



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

### Overton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Court Drove

Overton, Basingstoke

Hampshire RG25 3ES

**Previous SIAS grade: Good**

**Current SIAMS grade: Good**

**Diocese: Winchester**

Local authority: Hampshire

Dates of inspection: 14 July 2016

Date of last inspection: 5 July 2011

School's unique reference number: 116305

Headteacher: Fiona Wyeth

Inspector's name and number: Andrew Rickett 201

#### School context

Overton is a larger than average size primary school with 387 children on roll. Children come from a range of socio economic backgrounds. The majority of children come from a white British heritage. The number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is in line with the national average as is number entitled to receive the pupil premium. Attendance is broadly in line with the national average.

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

- Children talk with confidence and maturity about the difference that prayer and reflection can make to a person's life.
- Religious education (RE) provides opportunities for children to develop their appreciation of a range of world faiths and the need to respect diversity.
- The outdoor environment offers high quality spaces for children to be still during the school day.

#### Areas to improve

- Ensure that links between the school's core Christian values and its learning values are explicit and that the links between them are more clearly understood by children and adults in the school community.
- Deepen children's understanding of how Christian values contribute to their moral, social and cultural development.
- Widen opportunities for governors to be involved in monitoring the Christian ethos by gathering evidence from regular meetings with children.

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

The Christian character is good because the school provides an environment, both indoor and outside, for children to find time and space to reflect and think about matters of faith and belief. Children respond well to these opportunities saying that they give them places where they can be calm and think about their concerns without being interrupted. They clearly articulate the impact that reflection areas make to the quality of their lives in school and how they help them learn how to respond to times of stress. Children say that the outdoor reflection areas in particular help them to 'think how I feel' and 'shut out the rest of the world'. Some children say that they are places to 'think about God, to be quiet and pray'. There are similar opportunities in the school itself and children use the prayer display in the entrance hall to think about times when they need to say thank you or to ask for forgiveness. Following the previous inspection, the school identified three core values with explicit links to the Christian ethos. Love, faith and hope were chosen and related to Christ's love, His death and His risen life. They are clearly stated in some documentation and have been used by governors this year when monitoring the impact of values in lessons. Alongside these three Christian values, a set of six learning values have ensured that children's academic performance has improved and make a considerable impact on the progress they make in their academic achievement. However, with the drive to ensure that children's performance is as good as it can be, the three Christian values have not been given as much emphasis as they might. Children, for example, do not refer to them as readily as they do the learning values or consider how they make a contribution to their lives on school. However, they are reflected in the relationships as lived out in the school community. Children and adults show considerable kindness and care towards each other. Religious education makes a contribution to the children's appreciation of the diversity of cultures around the world and the need to show respect and tolerance for other religions. Links with a community in Uganda are a particular strength of the school. These links make a significant contribution to the children's growing awareness of the wider world and taking action to support others in need. Links between the three core Christian values, and how they underpin the learning values, have not been refreshed for a number of years.

### **The impact of collective worship on the school community is good**

Acts of worship are distinctively Christian and include elements that reflect Anglican tradition. The lighting of a candle marks the start of worship. With each class bringing their own candle and adding it to the central table, there is a sense of a community coming together to celebrate a special time in the school day. Children appreciate that acts of worship are an important part of being a church school and know that elements such as prayer, Bible stories and time for reflection are everyday aspects of worship. They have a good understanding of the purpose of prayer and how it can help them at different times in their lives. Younger children, for example, explain how they can say prayers of 'thank you' or 'please' to God. They are beginning to develop an understanding that saying a prayer can support them in times of trouble by providing 'protection' or 'helping to be a nicer person'. Planning for worship is based on values from the 'Values for Life' programme. Children have a good understanding that values such as compassion are related to stories from the Bible in which Jesus told how to live our lives 'in a better way'. Since the previous inspection, each class has been given a worship box with symbols and artefacts that mirror worship in the main hall. This has helped children have a better appreciation that the use of a cross, candle and Bible are parts of the ritual of worship. Children respond well in worship and show an appropriate attitude and reverence to prayer. They are enthusiastic when given the opportunity to discuss ideas with each other and are happy to share their thoughts openly. Children have some opportunities to participate in worship through 'Open the Book' and helping to prepare it. There are less frequent opportunities for children to regularly plan and lead acts of worship. The views of children have been sought regarding their opinions of what they enjoy about worship and how

to improve it. Some of these have been followed up when reviewing the quality of worship.

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

School leaders ensure that there is a constant focus on the academic performance of the children and supporting them to achieve their best. The school is very successful in this. At the same time, leaders place the welfare of children as a high priority as they understand the links between this and academic progress. The six learning values, and other strategies to support learning, have made a significant impact on the school's success in meeting the academic and personal needs of children. The contribution that the three core Christian values make to this success has not yet been explored and there is not a clear understanding across the school community, from children and adults, as to how love, faith and hope underpin the children's learning. The school's self-evaluation as a church school is generally secure and has accurately identified how the Christian ethos can be taken forward. In particular, all members of leadership and management, including all governors, are not yet fully involved in the regular monitoring of the school's progress as a church school. The chair of governors has a very good grasp of the priorities for action needed to continue to develop the school's Christian ethos particularly with regard to the contribution the diocese can make to support this journey. Governors have undertaken some observations of collective worship but have yet to be involved in gathering and evaluating evidence gathered from meetings with children. Children and their parents regard the close links with local church as part of what it means to them to be a church school. They appreciate that the celebration of Christian festivals in the church enables their children to understand a deeper meaning of Christmas and Easter. The rector supports the school through his membership of the governing body and contributions to collective worship and the teaching of RE. He is supported by members of the church community who show their commitment to the life of the school, and links with the church community, through the regular contribution of the 'Open the Book' team. Parents say that the school helps their children to explore matters of faith and belief allowing their children to 'make their own mind' about what they believe in. The school meets the statutory requirements for RE and collective worship.

SIAMS report July 2016 Overton CE VC Primary School Basingstoke RG25 3ES