



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Preshute Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

High Street
Manton, Wiltshire
SN8 4HH

Previous SIAMS grade: Good

Current inspection grade: Outstanding

Diocese: Salisbury

Local authority: Wiltshire

Dates of inspection: 7 June 2016

Date of last inspection: 16 May 2011

School's unique reference number: 126349

Headteacher: Celia Hicks

Inspector's name and number: Penny Burnside 772

School context

Preshute is smaller than the average-sized primary school and the two hundred and four pupils are taught in seven classes. The proportion of pupils with additional needs is below average, as is the proportion of pupils supported by pupil premium funding and those known to be eligible for free school meals. The headteacher will be retiring in the summer. An Ofsted inspection in December 2015 judged the school to be outstanding.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Preshute as a Church of England school are outstanding

- Inspirational leadership at all levels ensures that the school's vibrant Christian identity underpins everything it does
- Sensitive and careful provision for spirituality has created a very special culture in which children thrive
- Creative and innovative partnership working with the church helps deepen children's understanding of belonging to the parish
- The school's welcoming and inclusive ethos creates a safe place for children and adults to explore what they really think about questions of meaning and purpose

Areas to improve

- Strengthen existing systems for involving children in evaluating the school's Christian character by involving them in the detailed evaluation and planning of Journey Days
- Develop children's understanding of Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith by strengthening links with other dioceses both nationally and internationally

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

This delightful village school takes very seriously its mission to 'Live life, love learning,' and its commitment to 'life in all its fullness' is evident throughout the school. The curriculum is rich and exciting and the school's Christian values of honesty, love, respect, caring, kindness, sharing, hard work and forgiveness shine through the excellent behaviour and relationships and the very high standards. Actions from the previous inspection have been thoroughly and effectively addressed. For example, the reflective space in the school entrance, a visitor's first glimpse of the school's ethos, also informs parents of the current theme for collective worship. It is unashamedly Christian whilst at the same time inviting all children and adults to respond in their own way. Displayed prominently in the hall under the title, 'Who walks in his footsteps?' the values are celebrated and referred to throughout the school day. The youngest children in particular like seeing their values displayed, saying 'They help you remember and change your way.' Children show a mature understanding of the values. One child explained that forgiveness was his favourite value saying, 'I like it when it's all better.' Another child described the importance of honesty in friendship because, 'You can just say the truth.' Relationships across the school are very good indeed, with staff consistently modelling the values. Children notice this. Provision for spiritual development is particularly strong and, throughout the school, children and adults are invited to engage more deeply, for example through opportunities to think, talk or write about their feelings. The school is especially skilful at creating space to encourage spirituality— physically in the environment, practically through teachers' planning, and spontaneously, for example when teachers seize opportunities to ask a challenging question or take time to pause in the classroom. Exciting religious education (RE), such as the Journey Days, or 'talk homework' makes a significant contribution to the school's Christian character. Children's understanding of Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith is however currently under-developed.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship is at the heart of Preshute school. Great importance is attached to 'gathering' and opportunities are taken to draw people together in moments of sadness, as well as in times of celebration. Worship leaders know the children well and engage them very sensitively and respectfully, according to their different personalities. Expectations of children's responses are high, and questioning is skilful, resulting in children in Year 2 confidently explaining the meaning of 'rejoice,' and describing the shepherd who found his sheep as feeling 'ecstatic'. The quality of singing is excellent, with children joining-in enthusiastically but reverently. Worship-planning is skilfully differentiated and so children have a variety of opportunities to be involved, for example the act of worship for the youngest children was led by a teacher with children participating in a number of ways appropriate to their age, whereas the worship in Year 5 was planned and led by three pupils and supported by the teacher. The simple liturgy used with the youngest children reflected their growing understanding of the Trinity and a familiarity with a range of responses. Prayer permeates the life of the school, and is a feature of the corporate life of the school community, including during residential visits. Children as young as Year 2 can say the Lord's Prayer independently, enthusiastically and with confidence. Older children talk about organising several charity events such as Jumper Day, in response to worship. The introduction of Journey Days has deepened children's understanding of Easter and Pentecost and of the incarnation and also broadened their awareness of features of Anglican tradition and practice. A number of visitors lead worship, enriching children's experience including the vicar, representatives from the local Methodist church and an Open the Book team. The school has a number of systems for evaluating worship but does not yet formally involve children in the evaluation and planning of Journey Days.

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

The headteacher is passionate in her commitment to create a Christian ethos where children know they are loved and which drives 'opportunities, excitement and the love of learning.' As a result the culture is both supportive and challenging, and all children are enabled to take risks because they know they are loved and accepted members of this unique school community. This strategic nurturing extends to staff and is seen in the school's successful planning of professional development opportunities which led recently to the deputy headteacher gaining a headship of another Church of England school. There are robust systems for monitoring the school's Christian character and for ensuring that all staff, including those who will be joining the school in September, understand its Christian vision. Governors are involved and very well-informed. Their comprehensive and diligent monitoring of the school's Christian character has ensured that the recruitment process for a new headteacher has been informed by an accurate and detailed understanding of the school's current effectiveness as a church school and a clear view of the necessary requirements of future leadership. The leadership of the RE co-ordinator is inspirational and, together with the headteacher and foundation governors, she ensures that RE and collective worship have a very high profile in the school. The visionary leadership of the vicar and her energetic involvement in the school has been instrumental in driving further improvements since the previous inspection. Together with the headteacher and RE leader, she has introduced a number of innovative activities, such as Journey Days, which have deepened children's sense of belonging to *their* church, both in terms of familiarity with the building and also their relationship with the people of the parish. The school is constantly seeking new ways to reach out, to befriend and serve its community, for example through community lunches. Relationships with the diocese are very good. Collaborative work with leaders from three other local schools has further strengthened the school's understanding of its distinctive Christian character. The arrangements for religious education and collective worship meet statutory requirements.

SIAMS report June 2016 Preshute VC Primary School, Manton SN8 4HH