



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

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

### Lamerton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Lamerton  
Tavistock  
Devon  
PL19 8RJ

**Previous SIAMS grade: Good**

**Current inspection grade: Good**

**Diocese: Exeter**

Local authority: Devon

Date of inspection: 8 July 2015

Date of last inspection: 8 June 2010

School's unique reference number: 113411

Executive headteacher: Melody Nicholls

Inspector's name and number: Patricia Morris 626

#### School context

Lamerton is a smaller than average primary school with 49 children on role. Children are taught in two classes. The school federated with Gulworthy Primary school in January 2012. The executive headteacher has been in post since September 2012. The majority of children are from the immediate village and outlying farms and are of white British heritage. The number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is in line with the national average. The proportion of children supported by pupil premium is in line with the national average.

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

- The hard work and commitment of the headteacher and governors is securing the Christian character of the school.
- Strong relationships based on Christian values are reflected in the care and compassion given to all children.
- The development of the whole child within a Christian context includes good support for those children with special educational needs.

#### Areas to improve

- Develop a set of explicit Christian values that children recognise as underpinning the Christian ethos of the school.
- Develop an understanding of what spirituality means to children and adults so that high quality opportunities to engage in spiritual experiences can be identified.
- Develop more rigorous systems to monitor and evaluate the impact of collective worship to include high quality evidence that identifies how to move the worship forward.
- Provide opportunities for governors to be more involved in the monitoring and evaluation of religious education (RE) and its' impact on the Christian distinctiveness of

the school.

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

The Christian character of Lamerton Primary school is good because the family atmosphere is clearly underpinned by Christian values. Children understand what it means to be a church school and recognise that they matter to God. This is evident in displays showing that they all belong to God's world and achievement boards reflecting the school motto of 'Dream it, Believe it, Achieve it'. Children are proud of their school and behave well, treating each other with respect and thoughtfulness. One child stated 'when we say sorry we really mean it'. The school however does not as yet focus explicitly on a specific set of values which limits the extent to which they are understood by children to be rooted in specific Christian teaching. Children are constantly given responsibility and the strong Christian environment enables them to develop their confidence to be independent learners and to think and act for themselves. The ethos committee contribute hugely to school life and are actively involved through challenging questioning, creating displays and taking worship. As a result, they make a positive impact on the school's Christian character and children recognise and value their involvement. There is a real community feel with close relationships between the school, church and the community who particularly value children's contributions and involvement in local events. Consequently, children see the mutual support as part of their lives and speak enthusiastically of their own participation in joint fundraising. This results in a good understanding of the needs of others. Children are particularly proud of their developing global links for which they fundraise such as their involvement in the Food For Thought project and raising money for a school garden at an overseas school that then feeds the whole community. The impact of this is clear in children's strong cultural awareness. Spirituality is supported mainly through discussions in Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) lessons that are interwoven with Bible passages. Classrooms provide quiet areas containing tactile crosses that children use for reflection. There are further opportunities to develop children's spiritual awareness outdoors through growing and harvesting from the school's allotment. However, there is no shared understanding of spirituality among both adults and children in the school community and opportunities to explore the children's spiritual development are missed. Children have a good understanding of Christianity as a world faith. This is supported through visits to places of worship for different religions, discussions in Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) lessons and visitors from other faiths. As a result, children show respect for the diversity within other faiths.

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

Collective worship is highly valued by all members of the school community. Children are actively engaged in worship and there is a genuine sense of enjoyment. They understand the significance of lighting the candle at the beginning of worship to represent Jesus as the light of the world. The partnership with the local church is very strong and this is reflected in the wide variety of church members who lead worship in the school. One child proudly explained a display corner saying 'these are photos of the people who look after us in church'. Children are especially enthusiastic about the Open the Book team who provide opportunities for them to participate through drama which impacts on their understanding of Bible stories and how they can be used as examples in their everyday lives. Opportunities to celebrate major festivals in the church year are reinforced through a timeline on a wall highlighting festivals and saints' days throughout the year. Children are able to discuss these days confidently and photos next to each festival help them to explain knowledgeably how and why they are celebrated in school and in church. They are particularly proud of the connection between their school and the local church of St Peter and talk animatedly about the rock of St Peter at the entrance of their school which was made by a member of the church and blessed by the previous vicar. Children are able to explain the significance of this and the connection with their school. Parents say it is the children who encourage them to go to services at the church which impacts on the sense of

belonging as a community. Prayer is a natural and important part of the school day. This is reflected in prayer books in each classroom and a school prayer written by the children. A prayer tree enables children to have the opportunity to write and share their own prayers and is surrounded by speech bubbles with quotes reflecting the importance of prayer to children. They have a very good understanding of the purpose of prayer and how it can help in times of need. For example, one child said 'prayer is important. I pray for my dad who is poorly'. There is a simple understanding of the Trinity that is reflected in the daily greeting of welcome, 'in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit'. Informal monitoring of worship takes place through child conferencing and a tick list but there are few formal opportunities to evaluate the effectiveness of worship that identifies areas for future improvements. Leaders recognise that a more systematic monitoring system involving all stakeholders needs to be in place to move forward in this area. Children are involved in preparing an area for daily worship and in planning end of term services but there is a lack of involvement in leading and planning on a more regular basis.

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

The leadership and management of the school as a church school is good. The headteacher, governors and staff have worked very hard to maintain the Christian ethos of the school since federating. This includes the initiation of an ethos committee involving two foundation governors that makes a very positive contribution to the life of the school. The result of this can be seen in the committed way everyone works together and the good understanding of how the Christian ethos makes a difference to the lives of the children. However, their work is at an early stage and has yet to be fully embedded in the life of the school. A happy and welcoming school has been established where all children are valued and know they matter to God. Governors are well informed and regularly challenge the leadership of the school with insightful questioning. They are very supportive of the school's Christian ethos and regard it as central not only to the life of the school but also to the whole community. Governors actively encourage members of the community to share their skills with the school. For example, making material crosses for a reflection area for younger children or a floral display for a mock wedding in religious education (RE). This impacts positively on relationships and brings a real feeling of togetherness between leaders of the school, church and the local community. Strong links with the church result in the church being seen as an extension of the school and the vicar who has been in post for two terms is eager to develop this relationship even further. Religious education contributes positively to the Christian character of the school. Progress in RE is good and in line with other core subjects if not better. The RE leader ensures future targets are identified and recognises more consistent marking across both key stages is needed with opportunities for children to respond and reflect on teacher's comments. Leaders recognise that a more structured and formal system for monitoring to include governors is needed to move this area of the school forward. Parents appreciate the way in which 'the school encourages children to openly discuss faith' and that 'children are taught the importance of acceptance, forgiveness and inclusion'. They feel they are well informed through newsletters and workshops and praise the open door policy where concerns are listened to and quickly acted upon. This results in a mutually supportive environment which impacts positively on children's learning and behaviour.

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