



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

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

### Icklesham Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

High Fords  
Icklesham  
Winchelsea  
TN36 4BX

**Previous SIAMS grade: Good**

**Current inspection grade: Outstanding**

**Diocese: Chichester**

Local authority: East Sussex

Dates of inspection: 10 November 2015

Date of last inspection: 24 and 27 May 2010

School's unique reference number: 114527

Headteacher: Paula Robinson

Inspector's name and number: Connie Hughes 765

#### School context

Icklesham CE Primary is a small rural school with four mixed age classes. There are currently 119 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are of a white British heritage. They are from a wide catchment area and a range of social and economic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is broadly in line with the national average. The headteacher has been in post since September 2012. A number of new staff have recently been appointed. There are strong links with the village church of All Saints and St Nicholas, where there have been recent changes in clergy.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Icklesham as a Church of England school are outstanding

- Explicit Christian values underpin the beliefs, behaviour and attitudes of all learners.
- The strong commitment of the headteacher, supported by staff and governors in the continual development of the Christian ethos of the school.
- Religious education (RE) teaching is inspirational, challenging all pupils in developing their knowledge and understanding of Christianity and the main world faith communities.
- Collective worship, inclusive of Biblical teaching, prayer and Anglican tradition, impacts strongly on pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC).

#### Areas to improve

- Improve pupil ownership of collective worship through greater involvement in its planning, delivery and evaluation.

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

The outstanding contribution of explicit Christian values of hope, faith and love to the school's vision, enables all children to have aspirations, believe in themselves and care for others. The strong partnership between values and vision is an inspirational aspect of the daily life of the school. Pupils confidently and openly share their understanding of having Jesus in their life. They say, 'have hope in your heart, faith in yourself, my love will be there for you'. Stimulating and pertinent displays, reflection areas and symbols reflect the centrality of the school's Christian foundation.

Pupils engage in high quality experiences which influence positively on outstanding behaviour and attitudes to learning. Pupils describe the typical behaviour of their peers as 'kind.' Teachers' commitment to equipping their children with 'a love of learning' 'is at the forefront of their minds'. The daily reading club, before the start of the school, led by staff and pupils as learning partners, has significantly improved the academic success and self-esteem of those pupils requiring additional support. 'He is helping me to read' said one child and 'I couldn't ask for more,' explained a parent.

'Hope, faith and love' has a strong influence on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development. The weekly headteacher award celebrates pupils that demonstrate these values through academic or emotional outcomes. Pupils are outstanding in identifying and supporting a range of local, national and global humanitarian charities. For example, through Project Paddington, pupils willingly donated their teddy bears for Syrian refugee children 'to love and hug'.

The experiences offered by the school enable pupils to develop their own talents and abilities. 'Our teachers know every one of us and what we need', explained pupils. The school motto 'Be the best you can be' captured through motivational learning experiences, including three inspiring Olympian visitors, enthused and enhanced pupils' spiritual development. They are encouraged to participate with confidence and achieve personal success in a wide range of activities, including individual and team sports, such as the football team coached by the school caretaker. Pupils also take part in the local Education Future's Trust/Business Ambassadors project. Current data indicates that pupil progress is significantly above national standards. The contribution of RE to the school's Christian ethos is outstanding.

**The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding**

Distinctly Christian leadership of daily collective worship from the headteacher and teachers significantly influences the Christian ethos of the school. Observing whole school worship, pupils were attentive, engaged and responsive to an interactive experience of understanding symbolism in Christian worship. The daily lighting of the altar candle at the start of worship, explained pupils, 'shows us the way to God' and 'Jesus is the light of the world'. Biblical stories, prayer, music, drama and song are central to the pupils' worship experiences. Acts of worship provide very effective opportunities to encourage pupils to reflect on how Biblical teaching reflects their core values. Pupils are able to link these times to their previous learning and this contributes to deeper understanding. Furthermore, pupils understand how worship messages have relevance to their own lives, for example, by linking Jesus' message of love to their own service to others through the school's charitable work. Attitudes towards collective worship are positive. Pupils respond well to opportunities for reflection and participate with enthusiasm when singing. The headteacher, with local clergy, provide well-structured, creative and resourced planned themes centred on the Church year, biblical teaching, prayer, core Christian values and SMSC development. Regular monitoring and evaluation of pupils' responses to worship, led by the headteacher, identify how their experiences influence the daily life of the school. There are few opportunities for pupils to plan and lead worship. Pupils are developing their understanding of the Trinity through the input from clergy leading worship.

Pupils speak confidently of the importance and use of prayer in their daily life, including saying Grace at lunchtime, knowing The Lord's Prayer, the Prayer of St Richard, and using their own

prayer books. A significant homework task, 'What will we pray for?' shared the school's Christian faith with their families on personal and global issues. Responses pertinently included 'helping people hurt in wars' which made an important contribution to the pupils' understanding as they prepared for their Remembrance Service.

The school has well established links with the local church, including clergy regularly leading school worship and support from the church organist. Teachers use the church to support RE and to participate in and celebrate the major Christian festivals, developing the understanding of Anglican tradition and practices. Church services are increasingly well-attended by families as the school encourages their support of children's worship experiences.

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

Parents identify the outstanding leadership of the headteacher in fostering Christian values and embedding the strong partnership between the home, school and church. The headteacher, as the RE and worship co-ordinator, applies her knowledge, skills and qualities to ensure that the Christian ethos is continually developing, based on her belief that 'it is who we are'. The leadership team, governors, teachers and support staff work in partnership to embed the school's church school foundation.

There are highly effective procedures in place that accurately evaluate the impact of Christian distinctiveness on the pupils' learning and well-being. The work of the ethos committee makes an important contribution to the on-going monitoring of RE, acts of worship and SMSC.

Evidence gathered helps to identify further improvements, which ensures that the school is continually moving forward as a church school. The work of leaders and managers is supported by a highly skilled chair of governors and a skilled governing body.

Partnership between the church and the school are well-established. Foundation governors are committed to promoting the school's Christian ethos. The Parochial Church Council (PCC) and vicar, promote the school's Christian faith through gifts of personal Bibles to pupils at their Year 6 Leaver's Services. The headteacher celebrates the school's Christian distinctiveness in monthly reports published in the Parish magazine.

Partnerships between the Local Authority, Chichester Diocese, church and community schools are strong, sharing appropriate expertise and providing on-going leadership and curriculum development. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. Parents and pupils commend the school on the outstanding role models of the staff team in their awareness and responsiveness, to planning for the individual needs of their children 'with kindness, care and honesty'. The school meets the statutory requirements for RE and collective worship.

SIAMS report November 10 2015 Icklesham CE VC Primary School TN36 4BX