

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Eton Wick Church of England Voluntary Controlled First School

Sheepcote Road
Eton Wick
Berkshire
SL4 6JB

Previous SIAMS grade: Satisfactory

Current inspection grade: Good

Diocese: Oxford

Local authority: Windsor and Maidenhead

Dates of inspection: 9 June 2015

Date of last inspection: 19 January 2011

School's unique reference number: 109998

Headteacher: Rob Harris

Inspector's name and number: Jenny Earp 288

School context

Eton Wick School is a small village school with a diverse, multi-cultural community close to the town of Windsor, serving 170 children from the village and surrounding areas. The school is part of a three-tier system, with most children transferring to one of the four Windsor middle schools at the end of Year 4. The school has close links with the local community, neighbouring church schools and the Windsor School Network. The building is well maintained and the grounds offer a rich resource for outdoor learning and spiritual development.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Eton Wick First School as a Church of England school are good

- The Christian values programme has a positive impact on the life and work of the school, including pupil behaviour, learning and standards of achievement
- Strong and supportive links with the church help nourish pupils' knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith
- The strong leadership and Christian vision of the headteacher provides a drive for improvement that is shared by all staff and governors

Areas to improve

- Formalise assessment procedures in religious education (RE) in order to assess attainment in the subject more effectively
- Establish links with Christian communities in other parts of the world to strengthen pupils' understanding of the world-wide church
- Provide opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of the Trinity in order to enhance their spiritual development and knowledge of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit

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

Eton Wick School is a happy place where the school's Christian character makes a good contribution to the academic development of pupils. For example the most recent end of Early Years assessment shows that 71% of children achieved a good level of development, in line with national expectations. The school's progress data indicates that the vast majority of pupils at the school make expected progress with a number of children making more than expected progress across the curriculum. Gaps in achievement between different groups are closing and attendance rates are rising. The wider curriculum affords some opportunities for Christian values to be explored in other subjects other than religious education. For instance, pupils take part in initiatives such as the Spirited Arts competition and teachers plan enjoyable opportunities for pupils to develop their spirituality across the wider curriculum. The school's Christian values of friendship, compassion, wisdom, thankfulness, respect and honesty are embedded in the life of the school. These values, introduced after extensive consultation with all stakeholders, underpin the Christian ethos of the school. A Year 4 pupil could name all the Christian values and explain each in considerable detail. Another child remarked, 'School is fun and the rules here make sense'. Initiatives to promote spiritual development, such as the prayer trail and prayer spaces contribute to the wellbeing of all pupils regardless of ability or background. Pupils are able to link values to the Bible and to Jesus' teachings and feel at ease expressing their beliefs, whether they have faith or not and as a result they have a respect for diversity. Relationships and behaviour are excellent and are based on Christian friendship, fellowship and trust. An example of this can be seen in the way the school's 'Golden Promises' are used effectively to show pupils how to behave and act towards others. Parents speak of the way their children love coming to school and how newcomers are made to feel very welcome as part of the school community. As a result of actions put in place following a recent audit, the school supports the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) of pupils very well. A wide variety of sporting activities and extra-curricular clubs also contribute to the pupils' social and cultural development. The Christian character promotes an understanding of and respect for diverse communities. A good example of this is the way in which the school organised a 'Faith and Cultures' day, which celebrated faiths and religions represented in the local community, an event that was very well supported by parents. Religious education makes a good contribution to the Christian character of the school and is well led and managed by an experienced RE leader, who contributed to the writing of the Berkshire RE Agreed Syllabus. Pupils are excited and challenged by religious education, but although planning and teaching is good, standards of attainment are not clear because the subject is not yet formally assessed. Pupils can share their own faith and beliefs, making links between what they have learnt in RE with their own experiences.

The impact of collective worship on the school

Collective worship promotes distinctive Christian values for pupils very effectively and has a positive impact on the lives of the whole school community. Worship is planned well and its themes are based on the school's Christian values, which make a powerful contribution in defining pupils' attitudes towards school life. Bible stories are used to highlight the values and bring them to life, reflecting children's own experiences. Pupils are engaged well during collective worship and are familiar with different Anglican liturgical greetings and responses, as well as Christian symbolism. Creative delivery, using imaginative visual prompts and drama, engages pupils' interest and contributes to their understanding of the message or learning. This was evidenced in a good act of worship about King David, which took place on the day of the inspection. All pupils and adults present joined in together to sing the 'Eton Wick Golden Promises' song, with obvious enjoyment and great enthusiasm. A candle, an open Bible and a cross, placed on a worship table adorned by a beautifully hand-made cloth, provide a focal point which is unmistakably Christian. Family assemblies on Fridays ensure all members of the school community are included in worship and celebration. Prayer holds an important place in the life of the school and pupils are proud to show the prayers they have written for the Prayer Trail

around the inside and outside of the building. The Prayer Trail was blessed during a recent visit by the Bishop of Buckingham, an event recalled eagerly by the children. Each classroom has a reflection area and prayer corner used by pupils for quiet and reflective moments, opportunities that the children say they enjoy. All major Christian festivals are celebrated both at church and in school, creating an understanding of the church calendar and festivals. Pupils say they particularly enjoy taking part in the Christmas and Easter workshops held in the church. The vicar from St. John the Baptist Church visits regularly and takes an active role in the spiritual life of the school. She leads worship, together with other Christians from the local community. Pupils say they 'love the Open the Book' sessions led by Reverend La and her team. Special services are also held at the church, at which parents say they are made to feel welcome and are comfortable taking part. Visits to the church, which is adjacent to the school, give pupils further opportunities to become familiar with Anglican practice. All teaching staff attend and lead collective worship, thus ensuring that leaders are prepared for future leadership across church schools. There are good systems for monitoring and evaluating the impact of collective worship, both by staff and children. A 'Big Questions Board', offers a unique opportunity for pupils to ask questions that are important or puzzling to them such as, 'How can God see us?' and 'Can God be angry?' The foundation governors, clergy and worship council often use Bible quotations to help the children find the answers to their big questions. A real strength is the 'Worship Council', consisting of a group of pupils and a teacher, who meet weekly to plan and evaluate collective worship. This group represent the views of all the learners at the school very well. Pupils are developing an understanding of the Trinity, but cannot always articulate this fully.

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

Leaders and management articulate and promote a vision based on distinctively Christian values. This can be seen in all the school's documentation and website, where the school's Christian foundation is highlighted clearly. For instance, the school's mission statement informs parents that 'the Christian values that are acquired here will provide children with a firm foundation for the rest of their lives'. The school's rigorous monitoring programme ensures that the needs of all learners are met and governors are able to evaluate the school's Christian distinctiveness effectively. Collective worship and RE are both well led and informed by Christian values that contribute to pupils' good behaviour and attitudes. This impacts on pupils' understanding of Christianity as a world faith, whilst at the same time encouraging an appreciation of diversity. Development of staff as leaders in a church school is effective, with clear benefits for the current leaders. The mutual trust and respect shared by the headteacher, governors and staff, informs and reflects every decision made. Partnerships with parents, the church and the wider community are good, but there are, as yet, no global links. The school recognises the need to work towards developing stronger partnerships with the wider and global community. Parents are actively involved in school life and attendance at parent consultations and weekly family assemblies is good. The Parent Council group, in particular, works with the headteacher to improve the provision at the school for all children. Parents are justifiably proud of the school and say they are very well informed through a weekly newsletter. One grandparent said that she was always pleased to see that the prayer from the Friday worship was printed every week in the newsletter, something others parents noticed and appreciated. Parents believe there have been some real improvements at the school in recent years and say this is mainly due to the dedication and commitment of the headteacher. The school supports many charities, including the Samaritans' purse shoebox appeal, Windsor Foodshare and Slough Foodbank. This enables pupils to learn the importance of giving and the value of stewardship. The arrangements for RE and collective worship meet statutory requirements. The focus for development points from the previous inspection have been revisited and effective actions have taken place, such as the formation of a worship council and the implementation of effective self-evaluation strategies by the leadership and management team.