



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

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

### Charlton Mackrell Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Bonfire Lane  
Charlton Mackrell  
Somerton TA11 7BN

**Previous SIAS grade: Good**

**Current SIAMS grade: Outstanding**

**Diocese: Bath and Wells**

Local authority: Somerset

Date of inspection: 18<sup>th</sup> May 2016

Date of last inspection: 5<sup>th</sup> May 2011

School's unique reference number: 123746

Headteacher: Gilly Kempton

Inspector's name and number: Carolyn Banfield - 610

#### School context

With 79 pupils, Charlton Mackrell Church of England VC Primary School is a smaller than average village school. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs and/or physical disabilities is above the national average, but none have a statement or EHC plan. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is well below the national average. Pupils are taught in three mixed-aged classes. An independently run pre-school shares the school site.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Charlton Mackrell Church school are outstanding

- The consistently high levels of attainment and progress are closely attributed to the inclusive Christian vision, ethos and values, which define and guide school improvement
- Because pupils know that they are loved and precious to God, they develop self-confidence and positive views of themselves and others. This is reflected in their behaviour, attitudes and relationships.
- Curriculum provision is creative and motivating, resulting in enriched experiences for all pupils which successfully promote Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development. Music and sport are particular strengths.
- A strong and effective partnership with St Mary's Church facilitates a growing understanding of aspects of Anglican tradition, and supports the school's distinctive Christian character very successfully.

#### Areas to improve

- Show more explicit value links in curriculum planning.
- Strengthen on going self-evaluation through more formal and robust methods of monitoring and evaluation across all four areas, to maintain and build upon the school's current distinctiveness as a church school.

- Develop pupil's awareness and respect for faiths and cultures beyond their immediate locality at a deeper level.

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

The Christian character of Charlton Mackrell school is outstanding because the school's vision and values have a significant impact on pupil achievement, their outlook on life and overall well-being. The expectation that everyone is to love their neighbour as Jesus loves us, is at the very core of this community, providing the basis from which all twelve selected Christian values are promoted and developed. Pupils certainly know that they are loved, saying "as a family, teachers love us all equally and always forgive us". As a result, the behaviour and learning attitudes of the pupils is of the highest standard and relationships are excellent and consistently attributable to the Christian character of the school. Pupils are able to express how the values and the teachings of Jesus influence the way in which they approach life and the interactions they share. This is also a place of nurture, where the needs of each child are known, considered and addressed. Consequently, pupils grow in confidence and self-belief, they readily take on the challenges of learning, and by the end of KS2 achievement is consistently above the national average in all subjects. Curriculum provision is broad and highly motivating. Opportunities and experiences for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) are excellent. Because spirituality is seen as central to the development of the whole child, the outdoor space and setting is fully exploited. Music is an essential component and the contributions this makes to the spiritual lives of the whole community is outstanding and pervasive. As one child so eloquently described, "singing fills every empty part of me, it is me... it leaves me feeling blessed and happy." Displays and work in books confirm that Religious Education (RE) successfully supports and promotes the Christian ethos and shared values. Because of a range of events and celebrated traditions, pupils have acquired a clear British identity and an appreciation of factors which influence Britain today. Media reporting on world affairs, for example, help pupils to look beyond their immediate location, providing opportunities to demonstrate their compassion for others through charitable giving and prayer. Pupils would now benefit from extending their knowledge of faiths and communities in a way which will deepen their awareness and appreciation of cultural diversity further.

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

Collective worship is highly valued and is a pivotal part of the school's life, ethos and culture. As a result, pupils have many opportunities to explore the school's Christian values and this contributes strongly to the Christian vision of the school. Because of the range of styles and formats shared across the week, interest is generated and both pupils and adults enjoy the experience and interactions they engage with. Due to the close proximity of St Mary's Church, the school community is able to worship there on a weekly basis and the clergy team give outstanding support to enrich those experiences. The visual representation of the changing Christian year and aspects of Anglican tradition are naturally referred to, as pupils' attention is regularly drawn to the symbolic representation of the life of Christ within the church building. Consequently pupils have a clear understanding of why Christian festivals are celebrated and identify strongly with aspects of Christian faith and belief. The impact for many is their ability to articulate the influence of worship on their lives. The 'Open the Book' team has successfully brought biblical content to life, and pupil understanding of the teachings of Jesus and school values has grown as a result. Singing plays a crucial role in worship. The exceptional quality is uplifting and unifying; it demonstrates a shared outpouring of collective and individual spirituality. Prayer and times of reflection occupy a central place in worship and are effectively used throughout the day. Pupils have a mature understanding of the purpose of prayer viewing it as an opportunity to "open up to God with whom you can share everything and anything." Pupils appreciate opportunities to be still, and with comments such as "prayer takes the weight off your shoulders", it is clear that they find comfort and sustenance as a result. They know and use the Lord's Prayer and the school prayer is sung with gusto and in harmony, resulting in

a very unique and spiritual experience for all present. Pupils are able to demonstrate a growing understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This is because of the symbolism used during worship and the links pupils are able to make through the teaching of Christianity in RE. The school has worked hard to involve all leaders in the planning of worship and this has resulted in a cohesive programme underpinned by a values led approach. By more formally and explicitly linking the twelve values to the curriculum, opportunities for the less familiar ones to become embedded will be accelerated to further strengthen the school's ethos and vision.

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

The headteacher, governors and school staff share a vision rooted in Christian values and a passion to ensure, that regardless of their background, all pupils have the best education and understand the possibilities open to them within a loving Christian environment. This results in excellent standards of achievement and individual well-being. Leaders are highly effective in articulating the school's Christian character and in promoting and establishing its ethos. This is made clear through documentation and the way in which adults model behaviour and expectations. Valuing and caring for the whole child is of paramount importance and the love shared across the community has a significant impact on all who belong there. Consequently, pupils are extremely happy to come to school, speak enthusiastically about their learning, accept responsibilities eagerly and are genuinely proud of the part they have to play. Therefore attendance is good. Parents are very supportive of the school, acknowledge the outstanding pastoral care received and appreciate the way in which their child is loved for who they are. They see the school as an extension of their own family and look upon Tuesday worship in church with as much enthusiasm as the children. Matters of attendance, recruitment, the allocation of additional funding and decisions made regarding the nature of the taught curriculum are all set within a Christian context. The emphasis given to music and sport is testament to this approach. As a result, pupils are inspired and the life enhancing qualities are very tangible. This is evidenced through the many sporting achievements and the accomplishment of the chamber and whole school choirs. The partnership with the local church and community is outstanding because of the way in which an exploration of faith and belief is facilitated and pupil's personal spiritual awareness is strengthened. Mutual respect and support enable both to flourish and the school's Christian character is significantly enhanced as a result. Governors are aware of their strategic role and support and challenge appropriately by focusing on continued improvement. They regularly visit school and are involved in the practice of monitoring and evaluation. As a result, leaders have made good progress in addressing the key issues for improvement from the previous inspection and ensure that the school meets the statutory requirements for collective worship and RE. However, they are aware of the need to formalise more the process and procedures already in place in order to measure the impact of the vision and values on the life of the school and to further develop its distinctive character. They have given thought to planning for the future so that the Christian character of the school remains at its heart. Links with the diocese ensure that pupils benefit from visits to Wells Cathedral through Pilgrim days and this has a positive impact on their sense of belonging to the wider network of church schools. Staff and governors undertake meaningful training and there is evidence to show how this is shared to develop skills and improve practice. This can be particularly noted in the area of collective worship. As members of the Huish Community Learning Partnership, joint initiatives and the reciprocal sharing of good practice supports school improvement well.