



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

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

### Winslow C of E Voluntary Controlled Combined School

Lowndes Way

Winslow

Buckinghamshire MK18 3EN

**Previous SIAS grade: Good**

**Current inspection grade: Outstanding**

**Diocese: Oxford**

Local authority: Buckinghamshire

Date of inspection: 5 October 2015

Date of last inspection: October 2010

School's unique reference number: 110449

Acting Headteacher: James Bloomfield

Inspector's name and number: Gill Walley NS 644

#### School context

This is a two form entry school with 362 pupils from the town of Winslow and the surrounding villages. Most pupils are white British. The proportion who have special educational needs or who are disadvantaged is below the national average but this proportion is now increasing steadily. The Deputy Headteacher became the Acting Headteacher in September 2015. The incumbent of the parish is new to post following a lengthy interregnum.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Winslow as a Church of England school are outstanding.

- Parents see the school's strong Christian ethos of inclusion at the heart of its work. They feel that the school values all children and their families equally, encouraging all children to 'be the best they can be', whether or not they are Christians.
- Governors monitor the school's Christian distinctiveness effectively so that they have a thorough understanding of its strengths and what they might improve further.
- Pupils develop their spirituality and experience the Christian faith through extremely well planned collective worship (CW) and times of reflection in school and in church, and through the Religious Education (RE) curriculum.
- Pupils show a deep understanding of Christian values, Anglican traditions and Bible stories because they learn about these in ways which are interesting, relevant and memorable.

#### Areas to improve

- Develop links with churches in other parts of the world so that pupils have a wider understanding of Christianity as a world wide faith and of the differences within the Christian church.
- Enhance pupils' deeper understanding of other faiths through a range of visits and visitors.

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

All groups in the community explain how firmly the school's work and vision are based on distinctive Christian values. They understand that the values are based on Bible readings and pupils tell stories they have heard which show them how to live out each one. For example, they talked about the parable of the Good Samaritan as an example of Christian kindness, and the story of Jacob as an example of honesty. Pupils' excellent behaviour and the times when they demonstrate a Christian value are rewarded. They thoroughly enjoy coming to school because they feel cared for and supported, and attendance is very good. All pupils are encouraged to succeed and are given the help they need to achieve well. Most leave at levels above those expected nationally and they make very good progress in all curriculum areas including RE. This is because the school has the highest expectations of all its pupils, valuing them all as individuals, and the teaching is always engaging and well planned to meet their specific needs. The school environment reflects the Christian character very well, with a reflection corner in every classroom where pupils can write prayers and look at books of Bible stories. There are displays of the prayers they have written and the values are displayed all around the school as reminders. There is a spectacular display of them and what they mean at the entrance. Pupils made this after they had been consulted about which values they would choose as the most important. Pupils' moral values are developed extremely well so that they support and care for one another. They develop their spirituality well through their complete understanding of the Christian values they have chosen to focus on. They raise money for many good causes. Pupils and parents talk about the school as 'one big family'. One pupil said 'no one judges you and everyone understands', another spoke of the way 'everyone respects one another' and how 'we all try to be honest'. Staff, parents and pupils value the strong links with St. Laurence parish church and feel they are an important part of the parish community. Pupils worship there at least once each term and make frequent visits to learn about Anglican worship, for example when they are studying religious symbolism. Pupils have a limited understanding of the contrasts between how they and Christians in other denominations and parts of the world, worship. They thoroughly enjoy RE and learn about world faiths, reflecting on the similarities and differences between them and developing a profound respect for the views of others. Pupils are actively encouraged to discuss their views with one another. However they do not have many opportunities to visit places of worship or to question members of those faiths.

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

Worship is greatly valued by pupils, staff and parents, and many parents attend regularly with their children. Pupils particularly look forward to worship led either by the new incumbent or by his Director of Music, Pupils develop a very good understanding of Anglican tradition and prayers, the Church calendar and its liturgical colours. They also learn about the relevance of the Jesus' teaching to their own lives because worship is well planned and engaging. It is always linked to a Bible reading and helps pupils to learn to take responsibility for their actions. For example, they thought about the sources of the food their families buy in the supermarket as an introduction to thanking God for the Harvest. This led them to consider what they could give to those who are less fortunate. Images, music, art and drama are used frequently so that pupils of all ages can understand and explain the key messages. Worship has a strong focus on the Trinity and older pupils can discuss this because it has been explained to them visually in ways they can understand. They say they 'like speaking to God'. Worship follows the values as themes so that pupils fully understand how they are rooted in the Bible. Pupils often plan and lead worship and they write and read out many of the prayers which are used. They also lead celebrations of their learning and of the special achievements of individual pupils. They find it helpful to reflect by looking at the lit candle and they enjoy singing uplifting Christian songs. Pupils enjoy saying prayers together in their classrooms at the end of each day. If they want to reflect privately there is a quiet garden area for this purpose. This helps them to understand the role of personal prayer in their lives. Worship is monitored by seeking the views of pupils,

parents and governors so that it can be evaluated. This ensures that worship is always as effective as it can be in meeting pupils' needs and interests. Staff also feel greatly uplifted by worship, as do the parents who are able to attend.

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

The Acting Headteacher has maintained the school's determination to promote and strengthen the school's strong Christian vision. Together with the governors and the leader for Worship and RE he has evaluated the impact and strengths of the Christian distinctiveness accurately and planned ways in which it can be improved further. These are now being implemented and monitored well. Leaders have rightly recognised that the school's intake is changing and it needs to adapt. The school has met the recommendations of the last inspection report. The RE leader monitors standards in RE, provides strong support for colleagues and has developed a system for assessing pupils' progress. This ensures that teachers plan learning at the right level for all pupils so that all are challenged and enjoy these lessons. RE has a very high priority in the curriculum and together with the school's ethos it supports pupils' spiritual development extremely well. The Acting Headteacher and staff are excellent role models for pupils, so that they see what it is like to live by Christian values. All staff can explain the impact of the Christian values on the life of the school and the progress pupils make. Parents feel respected and included and appreciate the openness which encourages them and their children to feel comfortable to ask questions and discuss Christianity. They feel that the school 'turns out well-rounded, reflective young people with good values to live by'. They are involved in evaluating the Christian distinctiveness, for example through surveys. Pupils feel that they are an important part of the parish and value their strong involvement with the parish church. These links have been greatly strengthened despite the recent interregnum because the school has worked extremely closely with the Director of Music. This is an example of how important the links are both to the school and the church and how important the school is to members of the parish. This has been strengthened even further since the arrival of the new incumbent. Pupils have taken part in a 'sponsored prayer' project to raise funds for the parish. Governors have given consideration to ensuring that in times of change the school's leadership continues to maintain its Christian distinctiveness as the key priority.

SIAMS report October 2015 Winslow C of E Voluntary Controlled Combined School