



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

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

### Weeting Church of England Primary School

Main Road  
Weeting  
Brandon  
IP27 0QQ

**Previous SIAMS grade:** Satisfactory

**Current inspection grade:** Good

**Diocese:** Ely

Local authority: N/A

Date of inspection: 9 July 2015

Date of last inspection: 12 July 2010

School's unique reference number: 140681

Headteacher: Lynne Stabler

Inspector's name and number: David Bunkell 815

#### School context

This school came into existence on 1 April 2014 as an academy under the auspices of the Diocese of Ely Multi-Academy Trust (DEMAT), replacing a voluntary controlled school that had been deemed inadequate by Ofsted in 2013 and placed in special measures. The current headteacher was already leading another local Church of England primary school at that time, and took on the executive headship of both schools.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Weeting Primary School as a Church of England school are good

- Distinctly Christian values are expressed clearly, and most members of the school community recognise the positive impact that this has on their daily lives and achievements.
- Pupils behave well, and in many ways relationships are linked to the Christian character and values of the school.
- Christian values contribute significantly to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils.

#### Areas to improve

- Develop the monitoring and evaluation of collective worship (CW) by governors, staff and pupils to increase its effectiveness and usefulness.
- Encourage and promote further opportunities for personal prayer to benefit pupils' individual faith journeys.
- Provide places for quiet reflection, to extend pupils' experiences of a wider variety of forms of worship or contemplation.

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

Pupils have benefitted from the re-establishment of Christian values in the school throughout the last year, and invariably said how much the school had improved now that most people are far more caring. This has enabled pupils to make much faster progress and consequently increase their academic achievement. Levels of attendance are improving, and Christian values guide approaches to any unacceptable or persistent absence. All pupils are enabled to achieve, regardless of their background or ability, and pupils very new to the school were able to express how welcome they had felt, and how quickly they were able to play a full part in the school community. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) is aided by a new curriculum based on Christian values and promoted by all adults. In particular, agape and koinonia have been chosen as core values. Although pupils found these words difficult to pronounce, they were able to explain what they meant, and how their spiritual development had been enhanced, regardless of whether they had Christian faith, or other or no beliefs. Most pupils behave well and have constructive relationships with each other and adults, and take responsibility for encouraging their peers to have the same attitude, for example by reminding others that running is not allowed in the amphitheatre. They also said that pupils have better care for the environment, and gave as an example the fact that nobody now treads on the flowers. Pupils understand that Christianity is a worldwide faith and respect the diversity of other world religions, although are sometimes confused regarding the names or practices of other faiths. Religious Education (RE) lessons are enjoyed, and pupils said how this had not always been the case. One pupil said that RE lessons had made him think more widely about world issues, and that it is now a favourite subject.

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

All teaching staff lead the daily collective worship (CW) sessions, and pupils said that it is an important part of the day. Pupils were seen to pay careful attention throughout and were calm and patient when issues such as a faulty music stand and a problem with a computer caused interruptions. Virtually all pupils raised hands to volunteer to assist by lighting and extinguishing the candle along with saying opening and closing prayers. CW is distinctly Christian, including worship songs or hymns, and directly linked to a Christian value, currently the courage to persevere with faith. In discussion, pupils could relate improvements in behaviour around the school to reflection on topics that had been covered in CW. Pupils understood that the green cloth on the worship table indicates the season in the Anglican liturgical year, and that different colours are used at other times. In addition to the prayers said in CW, each class says a prayer either before lunch or at the end of the day. At the instigation of pupils, a prayer box has recently been acquired, and contains a number of prayers written by pupils, some of which are used in CW. In speaking to pupils, there was some confusion about where the prayer box is kept, or what its purpose is. Personal prayer is not so well established as corporate prayer, and currently there are no specific indoor or outdoor places for quiet reflection. Pupils were able to explain the importance of Jesus Christ in CW, as part of the Trinitarian nature of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, referring to recent CW for Pentecost. Local clergy help with the planning of CW, and one session each week is taken by the curate. Pupils were highly appreciative of his work. CW takes place sometimes in the church, but its small size limits its use, as only half the school can fit in. Pupils recalled poignantly a Christmas service that had started at the village pub, and symbolically, as there was no room at the inn, had then transferred in procession to the church. Some informal monitoring by governors, staff and pupils of the effectiveness of CW takes place, but is as yet insufficiently structured to have measurable impact.

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

Christian values are at the centre of the school's ethos. These core values have played a highly significant part in the rapid improvement to the academic progress that pupils make, and consequently to the very high standards that they now achieve in national standardised measures of attainment. Self-evaluation is thorough and insightful, and governors play a full part in this alongside senior staff. Leaders are aware of how much has been achieved in less than four school terms, and are very firmly focussed on what must be done to make even more improvement in the future. The whole curriculum is infused with a distinctly Christian vision, which permeates every aspect of school life. Parents are grateful for all that the school does for their children, and in conversation said that they talk about RE and CW at home, and sing worship songs there. Local clergy play an invaluable role in the school as governors, advisors and in leading CW. Links with the diocese are very strong, with diocesan staff helping the school to improve, and pupils regularly benefit from attending events at the cathedral. The future of church schools locally has been very carefully considered, and detailed plans made for substantial changes to come into effect from the start of next term. Alongside this, some combined governing body meetings have already taken place, and a newly-formed governors' SMSC monitoring group has already begun to have a positive impact across the two schools. The development of staff for new roles has been an important part of this. The arrangements for RE and CW meet all statutory requirements, and the leadership of these areas is given due priority, enabling the high standards that are achieved.

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