



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

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

### **Puddletown Church of England Voluntary Controlled First School**

Dorchester Road  
Puddletown  
Dorchester  
Dorset  
DT2 8FZ

**Previous SIAMS grade: Good**

**Current inspection grade: Good**

**Diocese: Salisbury**

Local authority: Dorset

Dates of inspection: 26 February 2016

Date of last inspection: 3 March 2011

School's unique reference number: 113765

Head teacher: Daniel Hunwick

Inspector's name and number: Revd David Hatrey 844

#### **School context**

Puddletown Church of England First School is a smaller than the average school with 149 pupils divided into five classes. It is situated in Puddletown and children come from the village and surrounding villages and hamlets. The proportion of children with special educational needs is broadly in line with national averages as is the number receiving pupil premium funding. Since the last inspection the school is now housed in modern buildings. The school became part of the Greenwood Tree Academy Trust in April 2015 together with four other local schools.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Puddletown First School as a Church of England school is good.**

- The school's Christian values, and its distinctive ethos, contribute to the high quality of relationships.
- The strong and sensitive leadership team have a clear Christian vision for the school.
- Children confidently use prayer to help support them in their lives.
- Religious education (RE) challenges children by asking questions which deepens their understanding.

#### **Areas to improve**

- Identify opportunities for spiritual enrichment across all subject areas so that an innovative range of experiences supports children's growing spiritual awareness.
- Provide support and opportunities for children to plan and lead worship so that they have greater ownership of the way that worship messages are explored.
- Extend the children's experiences of a range of worship styles by including a greater variety of worship leaders.

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

The school has identified responsibility, acceptance, forgiveness and justice as four core Christian values which together with the school's ethos make a significant impact on the lives and choices of the children. Children recognise that these values create a safe, affirming Christian community. They articulate what these values look like in their daily lives and talk about them at home with their families. The children's understanding of the links between values and Biblical teaching is not always evident. The school's vision is that each child has the potential to be a light like Jesus, a light in the world. Highly valued shining light awards are given where children show these values in action. However, the school's evaluation has identified that justice is not yet fully understood. The quality of relationships within the school is one of its strengths; children see one another as a light. As a result, bullying and name calling are rare. Children remind others of these values and how they should behave. Any behaviour issue is followed up in the same way, with reference to the values. Staff model these relationships between themselves and with the children. Children have a high regard for the staff. Religious education engages children, who respond enthusiastically when challenged, which prompts deeper thinking. They wrestle with 'big questions' and draw upon their moral understanding and Biblical knowledge to express their ideas and thoughts. They are given time to explore what they believe and why they do so. The school is improving the development of spirituality across the school. Reflection days, established over a number of years, make valuable contributions to the experiences offered. Children are enthusiastic about them because they share ideas in mixed age groups and have time to consider how they can best reflect and express these ideas with a developing understanding of the language involved. There were excellent examples of children using video clips to express their thoughts. The school has not yet fully identified opportunities to explore spirituality across all curriculum areas, ensuring that previous experiences are built upon. Children recognise that others can hold different views from their own, They listen with respect to the views of others because they realise that these are important to them. Children are aware of other faith communities and talk about similarities and differences between these and Christianity. There is a growing understanding of Christianity as a multi-world faith.

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

Leadership of collective worship is very good and has led to significant improvements. Planning for each term weaves together themes from the Church's year and the school's core values. Recent teaching on forgiveness has changed how children now say sorry with greater sensitivity. The church, parents and children's committee undertakes evaluation of collective worship as do older children. Children explore their understanding of the message of collective worship and how they could use it in their daily lives. Further changes have seen weekly class worship include distinct times for reflection. Children say that the questions they focus upon and the use of music and pictures prompts their thinking. They have a good understanding of Jesus and His significance within Christian worship. Discussions in class show a wide knowledge of His life and teaching, which they are confident to talk about. The vicar's worship draws upon Biblical material to support this. Prayer is developed well, with the youngest children saying thank you for all they see. They see this as a natural way of talking with God. Children say that they are able to share their thoughts with God, whilst older children include praying about famines or wars, using prayerful language. Children say prayers spontaneously for worship and then write these placing them on the prayer tree. Collective worship is regarded as a special occasion for all to share with God. Children enjoy participating, using Anglican greetings at the start and end of these times. The significance of the main Christian festivals is understood, with children answering such questions as, "Is sharing presents the best way of celebrating Christmas?" with a depth of insight. Some children see the link between Biblical teaching and examples from their own lives. The range worship styles are limited which has an impact on the quality of the children's experiences and how they enrich their understanding of worship. At present the children do not regularly plan and lead worship.

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

The headteacher and assistant headteacher have a clear vision for the school as a church school, lived out through its values. They are passionate and dedicated to this work. Rigorous and robust monitoring of each child's progress ensures that children make at least good, and often better, progress. Data suggests that attainment by the time they leave the school is above expectations. Good support for disadvantaged children through a range of interventions enables them to make progress. Staff are skilled in meeting a diversity of needs, nurturing children's well-being through small group work, enhancing self-esteem and confidence. The church, parents and children's committee reviews the Christian ethos of the school, undertaking a detailed review of its core values which has accurately identified strengths and areas to develop further. This has not yet been extended to evaluate the school's provision for spirituality and its impact. Previous inspection targets have been effectively addressed with the school sharing its Christian values and distinctiveness with the community. The feedback it receives from this indicates that its work is increasingly valued. Progress since the last inspection is very evident in the embedded Christian values and the quality of care and provision for children. The school makes good use of Diocesan training, particularly in developing the quality of teaching and learning in RE. This is also evident in the understanding of spirituality which is continuing to be developed. Valuable links with local schools draw upon their expertise, as well as offering their skills in return. A rich relationship with the local church is firmly established. Christian festivals are shared and enjoyed by parents and the local community. The vicar's contribution to collective worship is valued by the children. She has done much to shape reflection days including promoting contributions from church members working alongside children. Foundation governors challenge the school, for example ensuring that the collective worship policy is both inclusive and yet reflects Christian principles. Parents commend the school highly. They appreciate that the school's values have a strong impact on the lives of their children. They recognise the welcome and care shown by the staff. Parents value the opportunity to discuss questions that their children come home with concerning matters of faith and belief. The school has created a calm, caring, Christian community.

SIAMS report February 2016 Puddletown CE VC First School Dorchester Dorset DT2 8RY