



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church**

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

The Manor Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Roundways, Coalpit Heath, Bristol, BS36 2LF

Previous inspection grade: Outstanding

Current inspection grade: Outstanding

Diocese: Bristol

Local authority: South Gloucestershire

Date of inspection: 12 May 2016

Date of last inspection: 4 May 2011

School's unique reference number: 109176

Headteacher: Neil McKellar-Turner

Inspector's name and number: Margaret James 698

School context

The Manor is an average-sized, one form entry primary school, with 211 pupils on roll, located in the village of Coalpit Heath. The school serves this village as well as those in the surrounding area. The numbers of children known to be eligible to receive free school meals are below average, as are the numbers in receipt of Pupil Premium funding and those identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. The religious education (RE) and collective worship team leader left during this academic year, as did a second member of the three-strong team.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of The Manor as a Church of England school are outstanding

- Leadership given by the headteacher is inspirational. It is rooted in a clear Christian vision and driven by a passionate commitment to nurture each person as a unique individual made in the image of God.
- All members of staff understand and live out this vision on a daily basis. They are excellent role models and enable children to know that they are valued, cherished and safe to take risks.
- Children are thoughtful, reflective and articulate. They understand the importance of putting the needs of others before their own and flourish in an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust.

Areas to improve

- As children increase their leadership roles in collective worship, develop and deepen monitoring and evaluation in order to focus on its impact upon spiritual development.
- All governors to include monitoring and evaluation of the impact of Christian values as part of their regular monitoring cycle, to enable the Ethos Committee to maintain a strategic view of the school as a distinctive, effective and continually improving church school.

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

Life for all members of The Manor school community is characterised by a commitment to living out distinctively Christian values in an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect for the well-being of others. These values are known by all and are understood in their biblical context as being an expression of the Christian narrative. Children describe how the values enable them to be “the best people we can be” and are consistently focused upon how this allows for the development of a harmonious and respectful community. The shared understanding of spirituality and the inclusion of spiritual development as one of the three curriculum ‘drivers’ means that children’s development as holistic spiritual human beings is an ongoing priority in all learning. Consequently, their ability to reflect, to think for themselves freely and to consider life’s big questions is impressively mature. Children of all ages are comfortable to challenge others and to be challenged on their own opinions and they discuss issues with considerable depth. Their attitudes to learning have been significantly impacted by the introduction of ‘learning powers’ and these are making a difference to children in all classes across the school. Although the learning powers are not formally linked to Christian values, children consistently make these connections themselves and draw them together when discussing how they take on challenges in their learning. Members of staff explain how the embedded nature of the school’s Christian values enables children to apply the learning powers and recognise that their impact is reliant upon this foundation. Teachers and teaching assistants attribute much of the school’s high academic standards to this approach and to the focus which they put on the needs of the individual. Meeting the specific needs of each individual is of paramount importance at The Manor because all members of staff understand that everyone is unique and deserves to flourish. They regard this as being their responsibility as a distinctively Christian learning community. This approach, therefore, consistently shapes relationships as well as attitudes to teaching and learning, spiritual development and personal well-being. Difference is celebrated by all in The Manor school community and incidents of any type of bullying are rare. Children are confident that they know what to do if they are bullied but talk instead of ways in which they enjoy meeting and learning about people who are different from themselves. This attitude, in part, is a result of effective teaching and learning in RE. Through consistently engaging teaching and creative approaches, such as the regular Faith Days, the whole school community, despite being relatively mono-ethnic and mono-cultural, enjoys learning about people of other faiths and cultures. The teaching of Christianity is also very strong with the result that children have an impressive knowledge of Bible teaching which they often choose to apply to their own lives. Children reflect on how this is one of the ways in which their teachers help them to be ready for life when they leave the school.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Christian worship, prayer, Bible teaching and their relevance to daily life, are genuinely at the heart of school life at The Manor. Children of all ages engage enthusiastically in worship – whole school, Key Stage and class worship - because it is interesting and relevant to the daily challenges which they face. As a result, they participate whenever possible and lead several elements of acts of worship, both in school and in the parish church. Children of all ages confidently and spontaneously lead prayer for the whole school community and they are eager to increase their involvement to the point where they independently plan and lead whole acts of worship. The headteacher already has plans in place to work towards this. He is wisely taking one step at a time to enable children to understand the different elements of worship and to allow them to develop spiritually as they grow as worship leaders. Anglican traditions and practices, such as simple liturgy, response prayers and the use of Christian symbols in worship are included with the specific purpose of enriching worship for all. As a result, children talk with knowledge and understanding of different times within the church year and the Christian calendar. Governors, the vicar and members of the church community are also involved in the worship life of the school with the result that children consider the church to be an important aspect of the life of their school. Parents, too, appreciate these links and

describe the positive impact which this, along with Christian values, has on family life. Prayer is a very important part of life at The Manor school. There are many opportunities to pray during the school day and, as a result, children have an impressive understanding of the purpose of prayer. They eloquently describe a variety of ways in which they can pray and talk of the freedom they have to make up their own mind about praying as long as they respect others. They apply their focus on the needs of others to prayer and explain how it is “talking to God and asking for things that only He can give, like peace and forgiveness”. Their understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit is also impressive. Feedback on worship is at an early stage but, because it is focused on the impact of the message, has already led to changes being made. Governors have some involvement in this evaluation process but, at present, it is mainly led by the headteacher. The Spiritual Space, Peace Garden and the regular Prayer Club led by parents and church members, also help children to make prayer and spiritual reflection intrinsic and relevant aspects of everyday life, thereby having a positive and transformational impact upon spiritual development within the school community.

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

Following his appointment in September 2014, the headteacher led a comprehensive review of the school’s vision and values which included meaningful consultation with the whole school community. This was driven by his own clear and unequivocal Christian vision for children, which focuses on the value and needs of each individual as being unique in the eyes of God. He is uncompromising in his insistence that each person will be enabled to flourish in their gifts and talents and this shapes all that the school does. For example, the curriculum has been specifically designed to bring out the very best in each child. Consequently, all achievements are celebrated and children are confident in their own abilities. They are also mindful of the achievements and talents of others and frequently identify these and draw attention to what their peers are doing. Because this focus on the individual is rooted in the Christian narrative, it leads to the creation of a nurturing and supportive community where everyone puts the needs of others first. The Community Council is an excellent example of this. Children and adults work together to, in the words of a child, “take the best of the school into the local community, for their benefit, not for ours”. Children are regarded as being co-leaders and are involved in a wide range of committees and decision-making processes. They know that their views are important and respond with maturity and respect for their teachers. Governors are very committed to the school and know it well. They are involved in monitoring and evaluating the school as a church school, for example through the annual Governors’ Day, and make suggestions for improvement. This involvement, although regular, is not yet frequent enough to allow governors to develop a fully independent perspective. Links with the church are excellent and result in a cohesive Christian community. Partnerships with parents are also very good and benefit both children and their families. Parents speak of the welcome, care and real friendship which they find within the school community and describe the “transformational effect” which the school has had on many of their lives. They describe ways in which teachers and teaching assistants often “go the extra mile” to ensure that children and their families are being nurtured and cared for. RE has been very well-led for the past few years by a team of three members of staff and a link governor. Following the recent departure of two members of this team, high standards have been maintained. The recruitment of an experienced RE leader is now a priority for the head and governors, who have an excellent understanding of the many changes afoot in the subject. Statutory requirements for RE and collective worship are met because the leaders of this school have an excellent understanding of their opportunities as a church school as well as of their responsibilities. The establishment of strong relationships with other similar schools is instrumental in the introduction of ongoing initiatives and strategic developments and is having a positive impact upon the school’s performance in a range of ways, including its Christian distinctiveness and effectiveness as a learning community.