



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

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

### Upton-upon-Severn Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School,

School Lane, Upton-upon-Severn, WR8 0LD

**Previous inspection grade:** Good

**Current inspection grade:** Good

**Diocese:** Worcester

Local authority: Worcestershire

Date of inspection: 16 March 2016

Date of last inspection: 2 December 2010

School's unique reference number: 116853

Headteacher: Julie Wills

Inspector's name and number: Lynn Gill 848

#### School context

Upton-upon-Severn CE Primary School is a smaller than average sized school with 151 pupils on roll. The children are taught in single aged classes. The majority of pupils are of white British heritage. The headteacher has been in post since September 2011 and there is currently an acting deputy head. The school was judged as good by Ofsted in January 2015, having previously been judged as requires improvement in February 2013.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Upton-upon-Severn CE Primary School as a Church of England school are good

- The headteacher has a passionate vision for the school's Christian distinctiveness strongly rooted in Christian values which contributes to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.
- The inclusive Christian vision of the school ensures that pupils and staff are strongly nurtured and supported in their personal wellbeing.
- The schools' excellent links with the local churches and community promote pupils' understanding of their place in their local community.

#### Areas to improve

- Embed formal systems for school leaders, including governors, to monitor and evaluate the impact of the school's Christian distinctiveness and ensure such monitoring leads to significant improvement.
- Ensure that there is a shared interpretation of spirituality across the school community so that staff can plan for a range of high quality spiritual experiences for all learners in all areas of the curriculum.
- Extend learners' role in planning, leading and evaluating acts of worship in order to increase the school's understanding of spirituality and to enhance learners' spiritual development.

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

Upton-upon-Severn Primary school is a very caring Christian community. School leaders describe the school's vision statement, 'We offer inspiration to young lives. Anything is possible; we can all succeed' as inspiration in the way that God offered inspiration through the teachings of Jesus his Son. It is clear that Christian values play an important part in the life of the school. They have a positive impact on children's attitudes to their learning, well-being, behaviour and relationships with others. Children commented "when Jesus was alive he showed the values we have to do in our lives" and "God uses values in the Bible to show people how to help each other" thereby demonstrating their understanding of the Christian foundation of their school and the impact it has on their lives. The school is improving all stakeholders' understanding of the school's Christian foundation. The weekly newsletter starts with a Bible quote, which governors say is "carefully chosen reflecting school, community and contemporary issues". Pupils' self-esteem, self-worth and self-belief are nurtured so that every individual can do the best they can. Children say they are respected, valued and listened to by staff. Parents agree that the school's Christian ethos is influential in their children's everyday life. They say that their children often talk about the teachings from the Bible they have learnt from assemblies and say how "Jesus tells us how to live our lives". They appreciate the school's excellent links with the church and local community with one parent stating that it gives their children the opportunity to become part of the church community. The school does not have a clearly understood definition of spirituality although members of staff use activities such as Forest School and bell boating to give pupils a sense of their place in creation through real experiences. The religious education (RE) curriculum celebrates diversity and difference and ensures that learners are both interested in and respectful of those with other faiths and cultures although visits to places of worship are limited to those of the Christian faith.

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

Collective worship is central to the life at Upton Primary and is the inspiration for promoting learning about Christian values and biblical teachings. Collective worship themes are planned around the 18 'Values for Life' and the school strives to reinterpret the values in ways which not only relate to biblical teaching but also to the children's day-to-day experiences. The consequence of this is that children not only know the values, but understand their meaning and the relevance of them to their own lives; for example, a Year Two child commented that "if someone is mean to us we forgive them like Jesus tells us in the Bible". Collective worship has a positive impact on relationships between all members of the school community. The fortnightly 'Open the Book' sessions are very popular and engaging, where the pupils are encouraged to relate Bible stories to their everyday life and reflect on their message. The extremely committed 'Open the Book' team are very skilled at interpreting the stories for all age groups. All children, from the youngest to the oldest, enjoy taking part. Staff say that these assemblies bring Bible stories to life with children talking about them afterwards and the Reception children can often be seen acting the story out in their role play. Other members of the church community are also involved in planning and leading the collective worship programme and pupils enjoy the diversity of worship being eager to answer questions, sing or take part in drama or storytelling. The worship table, with a cross, three candles representing the Trinity and seven class candles, acts as a focal point and transforms the hall into a special place for worship. A Year Three pupil said that "a candle shows that Jesus is the light of the world and the class candles show that 'we are all shining lights'". Well planned collective worship is enabling pupils to develop an understanding of the Trinity, Anglican traditions and practices. Within worship, time is given to reflection and prayer to support the spiritual development of all members of the school community. Pupils also use prayer in their own lives with a Year Four child saying "we can pray to God to ask him to forgive us if we do something wrong". Special services held in the parish church give pupils an understanding of important Christian festivals. Parents are involved in these services giving them the opportunity to share in their children's spiritual reflection. Children enjoy participating in adult led assemblies but do not plan or lead acts of collective

worship themselves. Children's views have been sought and acted on to improve their involvement and engagement in collective worship.

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

The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school as a church school by 'offering children inspiration in the way that God offered inspiration through the teachings of Jesus his Son', and is committed to providing the best education for all pupils. The school leadership team and governors are committed to using self-evaluation strategies to improve academic outcomes for pupils; for example early intervention strategies for vulnerable pupils ensure they make good progress. Christian values play an important role in pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development leading to their good behaviour and attitudes to learning. Governors say that pupils are "well rounded, compassionate members of society, with a solid emotional grounding". Foundation governors carry out learning walks and discussions with pupils and the information gained leads to action plans to improve provision of worship and RE. Issues relating to Christian ethos and values are discussed by governors and staff to improve the Christian character of the school. Parents are very supportive of the school's Christian character which they feel provides an inclusive environment for all pupils. They speak very positively about the school's 'open door' policy which makes them feel valued as part of the school community. The headteacher's passion to support the church and local community, and for the school to attend the many church services and town events during the year, ensures that the school is at the heart of the community and pupils understand the involvement of the church in the local and wider community. Members of the school community are welcomed and encouraged to become part of the church congregation. The close relationship with the local churches provides many visitors to the school who enhance its Christian ethos. High priority is given to the leadership of collective worship and RE. The passion and enthusiasm of the RE co-ordinator is resulting in the well-structured implementation of the new Worcestershire Local Agreed Syllabus where staff feel well supported to deliver RE. However, assessment, tracking and monitoring procedures for RE are not yet in place. The statutory requirements for RE and collective worship are met and all areas for development from the last inspection have been effectively addressed.

SIAMS report March 2016 Upton-upon-Severn Primary School, Upton-upon-Severn, WR8 0LD