



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

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

### Swithland St Leonard's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Main Street  
Swithland  
Loughborough  
Leicestershire  
LE12 8TQ

#### Diocese: Leicester

Local authority: Leicestershire

Dates of inspection: 26<sup>th</sup> February 2014

Date of last inspection: 26<sup>th</sup> November 2007

School's unique reference number: 120163

Headteacher: Mrs Christine Lethbridge

Inspector's name and number: Mrs Brenda Davies (166)

#### School context

This thriving village school is situated in the rural village of Swithland. The vast majority of the 101 children on roll come from outside of the school's catchment area. Almost all pupils are of white British descent. Very few pupils are entitled to support from the Pupil Premium grant. Since the last inspection the learning environment has been improved by the addition of a permanent block of three classrooms.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Swithland St Leonard's as a Church of England school are good

- A fully embedded system of distinctly Christian values successfully guides and directs the development of the Christian character of the whole school community
- The leadership of the headteacher and her senior staff team is central to the successful and distinctive development of this school as a church school
- This school successfully meets the academic, social, moral and spiritual needs of all learners.
- Achievement is consistently high and relationships within the school community are excellent.

#### Areas to improve

- Develop the leadership role of Foundation Governors within the regular formal evaluation of the school as a church school
- Enable the inclusion of staff, parents and the wider school community more regularly in acts of collective worship
- Improve pupils' cultural development by providing more opportunities to learn about faiths and cultures other than their own

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

An established system of teaching and promoting distinctively Christian values is very effectively embedded into the ethos and practice of this school. This approach successfully guides and directs the development of the Christian characteristics of the school and has a very positive impact on the daily life of all learners throughout the whole school community. Attendance and academic achievement are high, and children are curious and enthusiastic learners. Inclusive practice is demonstrated in the way that the school successfully meets the particular needs of pupils of all abilities and faiths. Children are keen and able to effectively express their thoughts and ideas. They demonstrate excellent spiritual, moral and social development and a growing interest, understanding and awareness of faiths and cultures other than their own. The whole school community shows respect for difference and diversity within the Christian church. Children have gained knowledge and understanding of a wide variety of Christian denominational practices and have benefitted from visiting a range of churches in the local area. Good quality learning within carefully structured religious education lessons, including a visit to a Hindu temple in Leicester is helping the children to gain a greater understanding of other faiths. Children's behaviour in lessons and around school is impeccable. Parents' views of the school are wholly positive. Comments such as 'the work of the school reinforces Christian values in our family life' demonstrate the wider impact of the Christian character of the school.

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

Collective worship is structured around distinctive Christian values. The school follows the Diocesan schedule of themes, linked to Christian values. The whole school community recognises the value of collective worship and talk positively about what it means to them. Monitors prepare the focal point for worship each day. Children enjoy being involved in worship through writing and presenting prayers or being involved in drama. Few children have accepted the challenge of planning and leading worship but many would like to be more actively involved in regular worship planned by staff. Worship enables children to link Christian values to Jesus' teachings. The development of a Christian understanding of the Trinity is supported through worship, but remains an area for development for most children. Worship takes place in church at significant times in the Christian calendar, including Harvest, Christmas and Easter. These celebrations are very well attended by parents and the wider school community. The size of the school hall limits the inclusion of teaching and support staff, parents and other members of the school community in regular worship. All have expressed the desire for more regular inclusion in worship, but appreciate the school's limitations. School leaders and governors are considering creative ways in which they may adjust current practice to enable more adults to enjoy and benefit from regular inclusion in whole school collective worship. Anglican clergy lead worship in school each month. All teaching staff plan and lead worship. The Collective Worship leader is diligent in organising themes and resources and providing support for teachers. She has established good systems for monitoring the effectiveness of collective worship to which staff, pupils and parents contribute. These help to guide development. Governors have not yet made any significant contribution to the monitoring and evaluation of the impact of collective worship.

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

The strong leadership, vision and personal faith of the headteacher is central to the successful development of this school as a church school. She is ably supported by staff who confidently speak of and promote a school ethos deeply rooted in distinctively Christian values. The headteacher and staff have undertaken effective self-evaluation activities involving pupils and parents. This has enabled them to understand the strengths and areas for development of the school as a church school. They have used the outcomes of their monitoring to develop school

practice to ensure that the needs of all children are met. The headteacher ensures that all monitoring information is shared effectively with the governing body. Foundation governors have not taken effective steps to monitor the school as a church school. They continue to rely heavily on the outcomes of monitoring activities conducted by staff. The vast majority of children make good and sometimes outstanding academic, social and spiritual progress and thoroughly enjoy their learning within a distinctly Christian environment. The cultural development of pupils is progressing within the RE curriculum that effectively promotes pupils' understanding and appreciation of Christianity and is developing their appreciation of faiths other than their own. The wider community, including parents and members of Christian churches in the locality contribute effectively to the school and are thoroughly supportive of it. Leadership of RE and Collective Worship has been enhanced through links to a variety of resources provided by the Leicester Diocese.