



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Clover Hill Voluntary Aided Infant and Nursery School

Rawley Road, Bowthorpe, Norwich.
NR5 9AP

Previous SIAMS grade: N/A

Current inspection grade: Outstanding

Diocese: Norwich

Local authority: Norfolk

Dates of inspection: 8 July 2016

Date of last inspection: N/A

School's unique reference number: 140033

Headteacher: Helen Newell

Inspector's name and number: Marion Betts 220

School context

Clover Hill is an average-sized and growing Nursery and Infant school for pupils aged 3 to 7 years. The school is in a socially challenged area of Norwich and the number of children eligible for free school meals is much higher than the national average. The school has a significant minority from Muslim family backgrounds. The school has been awarded the Gold Standard Religious Education Quality Mark (REQM) and leads the local National Association of Teachers of Religious Education (NATRE) group. When the school federated two years ago with a nearby Church of England Junior school it changed its status from a community school to a voluntary aided school. The two schools share an executive headteacher and governing body.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Clover Hill as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The very effective leadership team powerfully promotes the strong Christian vision and values of the school which ensures that policies and practices underlying these are intrinsically woven into the school's daily life.
- A very strong emphasis is placed on the overarching Christian value of "Respect" which ensures an effectively inclusive school ethos of care and support for each other and which positively impacts on the well-being of all.
- Christian values are known well and understood by all the children who strive to live by them and this has a very affirmative effect on their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The motivating use in religious education of the children's own enquiries is highly effective in promoting both their enjoyment and attainment in this subject.

Areas to improve

- Ensure that the school's church school foundation is clearly communicated through the website so that all stakeholders fully understand its Christian distinctiveness.

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

The culture of school life is built around the overarching Christian value of "Respect" which allows the children from a variety of different cultures and religions to flourish within an ethos of very positive relationships. The children understand and are extremely interested in discovering from each other more about the diversities of the school community. They articulated how they strive to achieve respect for all by their "kind hands, kind words, kind thoughts and kind listening". This, and other Christian values, are explored in collective worship and linked explicitly to bible stories or passages. This identifies to adults and children that they are Christian values. Previous values investigated are prominently displayed and revisited and remembered frequently. The children endeavour to demonstrate these values in their behaviours and attitudes and those noticed displaying a Christian value are praised and rewarded. During behaviour management, staff highlight the school's value of "Respect and Forgiveness" as part of their promotion for restorative justice. This is now so embedded within school practices that the children themselves use the same techniques to settle any disagreements. The children are encouraged to reflect on the many valuable learning experiences they are given both within and outside of the school such as the visits to the local wood to discover for themselves the variety of God's creation. The children say that nature should be respected because God made it. The views of the children are sought and acted upon demonstrated by, having learnt about life in Africa, they were enthusiastic that a cow be bought for an African family and decided to sell their art work to achieve this. The school is characterised by praise used effectively, and supportive help to one another, with successes recognised and celebrated. In these ways the school promotes extremely well pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The enterprising learning skills taught provides an age-appropriate structure for children to think for themselves, to collaborate with others, and to build confidence and positive attitudes as they strive to be "the best they can be". This has led to children making very good academic progress. Vulnerable children also attain well because they are helped by a very strong pastoral and learning support team of staff.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship (CW) is regarded by the whole school community as a very important. Staff say that this activity affirms a sense of the school's whole community and provides a welcome reflection time. It is the main way the school derives and understands its value system and all try to model these in their daily school life. CW makes a real difference to children's lives and they explain the values as helping them to make the right choices. Bible stories and scripture passages are used for illustrating the Christian origins of the values, for example to help to explore thankfulness of God's creation, verses from a psalm of praise were used. Children explained that the current value of thankfulness is important because Jesus was thankful for his friends as they are of theirs. Worship has a set pattern of key elements and hymns connect well to the theme. The children enjoy contributing to the visual presentations and sing enthusiastically, all participating in the accompanying actions. Hence singing aids the effectiveness of the worship experience. Themes for CW are also planned around the Christian calendar. The children are very attentive in CW and respectful during the prayer and reflection time. They are encouraged to think about the message and how they can apply this to their own lives and experiences. The local minister regularly leads CW, as do volunteers from the church, and special festivals are celebrated at church. In these ways the children are gaining a good understanding of Anglican traditions and practices. Parents are made aware of the current value with suggested activities for families. Through the recent whole day linked to exploring the Christian concept of the Trinity, using song and craft activities, the children are developing a growing awareness of this Christian belief. Prayer is a big part of the school's daily life with children beginning to understand the importance of prayer within the school's

Christian life. Each class provides a sheltered prayer space which are used well by the children for peaceful reflection. CW is monitored well by the senior leadership and governors and the children's views are regularly sought. These evaluations lead to shaping future planning.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

Religious education (RE) is regarded by all as having high profile within school. This is demonstrated by the children's very good progress in RE which is in line with that achieved in the other core subjects; a generous budget; by the displays of RE work; by the organisation of special RE days and by the priority of its focus for the teachers' professional development. It is led by two highly experienced and enthusiastic specialists who effectively guide and support the other teachers. The RE leaders are strongly supported by the school's leadership team and teaching of this subject is very good. The children say RE is important because they are interested in knowing more about God. They enjoy RE because the learning is linked with creative activities of drama, song, art and craft and also because of the many visits which are undertaken to enrich the children's experiences, such as to the cathedral and the local church trail. The RE curriculum promotes an enquiry approach to learning and children appreciate the opportunities to create their own questions and to discuss together their ideas and opinions. A lesson observed, that took place towards the end of a topic, revealed how the answers to most of their initial questions had been explored and further knowledge gained. When discovering more about other faiths the children and their families from those religions contribute to others' learning. In this way RE enhances the children's debating skills and their growing confidence to interact verbally with each other and express clearly their ideas and knowledge. These skills transfer to other subjects and in these ways RE contributes extremely well to the Christian character of the school and to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. RE is taught for the approved amount of time and Christianity weighting. It is regularly monitored by the school's leadership.

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

The school's headteacher, deputy, and RE subject leaders with the very effective support of the governors, powerfully direct the school's Christian vision both explicitly within policies and implicitly within the practices of the school's daily life. In this way the church school distinctiveness is understood well by all stakeholders and promotes children's achievements in both academic and personal aspects of their lives. The school website however is not clear in explaining the new voluntary aided foundation of the school with emphasis that Clover Hill has now a distinctively Christian status. Governors planned strategically to bring this new status about by partnering, and then federating, with the church junior school. Governors promote future leadership across church schools by giving all staff opportunities of high quality RE professional development as well as that linked with the key Christian principles underlying school life. The school leadership team supports colleagues working in other church schools. Teachers are at present working alongside the diocesan advisor to plan and pilot an EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) RE curriculum. This demonstrates the very positive relationship the school has with the diocese. There is also a strong connection between the school and the minister and congregation members of the local church. All staff strive to model the school's expectations of their role in this Christian community and are very supportive of each other both professionally and personally. Following from the Christian theology of the leadership that everyone is within God's love, positive action is taken by staff to ensure that the worth, respect and well-being of each individual in the school community, is upheld. The governors ensure RE & CW meet the statutory requirements. Parents value the commitment the school has to each individual child; the respect for all linked to the school; the approachability of the staff; and the help and range of support courses the families are offered.

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