



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

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

### **The William Gladstone Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School**

Holden Crescent  
Newark  
NG24 4HU

**Previous SIAMS grade: N/A**

**Current inspection grade: Good**

**Diocese: Southwell and Nottingham**

Local authority: Nottinghamshire

Date of inspection: 15 October 2015

Date of last inspection: N/A

School's unique reference number: 1381486

Headteacher: Jackie Warren

Inspector's name and number: Lizzie McWhirter 244

#### **School context**

The William Gladstone Primary School is a new church school, resulting from the amalgamation of two community schools. Most of its 302 pupils are from a White British background. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language has risen steadily since the school opened. The number of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is double the national average. The headteacher has been in post since September 2012 when the school opened.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of William Gladstone as a Church of England school are good**

- Integral to the journey which this new church school is on is the dedicated Christian vision and commitment of the headteacher and assistant headteacher. This is embraced by governors and staff and ensures the Christian character of the school is grounded in Christian values, permeating all school life.
- The level of pastoral care in this nurturing and accepting Christian community which welcomes and supports every child as an individual and their families.
- The partnership between church and school, which is valued by everyone, whether or not they belong to the local Christian community.

#### **Areas to improve**

- Enrich pupils' personal and spiritual growth by involving them in leading spontaneous prayer in worship. This includes enabling pupils to grow in their understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- Embed the work of the governor distinctiveness group, involving pupils, parents and staff to enable positive development.
- Deepen pupils' understanding of the worldwide Christian church and enable them to meet people of other faith to enrich their learning and spiritual and cultural development.

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

The Christian vision and values of this new church primary school are at the heart of it all it does, underpinning all teaching and learning. The school's commitment to ensure that all will be welcomed and valued for who they are is an important part of its accepting Christian ethos. Relationships are good. This is because they are based on the school's chosen Christian values which include forgiveness and thoughtfulness. Both children and adults, including parents, can explain the importance of these values in their own words and celebrate them together. Pupils feel happy and safe and enjoy coming to school, where they are encouraged to strive to 'be the best'. Consequently, attendance is improving. The school attributes this to working closely with parents. The school has developed important staff roles, such as co-ordinators for English as an Additional Language and also Extended Services, which have made a real difference. Staff go the extra mile to support families without being judgemental. Good examples include building up positive links with the large traveller community and also accompanying families to the doctors. At the heart of the school's behaviour management policy is forgiving and forgetting as there is 'always a fresh start'. As part of the on-going commitment to the safety and welfare of the children, the school has strategies in place. These encourage a culture of positive behaviour through the school's Christian faith and church values, such as respect, to discourage bullying behaviour. Honesty, as one of the school's core values, is prized within a spirit of forgiveness, recognising we all make mistakes. Consequently, pupils are encouraged to reflect on their actions as part of their own spiritual growth. As one pupil put it, 'You should treat people how you want them to feel, make them welcome, not bully and accept them for who they are'. Achievement shows an improving picture, given the children's starting points. Home visits and training for staff on raising attainment and aspirations have contributed to this. A wide range of achievement is celebrated. This includes dance and football. Good examples include individual pupils who have won local dance competitions or been selected to play for Nottingham Forest Juniors. Some pupils aspire to be teachers because of the good role models they have experienced. Pupils enjoy their religious education [RE] in this school where RE is valued as a core subject alongside English and maths. Creative ways of engaging with RE have also empowered the staff. Good examples include pupils' poems and reflections on 'Where is God?' and 'What is Life?' for the annual 'Spirited Arts' competition. In addition, the school has found that pupils and staff have enjoyed seeing things anew as part of 'What If Learning'. This has resulted, for example, in pupils developing Christian thinking skills. Pupils show Christian values through their fundraising activities. They show respect for diverse cultures and beliefs through RE and worship, which enhances their global awareness. RE, therefore, makes a good contribution to the school's Christian character and to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school recognises that meeting people of faith, either at school or in a place of worship, helps deepen pupils' understanding of different faiths and cultures, enriching their spiritual and cultural development.

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

Collective worship, rooted in Christian values and Biblical teaching nurtures pupils' spiritual growth. Furthermore, the partnership between church and school is integral to the worshipping life of this school. Church services, such as Harvest are enjoyed and attended by parents, who value the links with the school, whether or not they belong to the local Christian community. Both the vicar and Methodist minister are welcome and regular visitors to school, often leading worship. One of the hallmarks at William Gladstone is the importance of prayer spaces. The vicar has been instrumental in developing these with the children. Good examples include children using lego to model what they thought heaven was like. The school grounds are valued by the children who welcomed working closely with their vicar in the design of an outdoor prayer space in the extensive wildlife area. This was valuable for building confidence and self-esteem. In addition, pupils find the wildlife is conducive to reflection as it is quiet and they are respectful of this space. They also welcome more outdoor worship, such as they experienced at

Christmas with the outdoor Nativity, which was 'amazing'. In addition, pupils say they value reflecting in the pair of carefully designed seats which enable them to feel they are 'being held in God's hands'. The headteacher and assistant headteacher model the pattern of worship. As a result, every member of staff is on the rota to lead worship through the year, with each class leading their class worship once a year. The children are learning to be proud of what they do. They really value having their own Bibles, which are also used in guided reading. They enjoy learning to link what is explicitly distinctive about their school to the gospels. Year 6 pupils take their Bibles with them when they leave. Pupils speak of their new school logo of a dove, symbolising new life, relating this to Bible stories they know and hear. Children are increasingly more involved in worship. Pupils enjoy sharing their prayers spontaneously in worship and say they would like to do this more often with 'time to think about God'. The school uses pupil voice as an important part of the evaluation of worship. Good examples include the range of hymns and songs used in worship to inform planning. Pupils experience worship at Southwell Minster, which nurtures their personal and spiritual growth as well as their understanding of Anglican worship. The school acknowledges that these are areas for development as well as enriching pupils' understanding of the Trinity in worship. Children are growing in their understanding of a Trinitarian God. Children say, God is the 'creator and Jesus is someone who died for us. The Holy Spirit came down to make the world better'.

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

The school's Christian foundation is effectively modelled by the headteacher and assistant headteacher. Both have found the Church School Leadership course instrumental to their roles. Their championing of a central Christian vision and dedication is strongly supported by governors and staff. The governor distinctiveness group ensures their work is underpinned by Christian values which include ensuring all groups of children, including those who are vulnerable, achieve and make progress. RE is monitored termly in line with other core subjects. Currently, no formal observations of RE lessons take place in this new church school. However, monitoring includes pupil interviews, book scrutinies, and talking to staff as well as visiting other schools to see what good RE looks like. Consequently, RE and worship meet statutory requirements and are well supported and resourced by the headteacher and assistant headteacher, with bespoke training and support from the diocese. Governors promote the wellbeing of all pupils and staff. This includes the development of all staff which addresses succession planning and support for leadership roles and responsibilities. Governors also value regular training to develop their role. The school has already identified the need to embed the work of their Christian distinctiveness group, involving parents, pupils and staff. Parents say they would value being involved. Community links are strong, especially with the parish church with members of Christ Church congregation coming in to school to hear children read. Furthermore, an art therapist is employed to work three days a week at school Barnabas Days, such as 'What Price Peace?' helps nurture pupils' spiritual and cultural development. Pupil voice is valued. They say they learn about God and Jesus and about peace in different parts of the world. Positively, the school was one of five schools included in a Holocaust Project, and they now feel empowered to go on and champion other schools to become involved. Parents speak highly of the staff, praising the support they give as well as treating the children as individuals. One parent said, 'This school has really helped me, been very supportive, pushed boundaries and gone out of their way to help'. Foundation governors testify to the school coming a long way on its journey over the last three years and to how much they 'enjoy being part of an exciting Christian community'.