



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

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

### **Oakington CE (A) Primary School**

**Water Lane, Oakington,  
Cambridge.**

**CB24 3AL**

**Previous SIAMS grade: Outstanding**

**Current inspection grade: Outstanding**

**Diocese: Ely**

Local authority: Cambridgeshire

Dates of inspection: 3 March 2015

Date of last inspection: 29 June 2010

School's unique reference number: 110833

Headteacher: Sally Daggianti

Inspector's name and number: Richard Liddington 816

### **School context**

Oakington CE Primary School is a Voluntary Aided school serving a rural community in the village of Oakington, four miles north of Cambridge. There are 125 children on roll. The children are organised into 5 classes, four of which contain children of mixed ages. The school is linked to the parish church of St Andrew's in Oakington. The incumbent has served the parish of Oakington for over 40 years and is a foundation governor. The current head teacher has been in post for 5 years.

### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Oakington as a Church of England school are outstanding**

- The school is passionate about its Christian ethos. It demonstrates high levels of inclusivity and its significant commitment to the individual child ensures all pupils flourish.
- The school is rooted in distinctively Christian values. This results in outstanding behaviour, relationships and Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development among the pupils.
- The school's particular commitment to inclusion is an integral part of their Christian character. This ensures a very caring, happy & purposeful environment which is highly valued by everyone connected with the school.

### **Areas to improve**

- Develop and share the school's core values statement so that there is a clearer understanding of the contribution that these values make on the lives of the pupils.
- Develop the RE curriculum so that there is improved pupil understanding of religious diversity and the world wide nature of the Christian church.
- Improve the existing schedule for self evaluation so that areas for improvement are

identified and addressed earlier and with the increased involvement of pupils.

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

Oakington is an outstanding school because its overt Christian character makes a significant contribution to all aspects of school life. Central to the school's success are its explicitly Christian values which are excellently modelled by the headteacher and all staff. These values have a significantly positive impact on the academic achievement of all pupils as well as in their Spiritual Moral Social and Cultural development and personal wellbeing. A statement summarising the school's 18 Christian values under the headings of Confidence, Achievement, Respect and Environment has recently been developed by the school leaders. This is yet to be fully embedded in the life of the school however and is therefore an action point. The pupils are able to express clear interpretations of what it means to be members of a church school. One particular child who had moved from a non church school commented that it was "great to be part of something much bigger than just a school" Pupils talk in detail about how values such as forgiveness, compassion and generosity influence their own attitudes and behaviours. They also acknowledge the importance of both formal and informal prayer and reflection in their own daily lives. Many of these prayers and reflections are recorded in a central diary and this helps provide a continuous focus for the children. The children's spiritual development is also supported by comprehensive RE and SMSC curriculum, as well as a wide range of less directed, extra curricular opportunities. Pupils appreciate the many opportunities that they have to contribute to the outworking of the schools values, particularly; the leading of collective worship, supporting the monthly Kid's Aflame church service and their extensive support for charitable organisations, such as the 'Skills for Living-Walt Academy' in Kenya.

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

Collective worship is held in the highest possible regard by everyone connected with the school. It is firmly rooted in Christian teaching, with planning based on a three yearly cycle, using Values for Life materials. Improvements have been made to the planning and provision of collective worship since the last inspection. Each value is now explored in depth over a half termly period and an increased number of adults now contribute to the development of these values. Pupils throughout the school articulate outstanding connections between the Biblical stories underpinning each value and how they influence their own lives. For example, children gave examples of how identified biblical stories had helped them develop more respect and tolerance for people who they hadn't previously got on with. Pupils universally state that they enjoy collective worship. They welcome the fact that it is "the one time in the day when the whole school gets together to learn about how God can help them live their lives" They enjoy the contributions made from a range of leaders and appreciate opportunities to organise resources, choose songs and contribute to acts of worship. Most significantly they love the regular opportunities afforded them, to plan and lead acts of worship, which they undertake with high levels of confidence. The children benefit from termly visits to St Andrew's church in Oakington and this has helped develop their understanding of the main Christian festivals. The school has already identified the need to further develop this relationship in order to further improve the children's understanding of Anglican liturgy. Although acts of worship are formally observed and evaluated as part of the schools self evaluation cycle, this isn't currently regular enough or involve pupils enough, to be sufficiently effective. Children talk with high levels of understanding about the concept of the Holy Trinity. They describe the Godhead as being "like an egg, made up of shell, yoke and white," each with its own purpose and spiritual characteristics, but coming together to form a "single, united God," Prayer and reflection is also an integral part of life at Oakington. The children take an active part in reading prayers and saying grace before lunch. They also actively seek out opportunities to "tell God about their problems" under the chestnut tree, "so that He can help them." The net result of all these features is that collective worship at Oakington is highly inclusive, inspirational and results in good attitudes, relationships and behaviours throughout the school.

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

The effectiveness of RE at Oakington is outstanding because teaching is consistently outstanding and achievement in RE is above national expectations. The RE curriculum is built around the locally agreed syllabus with Christianity having a very high profile. Pupils benefit from the excellent subject knowledge of staff and there are clear links between the concept being explored and the activity being undertaken. Of particular note is the comprehensive use of assessment for learning which provides clear and effective progression in pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills. There is a strong focus on the delivery of RE through enquiry based learning, with pupils demonstrating high levels of imagination and originality in their work. The RE curriculum also contains clear, explicit links to the schools Christian values. One recent piece of work on the feeding of the 5000 for example, resulted in the older children producing extremely creative and thoughtful dioramas which were linked to the values of generosity and inspiration. The RE curriculum includes units of study of the other major world faiths and some children are able to recall some of the basic features and links between the different religions. This does need developing further however to ensure that all children are able to apply a wider range of knowledge and skills to their understanding of different religions. The quality of teaching in RE and the progress of individual pupils is tracked in a simple yet effective manner by the subject leader and this informs the strategic development of RE. The school has already prioritised the need to implement the national initiative of assessing pupil's achievement without levels.

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

The headteacher and foundation governors share an overriding desire to build a church school which is distinctive and effective in its Christian witness. They articulate a vision for the future of the school based on biblical teachings and they actively promote and live out these values. This has a particularly positive effect in the levels of confidence afforded the school by the wider school community. The new values statement has been specifically designed to ensure an inclusive culture among parents. As yet there is insufficient evidence to show that parents, or indeed pupils, have a secure understanding of the Christian foundation of these values. The headteacher is the driving force behind the leadership and management of Oakington as a church school. She is ably supported by the foundation governors, several of whom are new to the role. Together they demonstrate a deep personal commitment to further improve the school. The current biannual cycle of self evaluation is undertaken by a small number of stakeholders including the headteacher, foundation governors and Bishop's Visitor. Although effective, this cycle of strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation does need developing to ensure sustainability of the excellent outcomes that currently exist in the school. The school recently contributed to a diocesan project aimed at developing new 'school based' units of study for the agreed syllabus for RE. Good use is being made of professional development opportunities to support staff and governors in their role as leaders in church schools. Relevant training has been identified or undertaken by new foundation governors and potential leaders on the teaching staff to support the existing school leadership. The school's strong Christian character results in good levels of partnership, trust and engagement with the local community. A significant number of staff and pupils regularly contribute to both church and other locally organised events. A volunteer chaplain visits the school each week and he provides excellent pastoral and spiritual support for the pupils. Pupils talked with great enthusiasm about his listening ear and the guidance that he provides over a whole range of social, emotional and spiritual issues. Parents also talk with huge enthusiasm about the distinctive Christian character of Oakington school. They identify the schools "awareness of all the children" and the strong "spiritual and emotional support" offered by the school as being just two of the Christian characteristics which made them choose Oakington for their children. Another sign of the strength of partnership with parents is the fact that parents of over 30% of the children attend the regular 'festival assemblies' at the linked church. Provision

for both RE and collective worship meet the National Societies Statement of Entitlement.

SIAMS report March 2015 Oakington CE Primary School Oakington CB24 3AL