



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Warton Nethersole's Church of England Primary School

Maypole Road,
Warton, Tamworth
Staffordshire
B79 OHP

Diocese: Birmingham

Local authority: Warwickshire

Dates of inspection: 25 June 2015

Date of last inspection: 29th January 2010

School's unique reference number: 140152

Headteacher: Susan Bostock Incumbent: Rev. Stephen Banks

Inspector's name and number: Reverend Alison M. Morris 759

School context

Warton Nethersole's Church of England Primary School is a small rural school which serves the villages in North Warwickshire. It is a smaller than average primary school with 144 pupils. Most pupils come from White British heritage with a mixture of social-economic backgrounds. It is a popular and expanding school with an inclusive and nurturing ethos. The number of pupils eligible for Free School Meals is rising and is above national average at 28%. There are 5 pupils on the SEND register. The school converted to Multi-Academy Trust status in September 2013. The Diocese of Birmingham has majority representation on the board of directors.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Warton Nethersole's Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding

- Inspirational leadership of the headteacher is motivated by her personal faith and is instrumental in the creation of an inclusive, welcoming and harmonious Christian community.
- The significant link between the church community and the school enhances pupils' attitudes to faith and to their spiritual journey.
- The current headteacher and governing body are implementing effectively an innovative 21st century Christian vision for what it can offer to its pupils and the community.

Areas to improve

- Build upon already existing imagery with more creative Christian symbolism and artefacts to highlight spiritual awareness and the Christian distinctiveness within the inside and outside environment of this school.

- Extend and engage with more global partnerships to enhance knowledge and understanding of Christian diversity across the Anglican Communion.
- Implement even further procedures for pupils to participate in the formal monitoring and evaluating of collective worship.

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

Excellent pupil progress is made and pupils achieve well, most reaching excellent standards of attainment in academic work, within a school that is overtly Christian in character. Pupils thrive in this school and have a thirst for learning. They are valued as unique individuals and benefit from the nurturing and inclusive ethos which meets their needs. Effective intervention programmes enriched by creative experiences ensure disadvantaged pupils' attainment is higher than that of similar pupils nationally. Explicit Christian values support a total commitment to meeting the holistic needs of the child who belongs to a trusting, caring and stimulating Christian community. Enthusiastic and committed staff model core Christian values that optimise learning for all pupils, supported by exemplary pastoral care. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted, nourished and challenged by core Christian values which have a high priority in the school development plan. Pupils have high expectations and excellent attitudes to learning and are keen to attend school, so absence is minimal. Older pupils understand what it means to be a pupil at a church school and make the link to Christian teaching in the bible. One pupil said '*We listen to stories about Jesus to find out what he was like .And then do so the same*'. Pupils feel safe and happy, secure in their sense of Christian identity and belonging. Parents value the inclusive approach and praise the many achievements gained such as Sports Awards. Pupils take up opportunities to participate in mission of the wider community and worldwide church through fundraising for example Water Aid. Religious education (RE) makes a very significant contribution to pupil's SMSC development, as belief matters in this school and teaching and learning in the subject are of the highest quality. Standards of behaviour are exemplary supported by the 'one golden rule'.....*Do for other people the same things you want them to do for you.*' This golden rule plus 'an extensive reward system' are underpinned by Christian values especially a firm belief in restorative justice. The school's calm and purposeful learning environment promotes an excellent learning climate where all pupils succeed and make progress.

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

Worship is distinctively Christian and evokes a sense of gathering with a strong focus on the person of Jesus Christ. Daily worship is inclusive, spiritual, and accessible which makes an outstanding impact upon reinforcing Christian values to the central life of the school. Pupils' belief, attitudes and behaviour are influenced by this distinctiveness. They enjoy, are actively engaged, and sing enthusiastically in worship within a distinctive spiritual atmosphere. Prayer is an integral part of school life; daily prayers written by pupils are supplemented with prayer responses such as 'Go in peace'. Visual images, symbols and lighted candles are used to encourage awe and wonder. A good example of this impact is when one pupil said '*If it wasn't for God we would still be in the dark*'. Focused displays and artefacts in the foyer visually express the school's Christian distinctiveness. Addressing a focus for development from the last inspection, worship is now planned using the 'SEAL' themes, illustrated through bible stories so that themes are rooted in Christian and British values. Worship through its moral messages, influences the pupils' actions and behaviour, creating an excellent learning environment. A variety of worship experiences in school and All Saint's church enables all pupils to engage in Anglican traditions and practices which use a clear and consistent structure for Christian worship and festivals. Substantial links with the clergy and foundation governors ensure Christian values are reinforced and Anglican traditions are embedded in the worship but knowledge of Christian diversity across the Anglican Communion is also essential for understanding. Key Christian festivals are always celebrated in Holy Trinity church which reinforces the spiritual link between the church and school community. Additional activities such as 'Open the Book', Soul Cafe' and visits to Birmingham Cathedral offer a rich experience of worship and foster pupils' understanding of their relationship within the diocesan community. A significant development from the last inspection is that pupils are now involved in leading worship with prayers or drama but creating planned opportunities for pupils to monitor and evaluate worship is important for future development. Formal evaluation and monitoring of the impact of worship upon pupils by foundation governors is rigorous and effective, so that the quality of worship offered is substantial and relevant to the pupils' lives and their spiritual development.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

Standards of attainment in RE are in line with national expectations and a significant number of pupils reach higher levels, whilst progress is good. RE follows the Warwickshire Agreed Syllabus and is given a high priority which has led to highly effective practice. RE is effective due to the passionate and very knowledgeable leader of the subject. This makes a significant contribution to pupils' development and the Christian character of the school. Pupil knowledge of the 'Christian story' is very good as well as awareness and understanding of other faiths and cultures. Pupils speak of the school's multi-cultural days such as 'Wow Days' as exciting ways to learn. The provision of creative learning activities enables pupils to learn about and learn from RE and to engage in personal reflection. RE provides a positive, spiritual and affirming experience for pupils. Pupils enjoy RE, engage in their learning and contribute enthusiastically in lessons. Teaching is good and often outstanding because it consistently addresses the needs of different groups. Lessons on Buddhism showed how well pupils were able to participate in group discussion how to get rid of 'unhappiness in their life'. Pupils' ability to hear other's viewpoints in a sensitive way is both purposeful and effective. Methods of teaching and learning are varied, age appropriate and effective which enables pupils to make exceptional progress. Pupils respond thoughtfully to the creatively planned lessons which cause them to be amazed by the awesomeness of God's creation, or to reflect sensitively on the feelings evoked by articles of value to them. The way that Biblical ideas are presented enables pupils to see their relevance to the present. Pupils talked enthusiastically about how the ten commandments related to their values in school. One pupil said, *'I am your God, no other God. This is what we do in school worship'*. A well-structured RE scheme has academic rigour and also fosters deep respect of Christian values and beliefs whilst developing an excellent understanding of other faiths. Assessment for learning is strong. Effective support for RE teaching has impacted upon staff development. RE books are scrutinised and standards moderated by senior leaders and foundation governors. Such monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning in RE has ensured high standards of teaching and learning and has led to improved pupils' standards of attainment.

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

Dedication, resilience and the personal faith of the headteacher have brought stability and harmony to this school. As a result, the leadership and management team has worked with vision, energy and commitment to develop an explicit Christian vision based on distinctive Christian values and these are understood and upheld by all. Both chair and foundation governors are particularly supportive of the strategic drive to sustain and develop the Christian distinctiveness throughout the multi academy trust, and through their excellent work and the flourishing links with local churches, a distinctive, Christian difference is made to the school. Foundation governors now provide significantly more evaluation of evidence and strategic support at every level, monitoring and evaluating the school's progress as a church school, giving account and acting as critical friends to the leadership team. Robust and rigorous systems for monitoring and evaluating the school's impact on pupil achievement are implemented through the Standards Committee and resulting school improvement plans fully reflect the school's Christian foundation. Pupils are encouraged to think globally and be culturally aware of their wider responsibilities through effective strategies which include bi-annual diversity festivals within the academy trust. Experienced leadership by the head has contributed significantly to the success of this school through identified strategic professional development and succession planning. All staff have a clear understanding of any future developmental needs of this church school within the academy trust. Governors and staff take up training opportunities for leadership roles through diocesan training courses. The high level of interaction with Heart Wood C of E Academy Trust has enhanced the reputation and status of this church school. Parents say that the school is very supportive of their requests: issues are dealt with quickly and efficiently. They believe pupils' needs are met and progress is enhanced through additional activities such as Gardening Club. They greatly value the exceptional school and church link and appreciate its strong sense of Christian belonging and identity. As one parent says: *'The ethos on the front door follows through.'*

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