



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Weavers Close Church of England Primary School

Alexander Avenue,
Earl Shilton,
Leicestershire.
LE9 7AH

Diocese: Leicester

Local authority: Leicestershire

Dates of inspection: 21st May 2014

Date of last inspection: 6th May 2008

School's unique reference number: 139200

Headteacher: Julie Hickinbottom

Inspector's name: Hilary Painter

School context

Weavers Close Church of England Primary School is one of three primary schools serving Earl Shilton, a small industrial town in South West Leicestershire. There are 223 pupils on roll, predominantly of white British descent. The school serves an economically depressed area with relatively high unemployment. Take-up of free school meals is above the national average. The school converted to sponsored academy status in 2013 as part of the Leicester Academies Charitable Trust.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Weavers Close as a Church of England school are good.

- Christian values are apparent in relationships at all levels, nurturing parents as well as pupils.
- The leadership team has a clear vision of the school as a church school, living by Christian values.
- The school is an active member of a wider, caring Christian community.

Areas to improve

- Promotion of the distinctive Christian character of the school
- Greater involvement of pupils in the planning, monitoring and evaluation of collective worship
- The regular formal evaluation of the school as a church school

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

The impact of Christian values is apparent, providing a positive atmosphere in which all children can develop. Christian symbols and displays are prominent. Parents say their children love coming to school and ancillary staff comment how children help each other and make

newcomers welcome, attributing this to the school's Christian character. Parents value the headteacher being at the gate each morning to greet people, enabling them to raise concerns in an informal way. Behaviour is generally good and there is a well-developed system of rewards and sanctions. Children speak of their enthusiasm for the reward system and their pride when awarded a 'special' school T-shirt. They are learning to use the question 'What would Jesus do?' as a strategy in difficult situations. Poor behaviour is dealt with quickly and sensitively. Attendance is good, with a system in place to follow up any absence from the first day. Children make good progress in both key stages. The school runs a variety of courses, some with outside certification, to help and support parents, enabling them to take a more active role in their children's learning. Parents welcome the opportunity to improve their skills. There is support for families from Outreach and Family Support workers, who work closely with the school. RE is taught using the diocesan framework and RE focus weeks enable pupils to consider topics in greater depth. Many pupils are able to express their thoughts and ideas clearly. One pupil says he likes the colourful mural of the Cross on the staircase, 'because the bright colours show that Jesus isn't dead, he's always with us.' The school has links with Burundi and Nepal, which are enabling pupils to develop their understanding of Christianity in a wider world.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

The collective worship is structured using the Diocesan schedule of themes, linked to Christian values and the church year. Collective worship is a focal point of the school day. Children speak positively about what it means to them with comments such as, 'Prayer helps me.' Year 6 pupils maintain the 'Weavers Worship' board and prepare the focus table with the Cross, a candle and ribbons of the appropriate liturgical colour. Children feel comfortable writing prayers, which are used during worship. Worship enables children to link Christian values to Jesus' teachings and discussion continues in the classroom. All pupils in year 2 and above have their own well-used Bibles and speak knowledgeably about Bible stories. The development of understanding of the Trinity is supported through worship, but remains an area for development for most children. Parents are welcome at many acts of worship, particularly when they include celebrations of achievement. Worship takes place in church at Harvest, Christmas, Easter and the Leavers' Service. These services are well attended by parents and the wider school community. Collective worship is planned by the worship leaders (staff, the Rector, ministers from other denominations) and generally follows Anglican traditions. The collective worship folder contains a wide range of material used and responses from pupils, but the monitoring and evaluation is not evident. A foundation governor regularly reports on collective worship but an evaluation of the impact of collective worship is not evident.

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

A strength of the school is that the headteacher, management and foundation governors are keenly aware of the importance of the Christian values of a church school. These values are clearly embedded in the ethos of the school. A member of the support staff said, 'It's how we do things here.' Within this ethos, pupils make good progress at Weavers Close, 90% making expected progress in reading and maths and 86% in writing. The school also succeeds in being a stable focal point in pupils' lives. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is enhanced by the wider curriculum including a breakfast club, after-school activities, involvement in charities and a range of day and residential visits. However, the distinctive Christian character of the school is not made explicit and the Christian values are not clearly articulated, therefore they do not underpin the planning, monitoring and evaluation process. The governing body has not taken effective steps to monitor the school as a church school. Senior staff and governors have attended courses organised by the diocese, the authority or the National Society with the aim of increasing their knowledge and skill level. Partnerships with the local church, the Leicester Academies Charitable Trust and the diocese are valued.

The school works closely with the incumbent, who visits regularly and monitors and evaluates RE. The school also works closely with the School Liaison Officer and the Family Outreach Worker, providing valuable support to families.

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