



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Central Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior School

Orchard Street
Chichester
PO19 1DQ

Previous SIAMS grade: Good

Current inspection grade: Satisfactory

Diocese: Chichester

Local authority: West Sussex

Dates of inspection: 11 February 2016

Date of last inspection: 30 November 2009

School's unique reference number: 126023

Headteacher: Gillian Leadbetter-Simms

Inspector's name and number: Linda Windsor (747)

School context

Central CE Junior School is an average size school with three forms in each year group. Most pupils join the school from two feeder infant schools, one of which is a Church of England school. Some pupils come from further afield. Pupils are of predominantly white British heritage. Others come from a wide range of ethnicities. The proportion of pupils supported by pupil premium is broadly average, as is the proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Attendance is broadly average. Ofsted placed the school in special measures in February 2015. Since that time there have been three interim headteachers. The current interim headteacher has been in post since January 2016. The school is due to convert to academy status in autumn 2016 under the Chichester Diocese Multi-Academy Trust.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Central CE Junior School as a Church of England school are satisfactory

- Relationships support the ongoing progress the school is making to meet the academic and personal development of the pupils.
- Worship is valued by all as a time of community and reflection.
- Children are at the heart of all that the school does.
- Links to the local community, especially the local clergy, are mutually beneficial.

Areas to improve

- Explicitly define the Christian values that underpin the school's ABC (Achieve, Believe, Care), in consultation with all stakeholders, and embed these into the life of the school.
- Develop a secure monitoring and assessment system for religious education (RE) that identifies current inconsistencies, thereby improving the quality of provision.
- Develop collective worship by strengthening links between Christian values and Biblical teachings to pupils' own behaviour and attitudes.
- Ensure that all staff and governors understand the SIAMS framework to strengthen the monitoring and evaluation as a church school and that this becomes integral to school

improvement planning with rigorous procedures involving all stakeholders.

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

The school's Christian ethos is celebrated throughout the school, signposted by symbols and displays, both in common areas and in classrooms. The school's motto, the ABC (Achieve, Believe, Care), is not yet explicitly linked to Christian values. As a result, pupils have only a limited understanding of these links and are, therefore, not readily able to explain how Christian teachings refer to specific values or to connect fully to their own behaviour and attitudes. The Christian ethos does not yet make sufficient impact on the academic attainment across the school which, despite focused teaching and improved outcomes, remains below the national average. The school recognises the vulnerability of some pupils and works hard to ensure their inclusion, keeping the child at the heart of all they do. Attendance has improved and is now broadly at the national average and there is a determination to improve this through inclusive policies and practice. Relationships throughout the school are supportive despite the recent challenges staff have had to face. Most pupils are polite and show respect for each other and for all adults in the school. There is a drive to develop spirituality across the school and pupils, when given the opportunity to reflect, value this. One boy spoke of being able to "look back to the past and forward to the future", and this, he said, means he is able to improve his attitude and his academic achievement. However, there are marked inconsistencies in provision and quality of experience across the school in this and in other aspects of the curriculum. Pupils support several charities and have a good understanding of why they need these. They talk proudly of their fundraising and understand how their support can really make a difference to those in need. Parents generally expressed support for the school, identifying the forward movement after a period of uncertainty. They all agreed that their children were happy and settled and described a growing ethos of better communication and focus on achievement. They were particularly pleased with the new system that notifies them when their child has done well in one or other aspect of the school's ABC.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is satisfactory

Collective worship is a special and distinct part of the school day when the school gathers as a family in an atmosphere of calmness and togetherness. Planning has recently been reviewed and is now more securely linked to the school's Christian ethos, with themes being developed over the week. This is beginning to impact on attitudes and behaviour, though in its early stages. All major Christian festivals are celebrated. Whilst Anglican traditions are being used at times, this is inconsistent and dependent on the worship leader. The school has developed its own prayer that has good links to the ABC. Pupils know the prayer and enjoy saying it together. They enjoy the feeling of community that whole school worship engenders. Worship is led by the headteacher, deputy head, local clergy, governors and, over the year, all class teachers. A variety of formats help ensure all pupils are engaged and interested. Class worship, although still inconsistent in quality, can offer a real opportunity for pupils to reflect on themes and issues at their own level. When done well, there are quality opportunities for prayer and reflection. However, the development of prayer is in its very early stages. Pupils understand prayer as talking to God which can be offered in a wide range of ways for a wide range of reasons. However, there are limited opportunities for them to pursue this. The school is developing reflective spaces to encourage deeper thinking and as places pupils can talk to God or write down their own thoughts and prayers. Governors attend worship to monitor and evaluate its progress and impact. They talk to pupils to get their responses. As a result, action planning is becoming more accurate.

The effectiveness of the religious education is satisfactory

Religious education (RE) is carefully planned and is delivered on a weekly basis. It supports the

Christian ethos of the school through the telling of Bible stories, other inspirational stories and discussion. Pupils also learn about other faiths. There is an emphasis on enquiry and reflection in RE lessons, which pupils enjoy, saying, "RE gives us a chance to stretch our minds!" Individual RE 'response books' chart each pupil's progress and understanding in the subject although the quality of these is inconsistent. This reflects the lack of confidence class teachers have in delivering the subject. Similarly, assessment is inconsistent. Teachers' understanding of pupil progress is insecure and judgments are unreliable. It is, therefore, difficult for the school leadership to get an accurate picture of the progress and attainment of all pupils in RE. Pupils, too, are unclear both about the level of their attainment or what they must do to improve. Teachers are beginning to understand that RE should both interest and challenge pupils and, where this is happening, pupils are becoming more enthusiastic and engaged. They enjoy debating and questioning and teachers who harness this aspect get better results. However, this is not yet integral to all RE lessons. The school has an RE resource bank that supports all aspects of the RE curriculum, including artefacts and information on a range of world faiths, although this needs updating. The RE leader has had little time or training to support her responsibility although this is being addressed and is becoming more knowledgeable about subject leadership and what steps are needed to make improvements. The school leadership team is clear that RE should be seen as a core subject and that standards should reflect those of other core subjects. Areas to develop have been accurately identified, the main aspect being to ensure the same good quality of provision in all classrooms, and the RE leader, supported by the school leadership team, now understands the issues within the school and is committed to improving the quality of RE across the school and enabling all pupils to flourish in the subject.

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

Over the past year there have been three interim headteachers, as well as changes in staffing and governance. The need to develop the school's Christian character has been clearly identified. Other imperatives, most especially to ensure that the quality of teaching and learning in English and mathematics improves, have had to take precedence. However, the school leadership is clear that the Christian distinctiveness is a key element in securing overall effectiveness. They have produced a detailed action plan which is in the process of being implemented. This has been shared with all staff and governors, is supported by all and is beginning to show impact where actions are becoming embedded. An example of this is the implementation of a new behaviour policy based on Christian values. All staff and pupils are clear about the policy and procedures. It has been received positively and is helping to ensure consistency and fairness in approach, something pupils say they value greatly. The leadership team, including governors, is monitoring progress closely and ensuring it supports the Christian ethos of the school and makes a difference to pupils. There is a shared understanding that progress is being made but that to succeed in positive change, all new initiatives must be carefully and thoroughly embedded if the inconsistencies that are still apparent in the school are to be smoothed out. The whole leadership team demonstrates a clear commitment to this end. The leadership also demonstrates great integrity and honesty, being open and direct in sharing their understanding of where the school sits currently. Whilst they acknowledge the task of improvement across the school is a significant challenge, they are also ambitious for the school and are determined to move it securely forward, both in terms its Christian character and in its levels of pupil attainment and progress. Links to local churches, clergy, governors and the cathedral are very good. Regular and thorough monitoring of the school involves representatives from the Diocese, clergy and governors. The school is also keen to involve pupils and all stakeholders in future monitoring.

SIAMS report February 2016 Central CE Junior School Chichester PO19 IDQ