

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

### Langafel (Voluntary Controlled) Church Of England Primary School

Main Road  
Longfield  
DA3 7PW

**Diocese: Rochester**

Local authority: Kent

Dates of inspection: 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2014

Date of last inspection: 15<sup>th</sup> March 2011

School's unique reference number: 118711

Headteacher: Mrs Catherine Woodbine

Inspector's name and number: Mr Steven Gallears

#### School context

Langafel is a large Church of England school located in a semi rural setting and serves a wide geographical area. Currently there are 273 children on roll. The school has an above average number of pupils with special needs, including a specialist autism provision for 17 statemented children. The school is closely linked to St Mary Magdalene Church, Longfield. Approximately 5% of children come from families who are members of the local parish church but some attend other Christian churches and belong to other faith groups.

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

- The headteacher has a clear Christian vision for her school underpinned by a series of Christian values. She is passionate about unlocking and nurturing the God-given talents of all children.
- Collective worship is an important part of school life and pupils understand the significance of this for their lives.
- Religious Education (RE) is well led and supported by the headteacher and governing body. It makes a significant contribution to the school's Christian distinctiveness and to the pupils' spiritual development.

#### Areas to improve

- Embed the core Christian values of the school by involving all stakeholders in this process.
- Increase opportunities for prayer beyond collective worship by further developing classroom prayer spaces and creating an accessible communal area for reflection.
- Involve all stakeholders in the planning, delivery and evaluation of collective worship.
- Work closely with all parents so that they have a clear and explicit understanding of the school's Christian values.

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

The school has been on a journey to re-establish its Christian identity and distinctiveness. A set of Christian values have been established and are in the process of being embedded with all stakeholders. At present, stakeholders can articulate these values and can link them to their daily lives. Attainment has improved significantly in the last year and behaviour observed was good. The pupils relate their improved behaviour to their understanding of the school's Christian values. This is reinforced by teachers using the values in lessons. Teachers use very positive behaviour management strategies based around forgiveness and reconciliation which encourage and foster good behaviour. The development of a reflection room for pupils who have not followed the school's behaviour code is an example of this compassionate practice. The school is proud of its fully inclusive nature; all of God's children are treated individually and are encouraged to develop their talents regardless of their starting point. There is ample evidence in pupils' RE books that the subject contributes to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development and helps to shape the school's Christian character. Pupils have opportunities to learn about Christianity and other world faiths as well as developing their own spirituality through probing questions and activities in RE. It is clear that those of faith and those with no faith are included and that their beliefs are valued. In a year 5/6 lesson, pupils had opportunities to reflect on the Trinity and to decide what this means to them in their lives. This provoked much discussion on big theological questions. Fostering and developing existing links with local and international schools has started to encourage a deeper understanding of diversity.

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

A comprehensive and clear collective worship policy is in place and provides evidence of regular and varied worship. The worship observed showed evidence of good pupil engagement and behaviour. Pupils are able to articulate what it means to them and they value this time. Pupils are able to take the messages and the Biblical teachings of worship and act upon them in their daily lives. There are clear links between worship and the school's emerging set of values. The attendance of all pupils, including those from the autism unit, is indicative of the school's inclusion policy which extends throughout the life of the community. Worship is distinctly Anglican, with a set pattern with which the pupils are familiar and in which they are able to participate. The themes of worship are designed to impact on the pupil's spiritual development although this is still a work in progress in terms of coherence and evidence of impact on all members of the community. There is pupil engagement and involvement in the planning and delivery of worship (including the work of the Leading Lights and Treasure Seekers groups) but this has the potential for increased impact in the future. There are ample opportunities for pupils to pray in a formal setting as part of worship. However, there are limited opportunities for pupils to pray in informal settings. Work on the school environment to promote pupils' spiritual development (as recommended in the last SIAS inspection) needs further attention. However, it is clear that pupils generally understand the significance and importance of prayer. As a year 1 pupil stated "talking to God is a way to help us get to know him". Leaders regularly monitor worship. This has resulted in a clear process of evaluation of practice and consequent changes where necessary. However, this does not yet regularly involve children and parents.

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

The headteacher clearly articulates and promotes a clear and distinctly Christian vision within the school community. Her vision of an embedded set of Christian values which supports all pupils is well on its way to fruition. Sound self evaluation leading into school improvement has resulted in better attainment and behaviour around the school. The headteacher clearly knows the strengths and limitations of her school and has a clear plan to develop its Christian distinctiveness. There is ample evidence of effective leadership by the members of the governing body. Although relatively new, they act as a support to the headteacher but are also critical friends. They visit the school regularly. They have a clear strategic vision for the school as a Christian community and have taken advantage of various training opportunities to support this. They acknowledge a need to involve all stakeholders in taking this vision forward. The school has established effective links with a local partnership of Anglican schools which give the school a focused and appropriate support network. The local parish priest has developed solid links with the school, often leading worship and is sometimes supporting the RE department. Links between the school and parish are also developing. Parents interviewed were incredibly supportive of the school and acknowledge the rapid improvements made in the last few years. They particularly focused on the caring and loving nature of the school and they recognised that this finds its roots in its Christian distinctiveness. However, there was limited evidence that the school has formally engaged with all parents about the school's Christian character and ethos. The RE leader has a clear grasp and understanding of her subject. She makes good use of diocesan training and support, and has the full support of the headteacher. She is fully aware of the strengths and weaknesses of RE in the school following effective and robust monitoring. The arrangements for RE and collective worship meet statutory requirements.

SIAMS report [October 2014] [Langafel VC Primary] [DA3 7PW]