



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

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

### Ingoldisthorpe Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Sherborne Road  
Ingoldisthorpe  
Norfolk  
PE31 6PE

**Previous SIAMS grade: Good**

**Current inspection grade: Good**

**Diocese: Norwich**

Local authority: Norfolk

Dates of inspection: 27<sup>th</sup> February 2015

Date of last inspection: 1<sup>st</sup> March 2010

School's unique reference number: 121134

Headteacher: Sean Wright

Inspector's name and number: Jean Johnson 608

#### School context

Ingoldisthorpe is a smaller than average primary school with 94 pupils on roll. Pre-school children are also accommodated in the school for two hours each morning. Almost all pupils are white British and come from Ingoldisthorpe and surrounding villages. The new headteacher took up his post in September 2014. The church is adjacent to the school. Following the retirement of the vicar in October 2014, the local benefices have been reorganised.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Ingoldisthorpe VA Primary school as a Church of England school are good.

- The strong Christian ethos of this 'family' school supports all learners, promotes good relationships and ensures that pupils make good progress.
- Leaders have a clear Christian vision for the school and its future growth which is understood by all members of the school community and seen acted out in the everyday life of the school.
- Pupils have a sense of belonging to a church school and are aware of the impact this has on their everyday lives.
- Worship is varied and engaging and has a positive impact on behaviour and attitudes.

#### Areas to improve

- Ensure that foundation governors support further improvements to the Christian character of the school through an increased responsibility for monitoring and evaluating the impact of collective worship and religious education.
- Ensure that reflection is a regular feature of worship and consider ways of encouraging pupils to use reflection spaces to enable them to fully explore their own spirituality.
- Continue to build on the quality of religious education (RE) by ensuring that all teachers

are aware of level expectations.

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

Pupils and adults are proud of the school's Christian values and ethos. As the website states, this is "a family school where everyone matters." Christian values are evident in the very good behaviour seen and the inclusive, friendly relationships demonstrated by all members of the school community. Pupils say that staff care for them and help them to do their best. They talk about how the Christian values they learn about and reflect on, in collective worship and RE, influence the way they behave towards others both in school and at home. They say that Bible stories for example David and Goliath teach them that God is there when they need him and that the "biggest is not always the best." The school's clear Christian ethos, understood by all, has contributed positively to attendance being at or above national averages and achievement across the school being at least good.

Symbols, eye-catching interactive displays and reflection spaces throughout the school and school grounds reinforce its status and mission as a church school and effectively support pupils' engagement with distinctive Christian values. A wide range of visits, including to a Christian residential centre, and school clubs provide a wealth of opportunities for pupils to develop their individual talents and interests. They demonstrate their care for others when they support local events to raise money for charity and sing carols in local residential care homes. They show care for and appreciation of God's creation in their 'outside classroom' and the school has been awarded the Eco Schools silver award.

RE is given a high priority within the curriculum. Within the enquiry based approach to teaching and learning, pupils challenge and extend their own thinking about Christianity and other religions. They have a sound appreciation of Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith. They develop their understanding of other cultures and faiths through topic work for example on China and visiting other places of worship for example a mosque.

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

All teaching staff attend and are involved in planning and leading collective worship, emphasizing its importance in the daily life of the school. Long term planning reflects the major festivals and themes in the church's year with Christian values and Bible stories being used to illustrate and expand upon the themes. Pupils say that their experience in worship has a positive influence on their behaviour towards others. It encourages them to be kind to everyone and recognise that everyone has their own strength. Worship groups from outside the school, for example Open the Book, GNR8 and BJ Puppets visit the school on a regular basis. Pupils plan and deliver their own contributions to collective worship, often in the form of drama. They talk about how they enjoy seeing Bible stories brought to life by the outside groups as well as other children in the school. Major festivals in the church's calendar and events in the school year, for example the chair of governors' significant birthday, are celebrated in the church. These services are well attended by parents and members of the local community. The inclusive family ethos of the school is apparent in the Friday 'Sharing Assembly' where children's achievements in a wide range of situations are celebrated. A significant number of parents also attend this assembly.

Pupils write their own prayers which are used in collective worship and at other times in the school day. These prayers appear on the school's web-site. They have a well-developed sense of the purpose of prayer and parents talk about how their children value prayer as a help to them in difficult situations. Displays in the school have helped pupils to gain a growing understanding of the nature of the Trinity. There are a number of Christian symbols for pupils to focus on within the worship space and a candle is sometimes lit to mark the start of worship. Pupils do not have time for reflection in all acts of collective worship. Staff informally monitor and discuss the impact of collective worship. Governors monitor the content of collective worship and provide reports for the governing body and headteacher.

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

All teachers teach RE and use the Norfolk Agreed Syllabus as the basis for their planning. They make cross curricular links to other subjects for example art. Pupils enjoy RE and the variety of activities they take part in to support their learning. They respond enthusiastically and thoughtfully to challenging questions in lessons. They display a good understanding of Christian beliefs when they explain and justify their opinions for example when considering different types of law and rules. They talk about learning about a topic for example creation from a Christian perspective compared to other religions as well as learning from religion when they ask challenging questions for example "If God made everything, who made God?" In the lessons observed, pupils had clear learning objectives for example about understanding the meaning of perseverance in the context of the bible story of Moses leading the Israelites out of Egypt. Activities that followed enabled them to come to an understanding of the meaning of the value in a Christian context as well as in their everyday lives. There is evidence of next steps marking and pupils' response to it in books so that pupils know what they have done well as well as how to improve their work. Displays in all classrooms enable pupils to celebrate their achievements.

RE is an ongoing priority in the school improvement and development plan and appropriate targets have been set for the current year. All teachers have attended training for delivering the Norfolk Agreed Syllabus. They use the Norfolk grade descriptions for assessment but some evidence in books indicates that they do not always have a thorough understanding of expectations at each level. The headteacher (RE subject leader) monitors teaching and learning termly. The majority of RE teaching is good with the result that standards in RE at both key stages are at least in line with national expectations, matching those in core subjects. There is evidence of progress across year groups.

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

The new headteacher, governors and staff have a clear shared vision for the school as a church school. They are committed to preserving and enhancing the Christian family ethos of the school whilst ensuring that pupils develop an understanding of and respect for other beliefs. They use additional finance from a trust fund to provide practical support for the Christian distinctiveness of the school by subsidising visits to for example the cathedral and buying resources for RE.

Parents are highly supportive of the school as a church school. They appreciate the links it has with the church, and see the school's friendly, caring ethos as a direct result of these links. They say that the school gives their children confidence and a curiosity about Christianity and the church. The church adjoins the school grounds. Parents and pupils talk about visiting the church for special services. Members of the local church community also come to these services, strengthening the school's links with the community. The school is in the process of establishing new ways of working with church leaders in the newly formed benefice. The benefice curate has become a school governor and leads collective worship. The previous incumbent, who was the RE governor, worked closely with the school until his retirement in October 2014.

The headteacher and a foundation governor have attended training to develop their understanding of Christian distinctiveness. Staff development has been planned to nurture the development of future church school leaders. Governors attend and monitor collective worship and special services. They use these opportunities to gather parent views, but do not yet routinely evaluate impact on pupils. Arrangements for RE and collective worship meet statutory requirements.