



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Moordown St John's CE (VA) Primary School

Vicarage Road

Moordown

Bournemouth
BH9 2SA

Previous SIAMS grade: Outstanding

Current inspection grade: Outstanding

Diocese: Winchester

Local authority: Bournemouth

Dates of inspection: 18 June 2015

Date of last inspection: 15-16 July 2010

School's unique reference number: 113838

Headteacher: Peter Herbert

Inspector's name and number: Dianne Christopher (731)

School context

Moordown St John's Church of England School is a large urban primary school with 415 pupils on roll. The school serves the local community exclusively since the governors revised the admissions criteria in 2006. The majority of pupils are of white British heritage, although the school is growing in the number of families it welcomes from diverse cultural and socio economic backgrounds. 16% of pupils are in receipt of pupil premium funding which is below the national average. The percentage of those with special needs or disabilities is above the national average at 19%. There is a breakfast club and after school provision run by a private provider on site.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Moordown St John's CE (VA) Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The Christian ethos of the school is outstanding and provides a strong framework for all of the school's activities, relationships and future developments.
- The leadership and management of the school are strong at all levels, with a determined drive to continuously improve outcomes and quality for all learners whilst ensuring that the school's Christian character remains central.
- The strong relationship with the local parish church forms a solid foundation for the Christian life of the school.
- Excellent relationships exist throughout the school and beyond, reflecting the impact of care, respect and compassion lived out on a daily basis.

Areas to improve

- Enhance opportunities for pupils to plan, lead and evaluate collective worship in order to increase their engagement and widen impact on the school community
- Broaden and deepen staff and pupil understanding of spirituality whilst building on the

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

Moordown St John's CE Primary School is outstanding and has an explicit Christian ethos that permeates all aspects of school life. The school values are based on 'The Tree of Life' and 'Fruits of the Spirit' and the whole school community understand and can articulate them, explaining the significance of each value in their own lives. Relationships, at all levels, are exemplary, reflected in the high quality of care given. As a result, the pupils feel safe in school and enjoy the experience, which in turn results in high achievement and attendance. Pupils commented, 'I love everything about this school' and 'There is always someone to talk to wherever you are'. Pupils are well behaved, confident and polite. They are given responsibilities that enable them to develop into well-rounded individuals with a clear sense of right and wrong. Religious education makes a significant contribution to the distinctive character of the school. The older pupils support and look after the younger pupils in and around the school. A pupil commented, 'We look out for each other'. There is an atmosphere of mutual support because all the staff wholly identify with the Christian ethos. Parents enthuse about the church school ethos and are delighted by the broad range of experiences offered, including the residential trips. The school provides many extra curricular activities, such as football, cricket, music, art, and 'Messy Church', along with numerous joint projects with neighbouring schools, such as 'exploring the continents.' Vibrant and interesting displays of this work have been produced and pupils talk about their work with pride. Parents enjoy the fact that their children come home and talk about the Christian dimension of the school and even the youngest children have a concept of what attending church means. The School Parliament meets regularly and has spontaneously raised money for charities such as Kinson Food Bank, The Salvation Army and sponsoring a child in Uganda. This demonstrates strong links to their Christian faith through service towards others. The school is making a significant contribution to the moral, social and cultural development of all pupils. However, a cohesive understanding of spirituality is underdeveloped and the school recognises the need to broaden and deepen this through creating sacred places for pupils to use at times of worry or for private reflection. Prayer and Worry Boxes are evident in the classes, providing opportunities for pupils to share concerns with others.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Worship holds a place of central importance in the life of the school and is inclusive, engaging and affirming, making an impact on the school's Christian ethos. The worship themes are planned around the school's values, spiritual, moral and social issues as well as the church calendar, thus clearly positively impacting on behaviour and attitudes. Pupils experience a range of worship, including whole school/class worship and church based experiences that are all led by teaching staff, local clergy and other visitors. Aspects of the Anglican tradition were observed in the consistent practice of creating a focus with a cloth and candles, also in the Christian greetings at the beginning and end of worship. The Hall Crew set up the Reflection Table in the hall for whole school worship and often read prayers or are occasionally involved. During the inspection, worship was observed in three classes. Each explored the value of peace, with references to the Bible story of 'Jesus in the Storm'. During worship in the outdoor classroom, pupils held a pebble, thought of a personal worry, reflected and then hid it away in the garden. A prayer and quiet moment followed. Pupils enjoy collective worship, listening and interacting appropriately. Prayer is seen as important and pupils understand that prayer is a conversation with God and that they can talk about their worries and concerns as well as it being a way to celebrate the good things in their lives. Bible stories are regularly part of daily worship and enable pupils to develop a broad understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Enhancing further opportunities for the pupils to engage in evaluating, planning and leading in worship would increase pupil engagement and ensure consistent quality of collective worship. Parents

are frequently invited to acts of worship and appreciate the contribution of worship and the impact that it has on their children's spiritual development.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

Religious education (RE) is a core part of the curriculum and is integral to the Christian foundation of the school. Significant progress has been made in the development of RE since the last Church inspection. The school has adopted the Discovery scheme of work that is used as an effective basis for teaching of RE throughout the school. The experienced and enthusiastic RE coordinator checks appropriate coverage of the subject, including the balance between the emphasis on Christianity and the coverage of other world religions. A robust system of monitoring and evaluation assesses the impact of RE and curriculum tracking is excellent. Work scrutiny during the inspection showed that achievement in RE is at least as good or better than in the core subjects. Pupils enjoy the subject and are keen to be fully involved in lessons, often making thoughtful and sensitive contributions. One pupil said, 'RE is one of my best lessons because it is fun and helps me to learn about Christianity and other religions'. Pupils demonstrate a range of skills, as evidenced when Foundation Stage pupils heard a story about 'A Bag Of Worries' and how resolving 'worries' brought about peace. Other pupils compared this to the Bible story of 'Jesus in the Storm' and how there was peace after the storm. Examples of reflection, deep thinking and interpretation were observed in Year Six. Groups of pupils were challenged to interpret and explain 'sacrifice' by sorting unrelated pictures into a range of different scenarios explaining their decisions. A variety of teaching styles is encouraged and has a positive impact on learning, with pupils responding well to challenge and creativity. When asked searching questions about their understanding of the Trinity, pupils were very keen to give their ideas and clearly had confidence and trust in the way their responses are treated.

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

The leadership of this Church school provides a clear and decisive approach that is firmly based on a distinctly Christian ethos. The newly adopted Christian vision and values of the school are embedded through the prospectus, newsletters and website. The governors are well informed and hold the school to account, whilst providing strong support. External data confirms that standards are in line with or well above the national averages in all core subjects and have improved steadily year on year, with all pupils flourishing as a result. The school is in the process of transferring to academy status, along with six other local schools. The governors fully support this, although they strongly express their determination to ensure the school's identity as a distinctively Christian school is maintained. Succession planning is highly effective and staff are given excellent opportunities to develop leadership and management skills. For instance, the replacement of the RE coordinator has been given considerable priority and the role is currently being shadowed in preparation for the handover, ensuring continuity. All staff are very supportive of the school ethos providing inspiration for the high standards of behaviour. There are mutually supportive links with the local parish churches, as well as strong and productive links with the diocese and neighbouring schools. Relationships with parents are excellent and they appreciate the approachability of the head teacher and staff, who listen to their concerns. As a parent commented, 'The children are given a myriad of ways to learn about themselves and the world around them'. Another said, 'The school is outward looking and does not exist in a bubble'. The pupils say that they have an effective voice within the school, that the School Parliament is heard, and their comments taken seriously. Effective foundation governors and a successful relationship with the local parish considerably enhance the spiritual dimension of the school. A member of staff commented, 'The distinctive Christian character of this school impacts on attainment and brings out the very best in every pupil.' This was whole heartedly endorsed by parents and governors. Statutory requirements for collective worship are met.

