be made. There is insufficient evidence of any depth of discussion taking place at full governing body meetings regarding progress against school development plan priorities relating to the church school status and monitoring activities undertaken by foundation governors. The school's self-evaluation has appropriately involved the foundation governors as well as the school's senior leaders, but this has not been discussed at a full governors' meeting and is over-optimistic in terms of judgements made. Christian values are present within RE and worship, but these are too implicit, rather than explicit. Parents and staff, as yet, have not had the opportunity to give their views on the success of the school as a church school. The school does provide good opportunities for leaders within the school to develop as potential leaders of church schools. For example, RE is very well led within the school with this leader also sitting on the local Standing Advisory Council for RE (SACRE). Links with the Diocese are good and consultants have had a positive impact on provision within the school, particularly within the RE curriculum.

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