



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

### Great Waldingfield Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Folly Road  
Sudbury  
Suffolk  
CO10 0RR

**Previous SIAMS grade: outstanding**

**Current inspection grade: good**

**Diocese: St Edmundsbury and Ipswich**

Local authority: Suffolk

Dates of inspection: 3 November 2015

Date of last inspection: 15 December 2010

School's unique reference number: 124699

Headteacher: T Hosford

Inspector's name and number: A Reeder 659

#### School context

Great Waldingfield CE VC Primary has undergone some significant staffing and structural changes for a small school since the last inspection. A new headteacher was appointed in September 2013 and a new deputy headteacher and special educational needs co-coordinator have been appointed this academic year. The school changed to a full primary in 2012, and now has pupils aged 4 to 11. An additional classroom has been recently built to accommodate the 143 children on roll, alongside a revamped staffroom, changing rooms and an outdoor landscaping project, which includes a new free flow outdoor area for the Foundation Stage children.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Great Waldingfield as a Church of England school are good

- Christian values are at the heart of the life of the school. Children talk freely about how these values are part of how they live out their lives together, leading to exemplary behaviour.
- Christian values drive school improvement and underpin key decisions made. The school's leadership is honest and perceptive about their strengths and areas to develop.

#### Areas to improve

- To design and implement evaluation tools to record the monitoring work of Foundation Governors in developing and sustaining the school's ethos in order to evaluate the impact that visits to the school make on future improvement.
- To increase opportunities for pupils to lead and evaluate collective worship so that

they feel included and have a voice in the development of their worship at school.

- To support the newly appointed religious education (RE) subject leader in carrying out their key role in monitoring progress and standards in RE so that the new syllabus is implemented in a way that engages the learners.

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

The school has a very strong ethos and the children are able to articulate clearly the core Christian values that underpin school life. They showed great compassion to a child who had a recent operation and was in a wheelchair and ensured he was included in their playground games. Many children explained that if they had arguments in school that forgiveness was a key component in helping to put things right. There was a lively discussion about some missing football cards in a Religious Education lesson. Collective worship that day had discussed this issue linked to a Bible story, and appealed to everyone's Christian values and children then spontaneously donated cards to the child who had lost theirs. The headteacher is driven by Christian values and this permeates through the school community. Pupils talk freely and with meaning about compassion, generosity and forgiveness in their daily lives. The school's Values for Life are clearly understood by the vast majority of the school body. Children's attitudes, relationships and behaviour for learning are excellent because of this. Achievement and attendance have improved since the last Ofsted inspection in June 2014. . Achievement in KS2 is now above national average in reading, writing and maths, and from a low starting point most children make good or better progress. A detailed action plan has secured improvements. Within their classes, pupils are both nurtured and challenged according to their individual needs and abilities. This improvement is mirrored in Religious Education. In RE lessons the children were highly engaged, enjoying their learning, and being pushed to consider big questions such as 'What makes a good leader?' The teachers used a varied range of resources to capture the children's interest. The school is of a mono cultural make up and the teaching team are aware that they need to ensure that opportunities are grasped to invite visitors from other key faiths into school and to ensure other that world faiths are taught to the same high quality as Christianity. Children through the implementation of a new syllabus understand the multi cultural diversity of Christianity and that people worship in different ways. Achievements of all kinds are regularly celebrated, and demonstrating Christian values has high importance alongside academic successes. Stars of the week are chosen for showing the school's Christian values in action such as perseverance, wisdom, service and thankfulness. They are well publicised in the school's newsletter and children can make the link about the values and their own behaviour. "It's what makes us special."

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

Collective worship is well planned and the whole school meets every day to worship together. Displays throughout the school hall focus on elements of Christianity. Daily worship is firmly rooted in Christian teaching. There is variety in those leading worship which leads to different delivery styles and a range of creative opportunities to engage the participants. Members of the parish church lead worship once a week and they base their worship exclusively in the teachings of the Bible and link this to modern life situations with which the children are familiar. Children make choices based on what they have learnt from the Bible. The children talked about being thankful which was a recent worship theme, and talked about how lucky they were to have a new playground and prayer space where they could talk to God. The 'Open the Book' team from Future Vision lead worship once a fortnight based on Biblical teachings with children participating as actors. The children joined in with the telling of the parable of the rich farmer and reflected thoughtfully about what being rich means in terms of human relationships and a relationship with God as father, son and Holy Spirit. The children listened attentively and were respectful and thoughtful during times of quiet reflection. The opportunities for children to lead and evaluate worship are currently limited but several

children spoke to the inspector about how they occasionally offer their own prayers, and would welcome the opportunity to play a greater part. Pupils have a good knowledge of the Anglican year, the sacraments and special festivals. The school visit the parish church of St Lawrence regularly throughout the year for services such as Christingle, Easter and a live nativity. The live nativity involves the community as the children journey to the church and stop off along the way to see if they can find a place to stay. Parents are invited to attend services and the school welcomes new families at the start of the new school year with a service in church. Parents appreciate the opportunity to worship with their children, and feel this makes them feel included in the school worship community. Active foundation governors visit regularly and have a good knowledge of the school. These visits are not recorded formally therefore there is no record of key discussions and the rationale for any changes or developments. They work closely with the headteacher in planning the next steps in development.

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

The school have worked closely as a team to move the school on from its last Ofsted inspection, and areas requiring improvement have been tackled decisively by the leadership team whilst maintaining the strong ethos of the school. All stakeholders led by the headteacher ensure that Christian values underpin key decisions in school improvement. They work closely together to bring about change and, despite the challenges of this, maintain a strong relationship of mutual support and respect. Children live out these values and this is reflected in motivated, co-operative learners with a strong sense of their own spiritual development and exemplary behaviour. Children try hard to live out the Christian values that form the basis of their relationships in school and beyond. The ethos of the school is an agenda item at each meeting of the governor's Education Committee, resulting in a key action to implement a new RE syllabus that focusses on developing a big question philosophical approach to teaching and learning. Achievement in KS2 core subjects has improved, and from a low starting point most children make good or better progress. There is a strong supportive relationship between the school and the church of St Lawrence. The church offers the children school youth clubs which are well attended and these relationships have resulted in several children from families of no faith going forward to christening and confirmation. A newly developed relationship with the Diocese has been taken up and they have offered the new RE subject leader valuable support in the form of training and one to one support in writing an RE action plan. This has given the school a clear sense of direction and it has started to have an impact on the pupils as RE teaching becomes more interactive and challenging. It has also supported the development of a newly qualified teacher to become a subject leader. The quality of RE teaching and the implementation of the school's syllabus for teaching RE is a current focus for improvement to ensure that RE underpins and develops the school's Christian values and character. Foundation Governors are active and involved in the life of the school and contribute informally to the school's self-evaluation which is perceptive and accurate.

SIAMS report November 2015 Great Waldingfield School Sudbury Suffolk CO10 0RR