



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Townlands Church of England Primary Academy

Meadow Court Road
Earl Shilton
Leicestershire
LE9 7FF

Previous SIAMS grade: Good

This inspection grade: Outstanding

Diocese: Leicester

Local authority: N/A

Dates of inspection: 7 May 2015

Date of last inspection: 5/7 July 2010

School's unique reference number: 120191

Headteacher: Dawn White

Inspector's name and number: Sheila Grice (165)

School context

Townlands is an average sized primary school with 233 children on roll. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs or disabilities is in line with the national average. A significant number of pupils live in households with low incomes. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The school has undergone a major refurbishment recently which affected all areas of the school. Townlands became an Academy in January 2015.

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

- Christian values are firmly embedded in all aspects of school life, resulting in learners having a very good understanding of how these values impact on their own achievement and behaviour.
- The Christian love and care shown to all children makes a significant difference to their lives.
- Collective worship is of a very high quality and inclusive, engaging all children.
- The outstanding leadership, rooted in Christian values, provided by the headteacher and senior leadership team, along with the support received from staff, governors and local clergy, is a key strength of this school.

Areas to improve

- Further develop children's knowledge of diversity and difference, within the church and different faith communities, in order to deepen their understanding of different practices and beliefs.

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

This school is exceptional in nurturing, encouraging and challenging learners so that they achieve their very best and become valuable members of a multi-cultural society. On entry into Reception most children are performing below age related expectations. By the time they leave Townlands, at the end of KS2, standards are well above expected levels and results are improving rapidly year on year. The school's vision, 'Nurturing children to achieve their full potential in a caring, Christian community' is clearly evident in all aspects of school life. The school's Christian values are prominently displayed on a cross in each classroom as a symbol of Jesus being a central part of school life. Children understand that the values are rooted in the Bible and that they reflect 'God who loves us and gives us hope'. They can articulate the importance of forgiving others and showing love and care both within their families and to those in our world in greatest need. This is clearly demonstrated through the fundraising for charities which has totalled an amazing £5,255 already this year. Staff and governors are united in their understanding of the importance of the school's distinctively Christian character. This is evident through the school's unique approach to showing genuine love and care to each and every child and member of staff. Children's behaviour and their attitudes towards learning are both outstanding. The policy of asking children to reflect on the consequences of their actions, as well as the school's Assertive Mentoring, programme has resulted in children taking responsibility for their own behaviour and supporting each other to make the right choices. Children are extremely polite and well-mannered and rightly proud of the Diana award, 'Anti-Bullying Champion' received last year. Religious education teaching is given a very high priority and it contributes significantly towards the children's spiritual and cultural development. The children benefit from the recently developed wildlife area which is used by all classes to appreciate the beauty of our world and as a quiet place of reflection. Children are challenged to think deeply and ask searching questions in order to deepen their own understanding, for example, 'Does a beautiful world mean there is a wonderful God'? Previous links with a school in Nepal, an annual European languages day and a recent visit to the Jain Centre in Leicester have helped children gain an appreciation of different faiths and cultures. Further visits to places of worship and a Faith Day are planned but these are not yet embedded into the school's planning cycle to ensure increased opportunities for children to deepen their understanding of cultural diversity and difference.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

High quality collective worship, which enriches the lives of both adults and children, is clearly at the heart of this school community. Diocesan themes, with a strong focus on biblical teaching, are used to plan worship each term. The attitude of children towards collective worship is very positive because they are actively engaged in worship and it supports their spiritual development. Visitors, including 'Mr Scrappy' and local clergy, regularly lead acts of worship so enabling children to have rich, varied experiences. Children are excited about these assemblies and several children are now encouraging their parents to take them to church on Sundays as a result of relationships formed with local clergy. The recent very moving Easter service in the church included sharing some inspirational stained glass windows, created by children, which are now displayed outside each classroom. Singing, prayer and reflection time form an integral part of worship and consequently collective worship contributes significantly towards children's spiritual development. Prayers displayed on the Prayer Tree in the entrance hall, show that children are confident to write sensitive and thoughtful prayers. Some children are also choosing to pray at home as well as in school, describing prayer as a 'special moment when we can get close to God'. Worship is consistently and recognisably Christian and children are developing a good understanding of local Anglican practice and the Christian calendar. Children can recognise and talk confidently about the Trinity as a result of regular use of the Trinity song which is displayed in each class, as well as discrete teaching across school. Even very young children talk about 'The Holy Spirit

is inside us, telling us what to do'. Older children liken the Trinity to an apple with the skin being like the Father, the flesh representing the Son and the seed being the Holy Spirit growing in us. The leaders for collective worship have been instrumental in ensuring that collective worship is effectively monitored by staff and children. Consequently worship is continually improving, for example, monitoring showed that children's understanding of the Lord's Prayer was underdeveloped. There is now a large poster of the Lord's Prayer displayed in the hall and children talk confidently about their understanding of different parts of the prayer.

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

All leaders in school articulate a distinctively Christian vision for the school and they are clear how the Christian values encompass all areas of school life. One teacher explained how 'The Christian faith is used to hang everything else onto'. Children are exceptionally well cared for within a 'family' atmosphere based on Christian love and hope. Staff go the extra mile to ensure the needs of all children are met, whether academic or social. All staff consistently ensure children have a thorough understanding of the school's Christian values. Leaders for collective worship and RE are focussed on school improvement. They have an excellent understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development and have been instrumental in securing changes, particularly in the teaching of RE, which have resulted in excellent consistency across school and high quality learning experiences which impact significantly on children's spiritual development. The foundation governor encourages and challenges the school very effectively. He is fully involved in the role of monitoring and evaluation and ensures that the school's Christian character is central to all decision making, as was evidenced in the decision to become an academy earlier this year. The recently formed Bible Club at lunchtimes is heavily over-subscribed and it gives the children in Years 2/3/4 the opportunity to share and discuss Bible stories in more depth. Children attending this club clearly enjoy these sessions enormously. Parents speak very positively about the benefits of their children attending a church school and they value the 'loving, caring, nurturing environment' which encourages their children to look out for each other and help in any way they can. Links with the local churches in Earl Shilton are excellent, offering mutual benefit to all. Issues from the previous inspection have been addressed and the school is well placed to continue to develop as a church school.