



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

St Peter's Church of England Middle School

Crimp Hill Road

Old Windsor

SL4 2QY

Previous SIAS grade: Good

Diocese: Oxford

Local authority: N/A

Date of inspection: 10th December 2014

Date of last inspection: 10th September 2009

School's unique reference number: 141349

Headteacher: Sharon Yardley

Inspector's name and number: Nick McKemey 280

School context

St Peter's is a small, all-ability middle school with 225 students serving Old Windsor and the Windsor area. Most students are of UK white heritage with a small number from minority ethnic and faith backgrounds. The proportions with defined educational needs and from disadvantaged backgrounds are in the lowest categories nationally. In November 2013, shortly after the arrival of the new headteacher, an Ofsted inspection judged the school to be inadequate. Subsequently there have been significant changes to the governing body, the staff team and the curriculum. St Peter's became an academy as a member of the Oxford Diocese Schools Trust on 1st November 2014.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Peter's School as a Church of England school are good

- The passion and commitment which the governors and headteacher have brought to the task of establishing St Peter's as a school with a distinctively Christian character are outstanding.
- The all-embracing and crystallised Christian values are transforming the effectiveness of St Peter's distinctive character in meeting the needs of all the students.
- St Peter's School has a growing ethos of inclusive Christian fellowship in which, whatever his or her denomination, faith or belief, every individual is valued to the full.
- Collective worship has become a core and transformational element in the life of St Peter's School.

Areas to improve

- Where appropriate, revise published policies and codes of conduct so that all members of the school community can see clearly that they embody the Christian vision and values.

- Extend the excellent student leadership and participation in church worship to whole school collective worship.
- Having achieved a stable learning environment in RE, extend the level of challenge and risk in learning tasks, especially for the more able.
- Intensify the focus on spiritual and moral development in RE to complement and reinforce the content of collective worship and the broader curriculum.

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

St Peter's aspires to be an outstanding school that by its distinctive Christian character enables each student to fulfil their full potential. To achieve this, the leadership and governance has established a new Biblically rooted Christian vision for the school. This is realised through the values of trust, wisdom and compassion, which are owned and articulated by both students and staff. The values are understood as the foundation of an ethos of inclusive Christian fellowship, encompassing every aspect of life and learning. 'This helps unite all the staff', commented one teacher. The increasingly distinctive Christian character of St Peter's School is having a positive impact on attitudes, behaviour and wellbeing. Attendance is in line with the national average and any type of exclusion is very rare. Students are keen to point out the importance of Christian values, such as wisdom, to their progress, achievement and personal development. As a result students of all denominations, faiths and none feel equally valued as members of the St Peter's community. Because of improved behaviour, attitudes, and progress parents welcome the strengthening of the distinctive Christian character of St Peter's School. Some students make values referenced judgements on behaviour and bullying. This is despite the published policies and codes of conduct not yet being fully aligned with the specifically Christian vision.

Academic achievement is steadily improving. Advances have been made in the expected levels of achievement in grammar, punctuation, spelling, reading, writing and mathematics. This is the result not only of significant improvements in curriculum, assessment and teaching but also the influence of the Christian values on the students' approach to learning.

The theological education derived from the students' experience in collective worship is making a significant contribution to spiritual and moral development. The weekly, Bible based, themes, such as 'Joy' are applied to learning and relationships. The RE curriculum makes a sound contribution to the students understanding of Christianity as a multi cultural world faith.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship is transforming the life of St Peter's. It is well supported in this by the strong relationship with the parish church. Because of this, worship makes a significant contribution to the harmony and spirituality of the whole school. 'This school is more like a family', was a comment repeated by staff, students and parents. The Christian vision and values encompass the content of worship, including the weekly themes. Worship constitutes a blend of Anglican Church calendar events and Biblically based content on values, themes and moral issues. This is the result of the thoughtful planning that provides the effective tutor group, whole school and church worship. The students respond positively to collective worship and enjoy joining in the singing and responses. Student participation and contribution to worship in church and tutor groups is substantial and includes prayer and performing arts. Student leadership and participation in whole school worship is, however, relatively limited. Students of all denominations, faiths and no faith participate willingly in all the forms of worship. The overall impact of worship means a growing number have good knowledge and understanding of the life and teaching of Jesus and the meaning of the Holy Trinity.

Prayer and reflection make a substantial contribution to the spiritual development of the whole school community. Frequent use is made of the prayer tree and box. In worship students reflect on themes and values in relation to world events. A girl in Year 6 said, 'I think about how humans make such terrible mistakes'. Students respond positively to regular and formal forms of prayer in collective worship. They are mindful to pray for those in crisis or need. As a result of the school's strong prayer life, most students acquire a good understanding of the different forms and purposes of collective and private prayer. A programme of whole-day,

off-timetable and off site spiritual retreats is strengthening the student's capacity for spiritual reflection and prayer.

The effectiveness of the religious education is satisfactory

In the period leading up to this academic year RE experienced significant turbulence in leadership and teaching. Standards of achievement and progress were diminished and the role RE plays in the church school limited. The school leadership's drive to improve RE is being effectively monitored, challenged and supported by the governors. A diocesan designed scheme of work is being followed and appropriately qualified leadership of RE has been secured. The curriculum has been stabilised and the students are making steady progress in lessons and units of learning. Individual progress is robustly monitored by a new data tracking system that is helping students meet their target outcomes. As a result of these improvements RE is now perceived as a valued subject, which helps support, the wider improvements in the school's academic performance.

Teaching and assessment have improved so that achievement in RE is now satisfactory. Students find the lessons interesting and motivating because of good, briskly paced teaching. Parents report that some children are researching into RE topics on their own initiative as the result of stimulating learning in class. For younger students levels of attainment are broadly in line with national expectations. Most of the older students make satisfactory progress towards expected levels of knowledge and understanding. The level of challenge, however, for the more able students is insufficient to enable them to meet their full potential.

The students, aided significantly by the school's Christian values and collective worship, have acquired some sound basic elements of spiritual, theological and moral literacy. Most students can make informed links between Christian teaching and their personal moral perspectives. RE makes a positive contribution to students' familiarity with the Christian faith and the Anglican tradition. Through the new scheme of study students acquire satisfactory understanding, knowledge and respect for other denominations, faiths and beliefs.

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

The passionate commitment with which the governors and headteacher have brought to the task of re-establishing St Peter's as a distinctively Christian school is outstanding. The transition to academy status has gone hand-in-hand with a radical re-evaluation of St Peter's as a church school. The 2009 SIAS focus for development has, consequently, been comprehensively addressed. As a result a Biblically rooted vision, with highly appropriate Christian values, increasingly underpins every aspect of life at St Peter's. The open consultation process means that the students identify strongly with 'their' values. These are also enthusiastically endorsed by the staff. The flourishing of St Peter's as a church school is secured by thorough evaluation by the Christian Ethos Working Party and close monitoring by the governors. The leadership and management of St Peter's, thereby, demonstrate the capacity to create an outstanding church school. In support of this St Peter's has strong and productive relationships with the parish and local Church schools.

The strengthened Christian ethos at St Peter's School is having a positive impact on students' wellbeing and achievement. Substantial progress has been made on the issues identified by Ofsted in 2013. As a result of a comprehensive improvement strategy, attainment levels are steadily improving for all groups.

Because of effective leadership the impact of the Christian character and the provision of collective worship are significant strengths. Members of the local community have remarked on the improved behaviour and disposition of the students. Work is in progress to make RE outstanding with highly qualified subject leadership secured. In difficult circumstances the leadership has stabilised the programme of study enabling the students to make modest but steady progress. Across the curriculum there are creative initiatives, which are successfully nurturing spiritual and moral development. An example is the focus in English on moral choice in narrative writing.

