



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

St Catherine's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Moorland Road

Pennygillan

Launceston PL15 7HX Cornwall

Previous SIAS grade: Good

Current inspection grade: Good

Diocese: Truro

Local authority: Cornwall

Dates of inspection: 15 June 2015

Date of last inspection: 22 April 2010

School's unique reference number: 112021

Headteacher: Sarah Chapman

Inspector's name and number: John Rudge (704)

School context

This average-sized school caters mainly for families in Launceston. It works closely in a partnership with other schools and particularly with two local primary schools. The number of children needing additional support is above average and nearly a quarter of the children are supported by the pupil premium. The school is located some distance from the parish church. A new incumbent is now in post.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Catherine's as a Church of England school is good

- The school is committed to ensuring that Christian values, and the Christian teaching which underlies them, support all children in their learning and well being
- Collective worship is a key feature in enhancing children's spiritual development
- The leadership has a clear vision for promoting the school as an inclusive community

Areas to improve

- Ensure that children are aware of the spiritual dimension of all subjects they study across the curriculum
- Extend children's global awareness by ensuring that they are more familiar with the multi-cultural dimension of Christian faith
- Ensure that foundation governors regularly and formally monitor and evaluate the quality and impact of collective worship

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

The distinctive Christian character of the school is a strong feature of its ethos. Children enjoy learning and their achievement is improving. Their sense of well-being supports their learning and progress. Current school data suggest that all children are now making good progress and that

older children receiving pupil premium achieve particularly well. The ethos of the school is promoted through its core Christian values which feature prominently in the life of the school. As a typical example, the school's behaviour policy is grounded in Christian values, such as respect and forgiveness, and is linked with Christian teaching. The emphasis is on the benefits of good behaviour both for learning and for the well-being of the whole community. Consequently, children show respect to each other and to staff, and this is mutual. They understand the Christian principles which encourage this. Some older children readily link this with Biblical teaching. On occasions when relationships break down, disruption is dealt with effectively. This gives all children a sense of confidence in their learning. They feel secure, safe and well supported. The school also promotes a sense of inclusiveness, as part of its Christian ethos, so that children of all abilities and different family backgrounds feel valued. A good balance is maintained between distinctiveness as a church school and an inclusive approach which serves the whole community. This principle is expressed clearly in the policy not to exclude any child. The Christian ethos supports children in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, particularly through collective worship. The school's programme of religious education (RE) also provides effective support in helping children to understand the Christian background to the school's values. The school is rightly committed to extending children's understanding of the spiritual dimension of all the subjects they study.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Worship, prayer and reflective learning, are central features of the life of the school. They provide a clear focus for the school's ethos and distinctiveness, and for the children's spiritual and moral development. Formal collective worship takes place daily in different settings and contexts within the school, including the main weekly occasions when the whole school gathers together. It is well planned, with a strong emphasis on Christian values, linked to the teaching of the Bible. Values are also regularly explored and promoted, for example, when children receive awards for their contribution to the school's ethos. In response to an issue raised in the previous report, children are now more directly involved in worship. They do so enthusiastically. The school listens to children's suggestions and views, for example about the selection of music and choice of prayers. A range of visitors take part in leading collective worship, including adults from the parish church as well as leaders of other local Christian communities. Worship is characterised by a respectful and reflective atmosphere. Children are drawn into the various aspects of worship through activities which cater for the full range of ages and abilities. The atmosphere of collective worship is lively and stimulating, as is the whole environment of the school, with imaginative displays and artwork contributing to the visual impact of worship. A wide variety of activities support the educational context of worship, as well as including aspects of Anglican worship with which children are familiar, such as the celebration of the Christian year. In particular, worship in classrooms is often devised, presented and led by the children themselves. A small voluntary group meets regularly to learn about and take part in the celebration of the Eucharist, and to prepare for confirmation.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

RE is supported by a well-planned curriculum, building on the local authority's agreed syllabus and effectively led by a subject specialist. These factors help to ensure that children have a positive and beneficial experience of RE. The church school ethos ensures that all children learn about Christian faith, and particularly about Jesus and his teaching, and how this supports the school's values. The inclusive approach to its role as a community school means that all children, whatever their family background, are encouraged to reflect on their own beliefs and values. The curriculum also ensures that children learn about and reflect on the beliefs, values and practices of other religious communities. Consequently, children have confidence when they discuss, in some detail, aspects of Christian faith. They also show respect for those who follow different ways of life. They do, however, need to increase their awareness of the multicultural dimension of Christian faith as part of their understanding of the global dimension of the Christian religion. RE teaching is good, because teachers use their skills to challenge and encourage children to explore what it means to have faith and what is involved in belonging to a religious community. The subject leader supports and monitors the quality of teaching effectively. Children therefore make good progress in line with improvements in the quality of teaching and learning in other subject areas. They enjoy and are

engaged by RE and are keen to explore some of the important questions and issues about life which it raises. Their learning is now much better supported by a more rigorous assessment regime, in line with the school's policy on assessment across the curriculum. However, teachers are aware that there is still a need to help and support the children further, especially in Key Stage I, by giving them clearer guidance on how to improve their work and move forward in their thinking.

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

A clear Christian vision on the part of the leadership underpins the life of the school. This ensures that children absorb its ethos and distinctiveness, and that the community life of the school has a clear focus on their well-being. Children benefit from a range of support from the wider community. Parents take an active interest in the school and its ethos. Leaders of various Christian churches support the school well, as does the diocese and the local parish. There are strong and growing links with the parish church, in spite of its distance from the school. The new incumbent plays an active role in stimulating interest and engagement between the school and the local community, and in making the influence of Christian faith and practice a prominent part of the spiritual life of the school. Governors are also active in supporting the ethos of the school, for example through the appointment of a foundation governor with responsibility with RE. Governors also consider carefully the quality of the spiritual life of the school alongside their responsibilities for ensuring that children make good progress in their learning. The governing body is, however, aware of the need to contribute more regularly and formally to monitoring and evaluating the quality of collective worship. The leadership has consulted widely in drawing together its self-evaluation of its progress, so that there is an accurate and shared understanding of its effectiveness as a church school. Leaders have responded effectively to issues raised in the previous report. This, in turn, confirms that the school is well placed to make further progress and to be a strong partner to other local schools.

SIAMS report June 2015. St Catherine's CE VA Primary School, Launceston PL15 7HX