



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

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

**Amesbury Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School**  
**Kitchener Road**  
**Amesbury**  
**Salisbury**  
**Wilts**  
**SP4 7AX**

**Previous SIAS grade: Good**

**Current SIAMS grade: Outstanding**

**Diocese: Salisbury**

Local authority: Wiltshire

Dates of inspection: 10 November 2015

Date of last inspection: 31 January 2011

School's unique reference number: 131215

Headteacher: Yvonne Morrison

Inspector's name and number: Marcia Headon 761

### School context

Amesbury Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School is a larger than average school of 370 pupils. It takes children from the locality and military bases nearby. The biggest pupil group is of white British heritage and the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is very low. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and physical disabilities is above national averages, as is the proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for additional funding. The school has a nurture centre for pupils with severe social, emotional and attachment disorders or those permanently excluded from other schools.

### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Amesbury Primary as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The innovative development of the nurture centre, based on Christian values has ensured the needs of vulnerable pupils are met in an outstanding manner.
- The excellent relationships which exist within the school built on trust and respect enable pupils to develop into compassionate and caring young people.
- The distinctive Christian values which are strongly embedded have a huge impact on the school's work and in pupils' attitudes and actions.

### Areas to improve

- Involve pupils more in leading collective worship so they may extend their understanding of worship and deepen their own spirituality.
- Extend the evaluation of collective worship to include staff, governors and adults who lead worship.
- Develop pupils' understanding of the Trinity.

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

The Christian values of respect, compassion and friendship drive the work of the school. Pupils live these out in their everyday lives. They are kind and caring stating this is because the values help them to keep on track and that remembering the values helps them to make informed choices as Jesus did and to follow his example. The pupils know the links between the values and many Bible stories, for example talking with confidence about Ruth and Naomi and compassion and friendship. The school's policies are fully based on the values for example the anti-bullying policy stresses forgiveness and care for all. The school meets the needs of vulnerable learners exceptionally well. In its nurture centre it is outstanding at helping those children who are in difficulties and one of the principles of the centre is to show God's love through its actions. When their starting points are considered pupils make good progress in Reception. At Key Stage 1 in 2015 pupils achieved at about national averages. Despite the fact that a high proportion of children join the school part way through each year, their needs are well met. At Key Stage 2 pupils' achievement in reading is good and in mathematics higher ability children achieved well. The gaps between disadvantaged pupils and others have narrowed in most year groups. Trust and respect underpin the excellent relationships in the school. The outstanding behaviour of the pupils can be directly attributed to the values. There are many opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual understanding both through RE, collective worship and the whole curriculum. In the summer months the school's spiritual garden is well used by both staff and children. Pupils' moral and social development is also exceptionally well fostered by the school emphasising its values of responsibility and ambition. Pupils raise money for charities such as the Shoebox appeal, the Trussell Trust, and for overseas charities such as a school in the Gambia following a visit by eight teachers. Pupils show their sense of responsibility by helping in the local area with the school choir singing at old peoples' homes or taking part in local events. The school as part of its Christian mission encourages and allows space for a family centre and a welfare group to operate on its premises. Pupils show respect and tolerance to one other and to others of all faiths and none. The school has good links with an ecumenical group and the Baptist church. However, they are less well aware of the role of the church overseas or Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith. Religious Education (RE) is seen as an important lesson by the pupils. They particularly enjoy the active parts of the lessons and say that it reinforces the values which they hold. Lessons involving discussion on topics such as the deeper meaning of harvest, or 'is it possible to be kind to everyone all of the time?' develop their thinking. The school has recently adopted Discovery RE as a new scheme and is making good progress in adapting its schemes of work. Standards in RE are mostly in line with other subjects.

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

Collective worship is tightly linked to the values of the school and while the majority of pupils describe it as fun and enjoy the drama, music and the opportunity to participate they also see it as a time to reflect, to think and thank God through prayer and to be a 'nice time of togetherness'. The impact of worship is evident and pupils are able to give examples of where an act of worship centred upon the value of courage encouraged them to try something difficult. The planning of worship is very thorough and encompasses the school community as it is carried out by a Worship Committee comprising the clergy, governors, staff and pupils. It is made relevant to the pupils as it is based on Values for Life, Roots and Fruits and the Liturgical Calendar. Pupils respond enthusiastically and with confidence to the Bible stories, hymns and songs, prayers, Christian greetings and a blessing. A good atmosphere is created in the hall by use of music on entry, an altar and the lighting of a candle. Pupils have a variety of experiences of worship in different settings and from different people. The local Vicar leads worship weekly, as do the headteacher, the Baptist minister and a local ecumenical group. Parents attend services in the local church at important festivals and the weekly Golden Celebration Worship. Class worship for the upper school encourages the spiritual development of pupils by the use of reflective diaries. These are completed well and pupils'

spirituality and moral and social development is helped through them. Pupils' understanding of the Trinity is beginning to develop in the upper school but in the lower school pupils have very little appreciation of the Holy Spirit. However, although pupils help with the planning of worship and the Worship Group sometimes leads worship in the church there are not enough opportunities for all pupils to lead worship. Collective worship is regularly evaluated by the pupils in the Worship Group but staff, governors or parents are not involved in any evaluation. Prayer is important in the life of the school and pupils are developing a good understanding of the purposes of prayer. A small prayer group of pupils meets termly. Opportunities exist in classrooms for prayer with prayer boxes, books and trees and these are used well. Recently pupils have been using their home learning to write prayers based on the value of compassion which are then used in collective worship. Pupils know the Lord's Prayer and are currently writing a school prayer.

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

The headteacher lives out her vision that every child really does matter to God. She has a strong belief that nurturing has a vital role to play in school. She is ambitious for the school to succeed and through careful analysis of need and then working with the community has set the school on a very firm direction and has enhanced its Christian distinctiveness. She is an excellent role model and gives outstanding leadership. Evaluation and strategic planning are strong and the school development plan includes a focus on church school distinctiveness with milestones for success. The school has addressed the points for development from the previous inspection very well. The leader for RE is highly conscientious and is providing excellent subject leadership as well as guiding the development of collective worship very effectively. The Governors know the school well and take their role seriously. They are fully involved in setting the strategic direction of the school as a church school. The new Vicar has already begun to make a significant contribution to the life of the school, visiting RE lessons and answering questions in a Year 2 class. He has invited teachers to the church to enable them to make greater use of the building as a resource. Staff development is a high priority for the school. One member of staff is attending a course on church school leadership, others have attended training given by the Diocesan Board and the headteacher is addressing succession planning in the school. Liaison with the local church has increased and the headteacher attends the annual meeting of the Parish. The school features regularly in the parish magazine and pupils' work is on display in the church. The headteacher has developed outstanding links with the local community and representatives speak warmly of her service and dedication to the children. The school liaises highly effectively with other schools in its cluster and works closely with another local outstanding church school. Parents support the school unreservedly with one saying 'I am very proud my child is here. The Christian ethos of the school gives it the ambition to constantly improve'.

SIAMS report November 2015 Amesbury SP4 7AX