



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Archbishop Courtenay Church of England Primary School

Ecclestone Road
Tovil
Maidstone
Kent ME15 6QN

Previous SIAMS grade: N/A

Current inspection grade: Good

Diocese: Canterbury

Local authority: N/A

Dates of inspection: 16 June 2015

Date of last inspection: N/A

School's unique reference number: 139822

Executive Headteacher: Mrs Lorna Priddle

Inspector's name and number: Mrs Elizabeth Pettersen 557

School context

Archbishop Courtenay is an average sized Church of England primary school predominantly serving the parish of Tovil. The proportion of pupils who receive pupil premium funds is double the national average, forty percent of pupils have English as an Additional Language and the numbers identified with special educational needs is slightly above average. There is higher than average pupil mobility. The school moved on to a new site in February 2012. The Ofsted inspection in 2012 put the school in to special measures. This judgement was removed in March 2014. The school operates as part of a federation of schools. There is a new leadership team with an interim head and executive head leading the school. In September 2014 the school became sponsored within Aquila, the Diocese of Canterbury's Academies Trust.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Archbishop Courtenay Primary School as a Church of England school are good

- The centrality of the Christian values of friendship, forgiveness and compassion impacting on respectful and caring behaviours between and amongst all stakeholders.
- The bright and attractive learning environment that nurtures awe and wonder of God's creation, an orderly learning environment and a developing sense of spirituality through interactive prayer stations.
- Committed leadership that is passionate about reflecting the life of Christ and thus creating a community where each individual can develop.
- Leaders have a thorough understanding to the school's performance and distinctiveness based on thoughtful self -evaluation.

Areas to improve

- Develop the teaching and learning of R.E in KS2 so that tasks match the ability of all

pupils.

- Adopt a consistent approach to assessment in R.E. through the school which is rigorous and evidence based and includes a range of creative tasks.
- Develop the Collective Worship section of the school plan to include specific action points for the future.
- Develop the school website to include all statutory policies and fully reflect the ethos of this church school.

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

Archbishop Courtenay has been on a distinct journey over the last two years as it has progressed in all areas of school development. At the heart of this transformation have been the Christian values of forgiveness, friendship and compassion. These underpin the daily school life resulting in caring and respectful relationships between all members of the school community. A strong focus on nurturing emotional well-being of all in a variety of ways has impacted on overall attainment. A “Learning to Learn” room to nurture good behaviour and learning patterns has had a positive impact on attendance and exclusions are now rare. Self-esteem and confidence have been nurtured through activities such as the Challenger Troop involving a day a week working with the army. Bright and attractive display in classrooms and public areas reflect Christian values and provide a welcoming school environment. The school grounds have been used to develop a sense of awe and wonder in God’s creation. Pupils spoke with warmth about a Wildlife Week when they planted vegetables in their allotment and studied nature and wildlife in their school environment. Great tenderness for creatures was shown by pupils when putting identity rings on small birds. The school has created its own topic based curriculum. This has widened the pupils horizons with cross curricular learning and enabled them to write more effectively. All adults interact kindly with pupils and give praise readily. Pupils respond in a respectful manner. They are enthusiastic and welcoming to visitors. Their behaviour in class and through the school is exemplary seen as they moved smoothly between activities and calmly around the building. Pupils enjoy their time on the playground and recognise that when disagreements occur that a need to forgive is a key part of resolving a problem. The pupils respect their differences and value the varied religious backgrounds within the school that add diversity.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

A large stained glass window of a cross on one wall in the hall marks this area as a special place to gather for worship. Worship is seen by the whole school community as a central part of the day when they unite to share their faith, their understanding of the school’s values and the journey of their school community. The school uses the Diocese of Rochester and Canterbury planning for worship. Music and well-chosen images ensure that pupils are quiet and ready for worship to begin. Anglican traditions are made clear with a receiving and sending response, a candle was lit and a verse from the Bible clearly displayed. Pupils sang the Lord’s prayer during worship with enthusiasm. The pupils enjoy celebrating Christian festivals of Harvest, Christmas and Easter and spoke with enthusiasm about attending church on these occasions. Pupils demonstrate an ability to reflect on the worship. This was illustrated during the inspection when pupils held a mystery object whilst blind folded. When this was seen to be a potato the whole school became involved in a discussion about how the potato has many uses. The message was reinforced with the Bible verse declaring that “the earth is the Lord’s” from 2 Corinthians. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on the message beyond the Worship. For example there was a display with post it notes that had been developed in the previous week reflecting on “God is...” The incumbent is fully involved in the life of the school leading worship once a week. In the current term he has been leading worship on the Trinity and with follow up workshops for groups of pupils. Pupils have a developing understanding of the Trinity as God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Worship has been monitored by members of staff and governors. The forms used record the events, but at present do not show possible development points. Prayer stations are in each classroom and in the main

areas in KS1 and KS2 helping to nurture spiritual understanding. Pupils were seen to make use of these stations through the day; for example pupils took special prayer beads, said a personal prayer and then placed them in a pot. Other displays invited pupils to write a recipe for friendship or to reflect on their feelings and emotions using stones labelled with values. In this way pupils were taking ownership of their prayers and developing spiritually.

The effectiveness of the religious education is satisfactory

The leadership team has carried out lesson observations and book scrutiny in R.E which has had an impact on the quality of work in books during the current year. At present the quality of work is inconsistent with the activities not always being matched to pupil ability, particularly for the more able. In some classes tasks are creative and imaginative in content resulting in some inspirational thinking although this is not seen in every class. The pupils have developed a deeper spiritual understanding of bible stories and stories from other faiths through reflective activities and next step questions. The subject leader has not had release time to monitor this subject and does not have a secure understanding of the strengths of teaching of R.E. in the school. The staff have taken part in training in assessment in R.E. but the application of this across the school is not consistent. Teaching seeks to develop pupil understanding of the school's values. A lesson on the seder helped pupils to reflect on the emotions of the people of Israel as they left Egypt and a lesson on communities helped pupils reflect on the values that are central to their own school community. Displays in classrooms reflect the bible stories and reinforce an understanding of values, for example a display showing the story of the Good Samaritan showed clearly how the story illustrated compassion, forgiveness and friendship.

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

Through passionate and caring leadership of the headteacher, senior leaders and interim executive board, reflecting the life of Christ, the school has been transformed over the last two years. Parents speak warmly about the role of the school leadership. They recognise that the school leaders enable pupils to feel safe and nurtured. Through rigorous self-evaluation leaders have a good understanding of the school and a clear vision for the development of Archbishop Courtenay as a church school. Policies show the centrality of the core values. Care for the individual and particularly the most vulnerable has meant that the outcomes in learning have been improved and now match national average in KS1. A history of underachievement in KS2 has meant that data, although improving, is still less than similar schools nationally. Senior leaders have also nurtured the professional development of teaching staff which has helped create a strong and united team. They work collaboratively with two other local schools which has enabled the development of future school leaders. The school has been supported by a Governor in the development of R.E. and worship. She has organised staff training and guided staff in developing assessment procedures for R.E. Pupils understanding of the wider community is developed through fund raising for different charities including Red Nose Day, Race for Life and Unicef that are local, national and international. There are close links with the local church evidenced in the organisation of the "King's Squad" after school club. Other links with the local community have led to Faith Trust leading workshops using Godly Play each week with KS1 pupils; this has deepened the pupils understanding of bible stories. The school website at present does not contain all statutory documentation and provides a limited view of this school as a church school. The school meets statutory requirements for the delivery of R.E. and worship.