



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

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

### **St Margaret's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School**

High Street, Stoke Golding  
Nuneaton, Warwickshire  
CV13 6HE

**Previous SIAMS grade: Outstanding**

**Current inspection grade: Outstanding**

**Diocese: Leicester**

Local authority: Leicestershire

Date of inspection: 5<sup>th</sup> February 2016

Date of last inspection: 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2011

School's unique reference number: 120200

Headteacher: Emma Prokipczuk

Inspector's name and number: Marie Sandford (834)

#### **School context**

This is an average size, oversubscribed, rural primary school where most pupils are of White British heritage. The school serves the village of Stoke Golding and smaller, surrounding villages. The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives additional funding is lower than schools nationally. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs or disabilities is also below the national average. The headteacher has been in post just over two terms.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Margaret's as a Church of England school are outstanding**

- The strong Christian leadership of the headteacher, deputy headteacher, religious education (RE) co-ordinator and governing body is central to the distinctiveness and effectiveness of this unequivocally church school.
- The school's Christian vision is underpinned by rigorous strategic planning, ensuring this church school remains highly effective and enabling pupils of all faiths and none to thrive.
- Strong partnerships exist with local clergy and other church representatives who are fully involved in the life of the school ensuring its Anglican foundation is honoured and promoted.
- Partnerships between staff, governors, parents, the churches and village communities are valued by everyone resulting in mutual support based upon distinctively Christian values.
- Christian values are embedded in all aspects of school life, resulting in pupils who are confident and well equipped to contribute to life in a diverse society.

#### **Areas to improve**

- Increase opportunities for pupils across the school to be involved in planning and leading worship in order to strengthen leadership skills and deepen understanding of Christian theological concepts and beliefs at an age appropriate level.
- Extend opportunities for prayer and reflection outside of worship, as part of implementing the school's interpretation of spirituality across the school community.

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

The school's mission statement 'the roots to grow and the wings to fly' and its aims connect its Christian character and preparing pupils for 'using their gifts wisely in a diverse society'. The roots are the Christian values which are embedded in all aspects of school life, rewarded and celebrated in worship each week. The Christian ethos ensures behaviour is extremely supportive with pupils being eager and ready to learn. As a result, pupils achieve highly and significant proportions make better than expected progress. Attendance is consistently higher than national averages as pupils are interested in the curriculum and aspire to achieve, encouraging others to persevere. As one child stated, 'we encourage one another and build each other up'. Any barriers to emotional wellbeing are addressed by caring staff to ensure 'all children understand their worth and value'. Individual pupils requiring additional help make good progress as the school tailors support specific to their needs. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development is integral to the Christian ethos of the school with pupils having a very clear sense of right and wrong. Respectful attitudes shape very positive views of diversity and difference. Pupils are confident to express their views with RE and collective worship being central to this, equipping pupils with the biblical links to the school's Christian values. Pupils are inspired by and enjoy RE as the activities challenge their thinking. Involvement in cultural diversity days, visits to other places of worship and exploring Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith provide opportunities to challenge thinking about religious beliefs, practices and stereotyping. The school's links with a school in India, facilitated by the British Council as the school endeavours to achieve the International Award, has enriched pupils' understanding of cultural differences. Raising money for charitable causes and donations for the local foodbank in Hinckley has enriched their understanding of the wider world. The school has rightly identified the need to provide opportunities for prayer and reflection outside of collective worship and the classroom as part of implementing its interpretation of spirituality across the school community.

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

The headteacher, who is also the collective worship co-ordinator, is committed to ensuring high quality collective worship enriches all members of the school community whether of faith background or not. The well-planned programme of worship is linked to diocesan themes that are rooted in Christian values and the teachings of Jesus. Planning is flexible, providing opportunities for emerging needs and events. A range of members of the community, including local clergy, contribute to the planning of worship. Evaluative feedback on worship, which enables improvement planning, is gathered from staff, pupils and parents. Governors undertake monitoring visits to highlight good practice and to ask questions relating to the impact of worship and the school's core Christian values, making recommendations accordingly. For example, although pupils appreciate being active participants during worship, the school has recognised the need for them to have more opportunities to plan and lead acts of worship. Worship is explicitly Christian in nature with adults and pupils from all faiths and none benefitting spiritually from gathering together at the start of each school day. Pupils enjoy the range of visitors leading worship especially the 'Open the Book' team who dramatise Bible stories. They are familiar with the pattern of Anglican worship as it is embedded. A lighted Trinity candle is a focal point during singing, prayer and reflection with pupils using a range of responses when lighting and extinguishing the candle. Pupils in Year 5 were inspired by the RE subject leader's explanation and understanding of the Trinity using a 'Jaffa cake', recognising 'it is impossible to separate the three parts'. In turn, they supported younger pupils by explaining a difficult idea in inspiring, practical and creative ways. The Lord's Prayer is displayed in the hall and pupils speak with confidence about their understanding of different parts of the prayer, relating parts to their school's core values. Each classroom has a reflection area used for personal and collective prayer. Some children choose to pray at home as well as at school, commenting 'prayer helps me to get through difficult times and gives me the chance to say thank you to God'.

### **The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding**

RE has a high profile within the curriculum with planning following the Leicestershire Agreed Syllabus 'Harmony and Diversity' which ensures pupils acquire a thorough knowledge and understanding of Christianity while making links to the range of other faiths studied. Senior leaders give detailed attention to the monitoring of RE, indicating its importance in the curriculum. The inspirational RE co-ordinator, one of only six lead RE teachers for the diocese, ensures the rigorous monitoring and evaluation leads to focussed improvement plans which impact on achievement. As pupils move through the school they reflect on their prior learning and develop skills in asking questions, making comparisons and expressing their own views using religious language and ideas in their explanations. By the end of Year 6, approximately half of the pupils are consistently working above the expectations for their age. Teaching in RE is consistently good and often outstanding as it challenges pupils of all ages to ask questions about religious practices and beliefs, preparing them for life in a multicultural world. A Year 6 display on 'One Leicester' based on Revelations 21-22 described the people and religious communities of nearby Leicester as 'waves of one sea, fruits of one tree, flowers of one garden and leaves of one branch'. Year 6 pupils commenced a new unit 'What happens when we die?' by initially drafting and discussing their own 'big questions' for a 'wonder wall', for example, 'If I had a chat with God, I wonder what He would tell me?' This questioning and reflective approach provides opportunities for spiritual growth. Pupil attitudes to RE are assessed at the beginning and end of each academic year and records show more and more pupils being inspired by the subject and learning exceptionally well. A typical pupil comment was 'I'm persevering just like Jesus persevered and didn't give up even when tempted'.

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

Recent changes to the leadership of the school and to the leadership of RE have ensured St Margaret's continues to thrive as a church school as it lives out its vision enabling all pupils to 'soar high on wings like eagles' (Isaiah 40:31). The governing body manages its business with rigour, taking time to appoint a substantive headteacher with the vision to uphold and promote the strong Christian ethos of the school. Development of staff and governors is given a high priority with the headteacher recently completing the nationally recognised Church School Leadership qualification. Leaders involved all members of the school community in the redrafting of the schools mission statement and aims using the embedded Christian values as the starting point. A seventh value, forgiveness, was added underpinning all others. The Christian values, described as roots, are shared using Biblical text. They can be seen in all aspects of the life of the school, supporting the spiritual, moral and emotional development and well-being of pupils and staff alike. The governing body, through its SMSC committee, regularly monitors the distinctiveness and effectiveness of the school as a church school so that the school's distinctive Christian character is a regular agenda item at full governing body meetings. The Christian character is also celebrated and promoted on the school's website and documentation. Thorough self-evaluation and improvement planning has ensured all previous development points have been thoughtfully addressed. The leadership of collective worship and RE have a high profile resulting in professional development opportunities for staff and governors which have impacted significantly on pupils' attitudes and development. Parents and carers feel welcome at the school, regularly attending worship. They have confidence in the inclusive nature of the school and welcome initiatives to develop children's knowledge and understanding of different faiths, citing a recent visit to an Islamic exhibition and mosque as an example. One parent stated 'It is important for our children to understand and respect different religions. We feel proud that St Margaret's is really providing a broad, open education to our children'. Church, school and community links are very strong mutually benefitting all.