



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Onny Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary school

Onibury

Craven Arms

Shropshire

SY7 9AW

Diocese: Hereford

Local authority: Shropshire

Dates of inspection: 13th November 2014

Date of last inspection: 8th March 2010

School's unique reference number: 123560

Head teacher: Mrs Penelope Knight

Inspector's name and number: Ms Sue Blackburn 756

School context

Onny C of E Primary school is a small rural village school of 62 learners. The school is at the heart of the community. The school federated with Lydbury North Church of England VA Primary School in January 2012 to become St. Michael's Federation. Both schools share the same head teacher. The school comprises three classes and learners come from predominantly white British families. The number of pupils with additional needs is above average. The school has a high mobility with many pupils starting school midway through the school year.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Onny as a Church of England school are good

- The head teacher provides strong leadership centred on Christian values and spiritual development which enables pupils to demonstrate respect and care for each other.
- The positive Christian ethos where pastoral support for individual pupils and their families is a priority.
- Governors and clergy have a shared Christian vision for the school and provide effective challenge and support so that the school meets the needs of all pupils well.
- Positive relationships between all members of the school community clearly rooted in Christian values of friendship and compassion.

Areas to improve

- Involve foundation governors in formally monitoring and evaluating the distinctiveness of the school as a church school including standards of achievement in religious education.
- Involve pupils in planning and leading collective worship enabling them to develop a deeper understanding of Anglican traditions and symbols.
- Develop links with schools in other countries to broaden pupils understanding of other cultures.

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

Pupils are happy and secure in school. They are valued as individuals and benefit from the warm family atmosphere, showing care and respect for each other. Christian values are at the heart of the federation's mission statement, 'Working, learning, playing, praying and believing together' and are clearly understood and articulated by the school community. The school is highly inclusive and actively supports pupils with additional needs. Behaviour and relationships are good as a result of the high importance placed on Christian values of respect and compassion. Parents commented on the pastoral support given to their children as well as providing valuable work-shops for themselves to enable them to better support their own children's progress. The 'Little Lambs' preschool group led by a member of the clergy is valued by the school community and has resulted in increased participation in church including increased baptisms. Improving academic achievement is a result of the high level of support and thoughtfulness given to each child and reflects the Christian values of the school. The quality of pastoral support has also resulted in improved attendance. The Christian character of the school has a significant impact on the spiritual, moral and social understanding of pupils. The school places high importance on developing pupils' spirituality. Events such as 'Malawi Day' have been organised by the school to develop pupils' cultural understanding. Pupils have limited opportunities to link with schools in other countries to further develop their cultural understanding. It is evident that pupils reflect on their learning in RE lessons, as one pupil said "It teaches us not to be jealous or unkind." RE is linked to other subject areas and a literacy lesson observed during inspection was based on poetry linked to peace, which provided an opportunity for reflection on the Christian values of compassion and forgiveness needed for peace to exist. Classroom displays including one on managing anger and one promoting all of the Christian values provide opportunities for pupils to post comments, reflect on their behaviour, and improve it.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good.

The school has prayer and worship at the heart of school life. All teaching staff join together with the pupils to worship daily. Pupils participated thoughtfully during the worship observed during the inspection and were eager to join in the hymn. Pupils commented on the importance of prayer although they were unclear as to the religious significance of a lit candle. Worship focuses on stories about the life of Jesus and how his life and teaching show Christians how to live. 'Visions and Values' materials provide the basis for planning collective worship by the head teacher with support from the clergy. Policies and planning for collective worship now reflect the schools Anglican foundation, addressing a focus for development from the previous inspection. Visitors from other denominations, such as a Methodist minister, provide a range of worship which is varied in style and reflects a range of Christian traditions. Pupils are encouraged to participate in confirmation classes run by the clergy so that they have the opportunity to develop a greater understanding of Anglican traditions and practice. The

school involves parents in termly services in the local church and parents have now expressed a desire to join in weekly assemblies in school as well. The pupils are sufficiently confident in response to what the school has provided to want to take part in planning and leading collective worship themselves. They would also appreciate the provision of more open spaces for private prayer and reflection.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good.

The school follows the Shropshire agreed syllabus for RE, with a strong focus on Bible teaching. The effective links between RE and other subjects foster spiritual development and social development well. It is clear in the lessons observed during the inspection, and from evidence in books, that the teaching is sufficiently differentiated so that all pupils are able to make good progress. The school has addressed the development point from the previous report, working with the diocese to develop the school's RE syllabus and governors are supporting the school in actively seeking to develop this further to provide a more modern and exciting curriculum. The head teacher monitors the progress of pupils in developing their understanding of RE and good progress could be seen in pupils work. However, there is as yet no formal assessment of standards in RE so that it is not possible to compare standards achieved in comparison to that in other subjects. Teaching of RE during the inspection focussed on memories and pupils responded thoughtfully and responsibly to teachers questions. Pupils said that they enjoyed RE lessons and that they taught them how to behave well.

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

Governors and the clergy are actively involved in the work of the school and provide support and challenge. They have a shared vision and passion for the work of the school and actively promote the school's Christian values. The head teacher provides outstanding care for all members of the school community and this is seen as a great strength of the school according to parents and governors. Due to the quality of education, grounded in Christian principles, together with the care and support offered to families the school is increasing in numbers. There are mutually beneficial partnerships with the school and local community. Parents have an exceptionally positive view of the school. The school places high importance on training and development of governors and school staff so that they are clear as to their roles and responsibilities. They have addressed the focus for development in the previous report by reviewing policies to ensure they reflect the distinctive Christian character of the school. Governors are highly involved in monitoring collective worship and standards across the school informally and, as a result, they have a good understanding of the work of the school. There is as yet a limited involvement of foundation governors in the self-evaluation process to evaluate the school as a church school or in monitoring standards in RE.

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