



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Purley C.E. (Controlled) Primary School.

Purley Village
Purley-on-Thames
Berkshire.
RG8 8BG.

Previous SIAMS grade: Outstanding

Diocese: Oxford

Local authority: West Berkshire

Dates of inspection: 21 January 2015

Date of last inspection: March 2010

School's unique reference number: 109971

Head-teacher: Karen Fakes

Inspector's name and number: Maggie Donaldson 767

School context

Purley Church of England Primary school is situated in the small village of Purley-on-Thames. It has recently (September 2013) been re-designated from an infant to a primary school and at present is in the middle of a building project which will accommodate an increased standard number of 110 primary-aged children. Currently, the school has 78 pupils on roll up to Year 4 in three mixed-aged classes and numbers will increase annually until 2017. The majority of pupils are White British and the percentage of children with special educational needs is increasing. A few families attend the local church. The head-teacher was appointed in January 2014.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Purley Primary as a Church of England school are good.

- Christian values define the ethos which has a positive impact on the daily life of the school, on relationships and on the achievement of pupils.
- The strong leadership of the head-teacher which ensures that the development of a clear Christian character is a priority in the school.
- Partnerships, especially with parents, governors and the local church are strong so providing a secure family ethos which supports the children.

Areas to improve

- To provide opportunities for pupils' spiritual development by increasing their involvement in the planning and leading of collective worship.
- To ensure the development of pupils' understanding of the Christian faith at national and global levels.

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

The school ensures that Christian values make a clear contribution to many areas of school life. Relationships across the school are based on Christian values of care, trust and mutual respect. The children are well-behaved, polite and considerate and take good care of the school environment. Pupils support and care for each other and this was well expressed during a discussion with children, one of whom said, 'We all care for each other and work together.' During break-time older pupils were seen to be helping to manage the younger children with a caring and mature approach. Learners' awareness of Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith and of diversity and difference is developing through the increased diversity within the school which allows different cultures to be embraced. In discussions, pupils from other faiths were able to share the importance of light in their own religions. This ensures that the social, moral, spiritual and cultural (SMSC) development of the pupils is good overall. Opportunities for spiritual growth are provided through the broad curriculum and pupils enjoy their learning. Spaces for quiet reflection are limited but this is due to the on-going building work. Children have a good knowledge of Bible stories from their religious education (RE) lessons and can relate some of these to their actions in the daily life of the school. During a discussion pupils were able to point out that, 'The Bible helps us with rules to be a better person', and that the story of the Good Samaritan, tells us to, 'Help people even if we don't like them much'. Parents talk about their appreciation of the school's Christian values and describe how children can link values to Biblical teaching through worship and RE lessons. Christian values are highly visible across all school documents and on the web-site. A section of the prospectus is devoted to Purley's church school status and emphasises what this means in terms of values, worship, prayer, tolerance and respect for other faiths. The school entrance which has a cross, a candle, a collage of the Last Supper and a Bible on display enables visitors to appreciate the distinctive nature of the school. The links between the school and St Mary's Church are good, the rector is a regular visitor, the church is used for some worship during the year and the church hall is currently being used for some lessons during the building work. This enables pupils to gain an understanding of the role of the Christian church in the local community. Pupil's understanding of the Christian faith at a national and global level is less well developed.

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

Collective worship has a significant impact on the school community. Pupils are engaged in the worship and are able to talk with enthusiasm about the stories of Jesus. They understand its importance and can link the Biblical content to values. Children have positive views about the daily act of worship which provides a focal point in the school day and underlines the sense of a close and caring community where they are well cared for. Music is played on entry to the space, (which is usually a class-room), a candle is lit and pupils respond to 'Show us your paths O Lord' with 'and teach us Your ways,' so demonstrating an understanding of Anglican patterns of worship. Pupils listen attentively, answer questions and reflect quietly. An illustration of the Trinity is set out on the whiteboard throughout the worship, attention is brought to it and the children are reminded of its significance. The children sing enthusiastically and respond sensitively to the prayer, some of which is written and led by the pupils. Children and staff appreciate the time for reflection which collective worship provides. However, some children expressed a wish to have more opportunities to lead and to plan the worship as they had recently enjoyed doing this for Christingle. The rector and the head-teacher regularly lead the whole school worship while teachers lead class worship. The church calendar is followed by the "Reverend Freddie Fisher" a soft toy whose vestments are changed using the four liturgical colours through the year. The reasons for changing the colours are discussed with the children so linking these with Christian celebrations and building an understanding of Anglican traditions and practices. Christingle and Harvest services take place in the local church and are led by the rector who, as a regular visitor to the school, is well known to the children.

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

Leaders and managers, including governors, are ensuring that Christian values are providing a secure foundation for the school during this time of change and transition. The vision and strategic thinking of the new head-teacher have secured the school's successful journey over this past year. She has shown great commitment in developing the school's distinctively Christian character which is now becoming more firmly embedded and she has the support of the governors and the whole school community in moving this forward. Governors work closely with the school and provide challenge and support in a positive partnership. Links with the diocese and the local church are contributing positively to the daily life of the school and to the benefit of pupils. The support of the diocesan link advisor and attendance of some staff at training are helping to forge stronger links with other local church schools. Parents are appreciative of the school's Christian foundation, of its family ethos and of the care their children receive. They are welcomed at the school and often provide voluntary support for a variety of school activities. The issues from the previous (SIAS) inspection have now been addressed. Collective worship and RE, linked to Christian values, are contributing to good behaviour and to SMSC. Pupils respond positively to the teaching of RE which is currently being developed by the head-teacher who has introduced more rigorous planning and evaluation of the subject since her recent appointment. This has greatly improved the teaching of the subject which now contributes to the Christian character of the school. A school council has recently been established. Pupils are very proud of this and say that their suggestions are listened to and acted upon.

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