



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

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

### All Saints Marsh Church of England Academy

Osborne Street  
Newton Abbot  
Devon  
TQ12 2DJ

**Previous SIAMS grade: Outstanding**

**Current inspection grade: Good**

**Diocese: Exeter**

Local authority: N/A

Dates of inspection: 19 January 2016

Date of last inspection: N/A

School's unique reference number: 113466

Headteacher: Susan Rowe-Jones

Inspector's name and number: Patricia Morris 626

#### School context

All Saints Marsh Church of England Academy is a smaller than average primary school with 113 children on roll. The majority of children are of white British origin. The number of children with special educational needs/disabilities is below the national average. The proportion of children eligible for pupil premium is above the national average. The school joined the Learning Academy Partnership, a MAT with a Church of England foundation, in September 2015 to become an academy. There has been a complete change of staff, the majority of whom were appointed at the beginning of this academic year.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of All Saints Marsh CE Academy as a Church of England school are good

- Core Christian values are clearly expressed and all members of the school identify how they affect their daily lives and achievements.
- The hard work and commitment of leaders has secured the Christian character of the school throughout the many recent changes.
- Inspirational collective worship provides rich experiences to engage and challenge children.
- Productive support from the Learning Academy Partnership (LAP), based on a Church of England foundation, is helping to move the school forward.

#### Areas to improve

- Improve children's cultural development by providing more opportunities for first hand experiences of faiths and cultures other than their own.
- Raise standards in religious education by developing a robust and rigorous system for monitoring and assessing so that a more informed process identifies how to move the school forward.
- Develop current practice of the Ethos and Communications group so that they are able to challenge the school as it continues to develop.

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

The Christian character is good because distinctive core Christian values are made explicit and are embedded in the daily life of the school. Children identify the importance of these values and how they influence their daily lives and achievements. Values are clearly represented in the form of a hand using the palm to represent the main value of love and each digit to represent another of their six core values. The use of the hand to represent core values is a very effective way of reminding children that love, in the palm, is central. Five other values, one for each finger, support love at the centre. Children have a clear understanding of this and it helps them to put the values into practice. Values are displayed in every classroom with buckets being filled when values are seen in action. This is a huge encouragement to children who not only want to be seen acting the values out but also to be able to recognise them in the actions of others. This is making a difference on behaviour outside school as parents also share values in action at home. Children recognise how their school core values are reflected in Bible stories painted on the walls in the playground and relate their importance in their own lives today. Displays around the school identify links with values and promote opportunities to develop children's spirituality. For example, the mirror, windows and doors display in every classroom encourages children to ask progressively big questions such as 'Who is God?' These displays provide children with opportunities to develop the language to express their own spirituality. This is also seen in displays of 'wow' moments where children have the opportunity to share experiences of awe and wonder and 'ow' moments when problems can be shared. Opportunities for reflection are encouraged in lessons, worship and in outdoor quiet areas such as the friendship bench designed by the children and made by a local further education college. Behaviour is excellent and is reflected in the way children respect each other and their good manners. Children have the opportunity to share opinions and work together collaboratively through a school council. Relationships between all members of the school community are a particular strength of the school and are consistently attributed to the Christian character and values. Standards across the school are improving as a result of effective intervention programmes. Parents feel they are well informed due to the weekly class newsletters that have been introduced. The importance of religious education is recognised by children and they have some understanding of Christianity as a world faith and show respect for diversity and difference within other faiths although there are few opportunities to experience these first hand.

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

Collective worship is highly valued and has a central role in promoting Christian values. The positive impact on children and the ethos of the school is clearly articulated and is seen in everyday actions. Worship includes verses from the Bible and children are able to successfully relate these to the school's six core values and their own lives. Themes raise aspirations and inspire a high level of challenge and reflection as represented in the current school focus of 'How would you explain what God is like to someone?' Children's excellent behaviour in worship is reflected in their deep and thoughtful answers and confidence in sharing their opinions. Children understand the significance of prayer and its important part in the school day. They know The Lord's Prayer, the school prayer and many responses to prayers. As a result, children say that 'prayer is a very special time as it is a way of talking to God' and 'we pray for people even if we don't know them'. Prayer trees in each classroom are highly valued by children who represent their individual personal prayers by tying a ribbon on the tree in the colour of the church year. They identify the seasons of the church year with conviction and speak confidently of many Christian festivals and how they celebrate them in the local church. Collective worship has a strong focus on the teachings of Jesus and children show a good understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit saying 'you can be more than one thing but still be yourself'. They participate enthusiastically in various aspects of worship and lead their own worship at special festivals. Worship is extremely well planned and there are excellent opportunities for children to evaluate worship in a response book that is used on a daily basis.

Worship contributes successfully to children's spirituality and those children who are part of the newly formed ethos team have initiated a spiritual prayer garden and are eagerly developing an idea to incorporate prayer beads in the water used for the garden so that 'the plants will carry the prayers up to God'.

### **The effectiveness of the religious education is good**

Standards of attainment in religious education(RE) are at least in line with other core subjects and with national expectations. Children make good progress and understand the value of RE. All teaching observed was good, well planned and resourced with good cross-curricular links. Discussions are developed with good questioning to extend and challenge children's thinking. For example, in a class with older children they read verses from the Bible and reflected on what they said about God. They were challenged to imagine how God would feel about the world today and animated discussions resulted in even bigger questions. Children were then encouraged to record their thoughts on the mirror, windows and doors display, which effectively contributes to the development of their spirituality. Children were seen to apply prior knowledge with confidence and showed some good knowledge of the beliefs of other faiths. Visitors are welcomed to talk to the children about different faiths but there are little first hand experiences or trips to other places of worship. Opportunities to fund raise for local and global communities contribute to children's understanding of Christianity as a world faith. Children talk enthusiastically about raising money to convert a chicken shed to a safe play area in Tanzania. As a result, RE makes a good contribution to the Christian ethos of the school. However, a rigorous programme of monitoring and evaluation has not yet been developed to bring about sustained improvement. Leadership of RE has been reviewed as part of the LAP. The recently appointed RE leader has responsibility for the subject across the Partnership. She is enthusiastic about the opportunity to develop RE and has already completed observations and sought children's views.

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

The school has been through a turbulent time with major staff changes. In September 2015 they became part of the Learning Academy Partnership (LAP) with a Church of England foundation. The impact of the mutual support within the LAP in providing high quality individual professional development for staff has had a positive impact on improvements to children's teaching and learning. Approaching their work in such a different and challenging way is enabling the school to emerge in a strong position to move forward. Leadership and management of the school as a church school are good because leaders constantly promote the distinctive Christian vision and have made a considerable effort to maintain this throughout the many changes the school has been through. The headteacher articulates a clear vision based on distinctive Christian values and effectively promotes its positive impact on the school community. The newly formed Ethos and Communications group are very supportive of the school's Christian character and regard it as central to the life of the school. They have a clear grasp of the purpose of being a church school and the importance of their role. Delivery of continuing professional development such as a recent ethos day has equipped all leaders with a more informed understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. A focus for development from the previous inspection included the need for more robust systems in the monitoring and evaluation of the school as a church school. This is now being addressed with the introduction of the Ethos and Communications group. They appreciate that work scrutiny and tracking systems are in place on an informal basis and leaders are aware a more formal and systematic way to monitor and evaluate needs to be developed. Links with the parish church are strong and have been maintained whilst waiting the appointment of a new vicar. This is giving the school the opportunity to explore how links between school and church can be developed further. Parents are supportive of the school. They say their views are listened to and acted upon. They appreciate the way they are taken seriously and issues are dealt with quickly and effectively.