

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Radley Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Church Road
Radley
Abingdon
OX14 3QF

Previous SIAMS grade: Good

Diocese: Oxford

Local authority: Oxfordshire

Date of inspection: 21 November 2014

Date of last inspection: December 2009

School's unique reference number: 123157

Headteacher: Grace Slater

Inspector's name and number: Lizzie McWhirter 244

School context

Radley Primary School serves the village of Radley and its surrounding area. The parish church is adjacent to this small school and is very much seen as an extension of the school, integral to its life and work. Currently there are 101 pupils on roll, who are almost all from a White British background. In addition there are 22 pupils who attend the school nursery on site. Very few pupils have free school meals or receive pupil premium funding. The headteacher has been in post since September 2013.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Radley as a Church of England school are good

- The strong sense of an inclusive and nurturing family community which is grounded in Christian values.
- The focus on each child as an individual in this welcoming Christian environment which develops positive attitudes amongst its pupils who become confident independent learners who achieve well.
- The close partnerships between church and school, which are valued by everyone, whether or not they are members of the local Christian community.

- Strong governance which regularly monitors and evaluates the school's Christian character.

Areas to improve

- Extend opportunities to all pupils to lead and evaluate collective worship in order to develop pupils' leadership skills and sense of ownership.
- Establish a lunchtime forum for pupils and adults to discuss together key Christian concepts as well as the deep questions of faith and life in order to enhance depth in their learning and support their spiritual development.

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

Radley Primary School provides a very positive learning environment for all its pupils, who are proud to belong, feel valued and achieve highly. This is because this small, rural school is an inclusive, happy and family community, rooted in the Christian faith. The whole school community lives out the school's chosen Christian values, which support pupils' spiritual, moral, cultural and social development. Pupils speak of the value of trust in the context of Moses and explain that it takes 'years to build, seconds to break and forever to do again'. Attendance is above the national average and exclusions are rare. This is because each day is regarded as a fresh new start when the slate is wiped clean, reflecting Christian forgiveness. Any children needing support are integrated into small working groups. All children are treated equally, with the school striving for high standards. Each child is viewed as if through the eyes of God as having equal importance and encouraged to reach their own potential, regardless of the impact on figures. As a result, achievement is very good in a culture where all achievement is celebrated. Pupils feel able to make a positive contribution to school life and experience the Christian values of service and generosity through their fundraising. Such values enhance their understanding of the world and their responsibility to others. This is enhanced by the school's link with Gambia. Pupils show respect for the diverse community they belong to. This is supported by visits to places of worship belonging to other faith traditions as part of religious education [RE]. Pupils show good understanding of church, synagogue and mosque life. They also show understanding about beliefs in action and how health care projects support parts of Africa where there is no health care. Radley pupils show good religious literacy and have a very good understanding of the Christian narrative. Pupils speak of salvation in their own words, saying that 'Jesus grew up to be a man and he saved the world'. However, pupils say they would welcome more time and space devoted to discussing key Christian concepts and the deep questions they want to ask.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Radley pupils have a good attitude to collective worship because the quality of worship offered to them is making a real difference in their lives. It contributes greatly to their spiritual development. All staff attend worship, which is recognised as an important part of the day as it helps to build community. Pupils and parents speak highly of worship, and are able to make links between Jesus' teaching in the Bible and everyday situations. Key festivals are celebrated in the parish church next door to the school and this is much appreciated by pupils and parents alike. Some pupils say church worship 'makes a massive difference' to the worshipping life of the school. Many pupils especially praise worship led by their vicar and the local 'Open The Book' team, saying 'they work really hard and they love what they do'. They speak of how they remember the Bible stories which are acted out. Good examples include The Exodus when 'Moses trusted in God and God trusted in Moses'. Pupils are able to articulate the mystery of The Holy Trinity in their own words. They speak of The Trinity as 'God, Jesus and The Holy Spirit. You could think of it as three pieces of a puzzle. It's one puzzle but three pieces. In the word trinity tri means three and unity means united'. Pupils value prayer and speak of forgiveness using the example of Zacchaeus' life being transformed and how 'he

changed a lot' when forgiven by Jesus. They also value times for personal prayer, using reflection areas and finding quiet spaces, both indoors and outdoors. School council pupils regularly lead worship every Friday in school which is much enjoyed by all. Pupils welcome the opportunity to extend worship outdoors to remind them of 'God in the forest who created trees and plants'. They discuss worship with the school councillors. However, foundation governors and pupils alike recognise the importance of sharing their viewpoints as well as extending pupils opportunities to lead worship. In all these ways, the quality and integrity of worship is continually enhancing pupils' spiritual development and developing the school's ethos.

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

The school's Christian foundation is effectively promoted by the headteacher, supported by her staff and governors. It is also welcomed by pupils and parents so that the Anglican foundation is secure and celebrated. Staff and governors live out the school's Christian values in a spirit of love and trust. Parents speak highly of how their children's needs and abilities are well met and how the wellbeing of pupils is given the highest priority. Collective worship and RE have an equally high status, as the headteacher holds these two important portfolios. Parents praise the excellent communication between home and school. They speak highly of how approachable and available all the staff are and how they are always at the door at the beginning and end of the day. Parents go on to cite that this is a 'very nurturing school' and say how 'the teachers have a very good measure of where the children are at each stage and how well the children adjust academically and socially'. Areas from the last inspection have been addressed, showing how the school has moved on, with clear priorities for action. The school's distinctive Christian character is discussed regularly at governing body meetings. This raises its status with all governors who are committed to monitoring the performance of the school and using this monitoring to embed the school's Christian values. Foundation governors go the extra mile in providing support for pupils and staff alike. A good example of this is how they provide drama coaching for school productions. Staff in this small, rural school take on many roles and responsibilities and benefit from the training and support offered to them by the diocese. Community links with the village and with Radley College are strong, especially through many of the parents. This raises the school's profile and shows how the school works hard to reflect its Christian foundation. It is committed to working in partnership with the church and village community and serving the children and families of Radley.