



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

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

### Eardisley Voluntary Controlled Church of England Primary School

Eardisley  
Hereford  
HR3 6NS

**Diocese: Hereford**

Local authority: Herefordshire

Dates of inspection: June 26<sup>th</sup> 2014

Date of last inspection: March 12<sup>th</sup> 2009

School's unique reference number: 116804

Headteacher: Mrs Bridget Knight

Inspector's name and number: Miss Allyson Taylor 768

#### School context

Eardisley Church of England School is a small village primary school of 90 learners. The number on roll has increased by over 40% in the last two years. The current headteacher has been in post since 2011. Learners come from predominantly white British families. The number of learners with more complex special educational needs is above average.

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

- The school's commitment to the core Christian values of joy, friendship and determination ensures excellent personal development and well-being of learners
- The rise in academic standards and rate of progress are a direct result of the commitment to the school's chosen Christian values
- The passionate commitment of the headteacher and other leaders to show how each child can follow in Jesus' footsteps and apply His teaching in their own journeys of faith and learning

#### Areas to improve

- Ensure regular active involvement of learners in planning, leading and evaluating collective worship so that this vital aspect of Christian distinctiveness keeps developing
- Provide longer opportunities for personal, quiet reflection to enhance spiritual development
- Monitor marking in religious education and other subjects so it is consistent across school and gives learners clear next steps to ensure standards continue to rise

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

This is a thriving community where Christian values give learners the "qualities for living and learning" described in the main aims of the school. The Christian character instils self-belief and enables staff and learners of all ages and abilities to be the best they can be. A range of stakeholders explained that joy,

friendship and determination are the most important values to their school. These are clearly understood as reflecting the teaching and example of Jesus. The core values were chosen, after much debate, by the school council. Representatives from each class also created the vision statement: "In all that we do, our values shine through." Learners can explain how passages from the Bible help them understand how the values chosen affect them. One child explained: "If we didn't have our values, we would not be who we are today or get on in life in the future." Behaviour and relationships across ages are exemplary and learners articulate with maturity and confidence how the value chosen each month helps them to live and learn together. All members of staff, including volunteers, provide effective role models. The school is highly inclusive and has welcomed several children with complex learning and social needs, yet it is hard to distinguish these in the school community. With a predominantly white British profile, the school is right to focus on learners developing a respectful understanding of other countries, cultures, and faiths. An established link with a school in Tanzania supports this aim and the school is exploring a global learning programme to extend provision. The Christian character of the school has a significant impact on the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of learners. Spirituality and spiritual development are clearly defined and understood by staff and governors. Religious education(RE) has a strong focus on Bible teaching. RE is linked to other subject areas, for example, art created to celebrate Holy week. The learning environment celebrates achievements and shows the rich, creative curriculum. Stunning displays of work demonstrate that learners are able to express their thoughts and emotions with confidence. Learners explain how the school, as a Church school, helps them to see everyone as special to each other, to their families, to their school and to God.

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

Collective worship is at the heart of how the school affirms its Christian foundation. Worship focuses on the Bible and life of Jesus; it results in learners both understanding and following his examples and teaching in their own lives. One child stated: "Jesus shows me how to be a better person." Whole school and class acts of worship are key drivers in developing knowledge of the Christian origins of values and how these provide a strong moral framework. The school makes creative use of the parish church, school hall and outdoor space to enhance learners' experience of worship. Learners say this helps them see that God is everywhere. Worship is planned in detail by the headteacher and incumbent who are supported by foundation governors and visitors in offering a range of worship which is both varied in style and reflects Anglican traditions. Feedback from a range of members of the school community is that the variety of worship gives all a sense that Christianity is a worldwide religion. Symbols and music are used effectively to set the tone and encourage reflection during worship. The sign of the cross, reflecting the Trinity, the Lord's Prayer and a range of greetings and blessings are used each week and all ages respond to these as familiar elements of worship. Learners plan and lead elements of worship and they state they would like more opportunities to lead whole school worship. The views of learners, staff, parents and governors are sought and recorded. There is room for the school to act upon these views more formally in development plans and to evaluate the outcomes of such plans. Prayer and reflection are an integral part of each day. These have a profound impact on learners of all ages. One child in Year 4 said: "Reflection opens our minds and calms us so we are ready to work." Two groups of children, selected from all classes, expressed a wish for reflection and quiet prayer for longer than the minute often allowed each day. One child expressed a wish to have a reflection space to use away from others at lunchtime. As such, there is a widespread appreciation of the impact of prayer and reflection on the spiritual growth of learners.

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

The headteacher is an outstanding role model of care for each member of the school community. Her commitment to a high quality education for all abilities, grounded on Christian principles, means there is an increased demand for places, a rising roll, and improving academic standards. She demonstrates a considered understanding of how core Christian values, allied to children's engagement with these, leads to good academic progress and secures personal well-being. Since her appointment in 2011, the school has achieved the Values Quality mark. The incumbent and governors rightly attribute the success of the school to the clarity of vision and purpose the headteacher has engendered among all members of the school community. Governors play a vital part in upholding and promoting the core Christian values chosen by the school council. Parents recognise the special qualities of the school and attribute this to the

transformational impact of the shared vision and values. They express confidence that the school meets individual needs. One parent said that the children are: “Ambassadors for values.” Another described how: “Values enable my child to consider life’s big questions and make good choices.” Parents state that all members of staff are approachable and how they feel welcome in school. Governors work with staff to evaluate the school’s strengths and identify areas for improvement. An ethos committee audits provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their findings are linked to school development plans. The next step is for governors and senior leaders to evaluate the impact of their actions. The focus for development from the previous report, around providing more classroom based worship, has been met through the introduction of reflection and prayer throughout the school day. The headteacher coordinates religious education and collective worship. Learners state they enjoy making the many beautiful artefacts displayed around school and learning about beliefs and customs of non-Christian religions. Portfolios of evidence confirm that there is much high quality work in RE. However, marking of written work in books is variable in terms of helping learners know how to improve. The coordinator is aware of this and is to review marking across the school to make it more consistent and aimed at raising standards in all subjects. Partnerships with the church, local community, diocese and national organisations, like RE Today, are mutually beneficial. Through such partnerships, Eardisley’s special qualities are recognised beyond the local area.

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