



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

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

### Ruskington Chestnut Street Church of England Primary School

Chestnut Street  
Ruskington  
Sleaford  
Lincolnshire  
NG34 9DL

**Previous SIAMS grade: Outstanding**

**Current inspection grade: Satisfactory**

**Diocese: Lincoln**

Local authority: N/A

Dates of inspection: 3 March 2016

Date of last inspection: 10 June 2011

School's unique reference number: 120693

Headteacher: Laura Suffield

Inspector's name and number: Yvonne Shaw 245

#### School context

Chestnut Street Church of England Primary School is slightly larger than average with 272 pupils on roll. Most are of White British origin and most speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding is below average as is the proportion who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupil mobility is slightly higher than average. Most pupils come from the large village of Ruskington. The school has become a stand-alone academy since the last inspection.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Chestnut Street Church of England Primary School as a Church of England school are satisfactory.

- This inclusive school welcomes and nurtures pupils of all ability and disability.
- Religious Education (RE) makes a positive impact on and is developing pupils' tolerance and respect of other faiths and belief thus enriching the Christian distinctiveness of the school.
- The school's values are known by most and are prominently displayed alongside British Values to foster an understanding of how these values apply to pupils' everyday life.

#### Areas to improve

- Establish regular, rigorous and focused evaluation of the school as a Church of England school.
- Provide governors with timely reports to enable them to hold senior leaders fully to account in providing high quality, distinctively Christian education.
- Explicitly link the school's values to Biblical teaching so that all can articulate that they are Christian as opposed to laudable, shared, human values.
- Introduce greater rigour and regularity in planning, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of acts of worship, and to include pupils in these activities.

**The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is satisfactory at meeting the**

### **needs of all learners**

Chestnut Street is a caring and inclusive community where pupils of all ability and disability are welcomed and nurtured. The Enhanced Resource Provision is meeting the needs of those pupils with profound hearing loss. Core values of friendship, forgiveness, creativity, trust, respect, perseverance and thankfulness are set within a mission statement of 'Care, Believe, Grow'. Most members of the school are able to articulate these values. What is less clear is the extent to which the school's values are founded on the Gospel of Jesus Christ and explicitly Christian rather than shared human values. The school's website is bright and welcoming but it neither makes explicit the Christian foundation nor the basis of the school's values as being rooted in Biblical teaching. Pupils display positive attitudes and good behaviour. There are very few recorded incidents of either bullying, racist or homophobic occurrences. Pupil attainment in statutory tests is broadly in line with national outcomes, however, progress is significantly below that which is expected. Leaders have attributed this to the increase in the proportion of disadvantaged pupils and the increased mobility of pupils in recent years. School based data, as opposed to statutory test outcomes, indicate that currently progress is broadly average for most pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Parents value the work of the staff to ensure each child is supported academically, spiritually, morally, socially and culturally. They articulate that RE lessons have a positive impact on their children's understanding of other cultures and the way they treat each other. A recent visit to a Mosque has been highly effective in further developing pupils' understanding of diversity, faith traditions and cultural differences. Parents whose children have attended other schools speak highly of the sense of care which this school promotes. They attribute this to the Christian foundation of the school. Parents' views do not contribute to monitoring and evaluation of the school as a Church of England school. Attitudes to learning are largely positive and the curriculum provides for pupils to explore spirituality as exemplified through the many displays in school. It is unclear how these experiences are planned or evaluated across the curriculum. Where such planning is clear, the experiences the pupils encounter lead to deeper spiritual development and understanding. Members of the school community express their thoughts about some ways in which the Christian distinctiveness of their school has affected their daily lives and achievements. This is, however, limited. Pupils enjoy school and this is reflected in attendance which is in line with national figures for all pupils and with minimal persistent absences. They talk confidently about their enjoyment of school, where they feel safe and valued. A typical comment from a pupil was, 'We feel safe here, we are well looked after and we know who to turn to if we have a problem.' Pupils are motivated by respect, manifested in the varied charity work undertaken. RE makes a good contribution to the understanding of Christianity and other world faiths. The leadership of the subject is secure and lessons are taught well. The school team recognises the need to take steps to ensure that the school's ethos and Christian values that underpin it are explicit. Clearly rooting these values in Biblical teaching will be significant in their journey to improvement. It will also ensure that all can articulate the distinctively Christian foundation of the school.

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

Collective worship is recognised as important in the life of the school community and is valued by most. Pupils relate some of the themes of collective worship to their daily life when Christian values and Bible stories presented in worship are discussed afterwards. The quality of worship is varied, with pupils enjoying visitors' assemblies and worship in Church the most because they find these exciting. Pupils find whole school worship less enjoyable because in these acts of worship, they are generally passive participants. The lack of emphasis on pupils' personal prayer and reflection within worship restricts their ability to relate Christian values and teaching to their personal spiritual journey. Lack of formal monitoring and evaluation of collective worship by all members of the school community hampers the improvement of the experience pupils have of worship. There is a collective worship council in place but they meet infrequently. They are not involved in the planning, presentation, evaluation and consequent improvement of worship. This means that the focus for development from the previous inspection has not been fully met. There are few occasions for all members of the school community to take on any responsibility for worship, which in turn reduces creativity and variety. Despite long term planning being in place for worship, sometimes visitors are left to plan their own

service which may or may not link to the current theme. Pupils are developing an age appropriate understanding of The Holy Trinity and are becoming increasingly more confident in expressing what it means. Symbolism such as the lighting of a candle and saying a prayer to welcome Christ into the room enhances this. Pupils are not familiar with religious vocabulary such as Eucharist, redemption and salvation. This results in pupils being unable to relate these concepts to the school's values or to their own lives. Major Christian festivals are celebrated, both in school and in church but there is restricted understanding by pupils of Anglican traditions in worship. Pupils and adults supporting school worship hope to engage more regularly in worship in church.

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

The headteacher and staff work as a professional team to ensure every child is valued and nurtured. School values are embedded which ensure all strive to provide the best for every pupil. Whilst these values are embedded, the school does not articulate a Christian distinctiveness as based on the life and teaching of Jesus. This distinctiveness is not made explicit in documentation or on the website. Insufficient emphasis is given to ensuring that all stakeholders recognise that the school's strength comes from its church foundation. Since the last inspection, continuous improvement has not been sustained as a consequence of the absence of robust systems of review and evaluation. This means that a focus for development from the previous inspection has not been fully met. Governors have not held school leaders rigorously to account for the effectiveness and distinctiveness of the school as a Church of England school. This is because of the absence of timely monitoring and evaluation reports. Nevertheless, the effective partnership between the RE and worship leaders is beginning to move RE forward. This is because the leadership of RE is good. Leadership of collective worship is not good because leaders do not know this area well enough. This is a consequence of a lack of monitoring, evaluation and subsequent planned improvement. Staff welcome training provided by the diocese enhancing professional development and potential for further responsibility. Input from local clergy from a variety of churches significantly enhances the pupils' experience and the Christian life of the school. Parents value the work of the school. This is confirmed in school held parental surveys although Ofsted's Parent View is underpopulated at this point. Parents are not surveyed about the distinctive Christian character of the school. The school is working with and are supported by the Lincoln Anglican Academy Trust (LAAT) which demonstrates the capacity to improve. The school meets statutory requirements for RE and collective worship.

SIAMS report March 2016 Ruskington Chestnut Street Church of England Primary School, Ruskington, Sleaford, Lincolnshire NG32 9DL