



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

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

### St Peter's Church of England (Aided) Primary School, Whetstone

Wale Road  
Whetstone  
Leicester  
LE8 6NJ

**Previous SIAMS grade: Good**

**Current inspection grade: Good**

**Diocese: Leicester**

Local authority: Leicestershire

Dates of inspection: 17 May 2016

Date of last inspection: 11 April 2011

School's unique reference number: 120202

Headteacher: Michael Bailey

Inspector's name and number: Sheila Grice (165)

#### School context

St Peter's Church of England (Aided) Primary School is an average sized school, serving families from its local area in Whetstone. Most pupils are of White British heritage, with a small number of pupils from minority ethnic groups. The proportion of children with special needs or disabilities is just below average and the number of children receiving the pupil premium is also below average. The school has recently received the LA anti-bullying award, Beyond Bullying. The current headteacher has been in post for 5 years.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Peter's as a Church of England school are good

- Leaders and staff are united in promoting a distinctly Christian vision for the school which impacts on all aspects of school life.
- The Christian ethos of the school impacts significantly on relationships between all members of the school community, resulting in a calm, harmonious and safe atmosphere where children thrive.
- Religious education (RE) has a very high profile in the school and it makes a very good contribution to children's spiritual, moral and social education.

#### Areas to improve

- Provide more opportunities for children to be involved in leading and planning worship, in order to further enhance the quality of collective worship.
- Embed the Christian values so that children can confidently relate them to their own lives.
- Ensure foundation governors take an active part in regular monitoring & evaluating this, a church school, in order to secure further improvements in collective worship and the impact of Christian values.

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

St Peter's Church of England (Aided) Primary School is a caring, compassionate and welcoming school where pupils and adults feel valued and cared for within an atmosphere of Christian love and understanding. Staff and governors are united in their understanding of the importance of the school's distinctively Christian character. Children's behaviour and the respect shown towards others are both excellent. Children achieve well academically and clearly enjoy their learning, describing lessons as, 'fun'. Due to their engagement in learning children are making good progress academically, and also in their personal and social development. The wealth of high quality displays in classes and around school affirm that this is a church school. Displays, many of which include verses from the Bible, further promote the school's Christian values and beliefs. Each class learns about a particular Christian value e.g. forgiveness in year 2 and peace in year 6. Whilst they can relate these values to Bible stories, many children have yet to fully articulate how these values affect their daily lives. Adults, however, are very clear how the values impact on children through conflict resolution and children showing forgiveness to each other. They can also explain how compassion is shown when working alongside parents. Each class has an area for reflection and older children value the opportunity to write prayers, which can be shared at the end of the day. Through the wide range of enrichment activities provided, there are good opportunities for children to develop their spiritual, moral and social development. However, their understanding of other faiths needs further development, particularly through the teaching of RE, in order that they fully understand and respect the diversity and difference within other faith communities. There are very strong partnerships with the local churches, particularly St Peter's, which help to promote the school's Christian character. Parents speak very highly of the school and they value the school's distinct Christian ethos and strong sense of community, 'under a Christian banner'.

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

Collective worship is clearly a very important part of the school day. Planning is based around the diocesan themes and closely linked to Biblical stories with full account taken of the Christian calendar. Visitors, including the vicar and other local clergy, enrich the quality of collective worship, and are popular with the children. There is a clear structure within all assemblies which enables children to become engaged with the worship. A picture, alongside a Bible quote or saying, provides an opportunity for reflection at the beginning of the act of worship. Following a welcome liturgy, to which children respond, a candle is lit. Children take it in turns to nominate someone to light the candle. Assembly ends with a prayer, a song and a further liturgy. It is clear from the children's responses that this structure really enables them to understand the importance of reflection, prayer and song in worship. Children's understanding of the Holy Trinity is developing well and children can confidently talk about God the Father 'as a solid rock in our lives'. St Peter's parish church is used to celebrate special assemblies regularly throughout the year. The most recent service based around Pentecost followed a week of class work focusing on the Holy Spirit. Children spoke confidently about the Holy Spirit, 'who we can't see but we know he's there, because of the way people behave and the things they do'. Year 4 pupils had written some beautiful, very thoughtful poems called, 'Before the Spirit came' which they shared at the Pentecost service. The leader for collective worship has ensured that worship is continually improving by increasing opportunities for reflection and raising the profile of singing through the introduction of modern, lively songs which children clearly enjoy. Their singing is a joy to listen to because the children sing so enthusiastically. Formal, written monitoring of collective worship, by staff and children, has identified the need for more interactive assemblies which fully engage all children.

**The effectiveness of the religious education is good**

Religious education has a very high profile within the curriculum and planning follows the Leicestershire Agreed Syllabus. The majority of pupils in each year are working at age related

expectations or above as a result of good quality teaching. Monitoring of RE lessons by the headteacher and RE leader provide insightful comments to aid teachers in their efforts to ensure all teaching becomes outstanding. Children are achieving a good understanding of Christianity and their understanding of other major world religions is developing. Children are developing skills of empathy, comparison and personal reflection, through work covering the 'Big Questions'. The initiation of RE days and weeks throughout the year provide the opportunity for more in depth learning. Children are fully engaged in their learning, speaking very positively about their RE lessons which, 'are enjoyable, make me think much more deeply and help us understand the Bible'. The extremely enthusiastic, pro-active RE leader has a very good understanding of the strengths and areas for development in RE. Teaching staff value his support and encouragement as well as the practical help always offered. The RE leader is also a lead teacher within the Local Authority and he remains up to date with all the latest developments, ensuring staff are well placed to introduce the new RE agreed syllabus next term. Effective monitoring has resulted in significant improvements in RE since the last inspection. Staff are now confident with their RE assessments, differentiation has improved and excellent use of questioning enables pupils to think much more deeply. Feedback and marking is very effective and pupils are challenged to respond to marking. One child commented that her teacher's comment had 'really made me think about tolerance towards different religious practices'. Assessments are made which inform both planning and teaching and learning and internal monitoring has identified that children now need to be more involved in thinking about what they need to do to improve their learning.

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

There is a clear Christian vision and commitment to the school's church status by the headteacher, with strong support from the staff team. Leaders at all levels promote and acknowledge the school's Christian vision, which is focused on, 'Love of Learning: Learning to Love: Led by Faith'. Parents value the 'massive difference made by the headteacher' who models Christian values and has developed a school where children, staff and parents benefit from the 'calm, happy atmosphere'. The school development plan always includes a priority relating to the church status of this school, consequently improvements continue to be made. Leaders have a very good understanding of the strengths as a church school and have identified action needed to secure further improvements. Full advantage is taken of training opportunities for staff and governors which results in confidence and a secure understanding of national and local priorities. The RE leader is given good support to fulfil his responsibilities and he is well placed to secure further improvements. Although some evaluation has taken place recently by governors regarding the Christian character of the school and collective worship, governors have yet to fully embed their self- evaluation of this, a church school, in order to contribute fully to the school's self-evaluation strategies. Very good partnerships exist between the school, St Peter's church and other village churches. However, links with different faith communities are underdeveloped. The issues from the previous inspection relating to improvements in RE have been very successfully addressed. Greater involvement by children in planning and leading collective worship remains an area for improvement. Staff and governors are committed to continue to develop this as a church school. Once governors are fully involved with self-evaluation of collective worship and the school's Christian ethos, they will be well placed to effectively hold leaders to account for the school's effectiveness of this church school.