



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

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

### Corvedale Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Diddlebury, Craven Arms, SY7 9DH

**Previous SIAS grade:** Good

**Current inspection grade:** Satisfactory

**Diocese:** Hereford

Local authority: Shropshire

Dates of inspection: 28 September 2015

Date of last inspection: 15 November 2010

School's unique reference number: 123559

Headteacher: Jonathan Brough

Inspector's name and number: Andrew Teale 770

#### School context

Corvedale CE Primary, with 76 pupils in three mixed-age classes, serves a rural area between Ludlow and Much Wenlock. Located in the village of Diddlebury, the school is linked with St Peter's, Diddlebury, All Saints, Culmington, St Peter's, Stanton Lacy and St Michael's, Munslow. Most pupils are white British. Only small numbers receive additional 'pupil premium' funding and special needs levels are average. Continuing to nurture strong links with the church is seen as a core aim. The May 2014 Ofsted report described Corvedale as a good school in all areas. The headteacher has been in post since Easter 2015.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Corvedale as a Church of England school are satisfactory

- Corvedale is a school with a religious character, which provides a nurturing and supportive environment for children and families.
- The Christian ethos is evident and is having increasing impact upon the whole school community.
- The close partnership between the school, local churches and clergy enhances the Christian life especially the worship of the school.

#### Areas to improve

- Make more effective use of monitoring and assessment in religious education (RE) in order to facilitate increased differentiation and increase achievement levels for all pupils
- Fully implement the new agreed syllabus for RE.
- Plan more frequent experiences within the curriculum, which provide opportunities for learners to explore spirituality.
- Share the Christian leadership responsibilities more widely among staff, governors and children in school to enhance monitoring and development planning.

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

The school's mission and practice makes it explicit that Christian teaching, such as to value and treat one another equally, are central to the work of the school. These have helped the school to achieve progress and attainment



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

standards that are broadly in line with national results, although the very small cohorts make it difficult to draw conclusions from any single year. The school is aware of where it needs to continue to improve standards and is taking appropriate action, for example, introducing a new scheme of work for maths. It is too early to assess the impact of these changes in terms of meeting the needs of all learners. Attendance is high because children enjoy coming to school. Children feel safe and cared for at Corvedale. They are taught to take care of each other and older children regularly nurture and support those in younger year groups including the nursery. Relationships between different members of the community are also enhanced through the caring and helpful ethos, which dominates the school. A parent talked about her six year old daughter who offered advice to her mother, 'Stay calm. Pray and it will be answered'. During challenging times, the strong church partnership brings support to those that need it. Parents and children report that though problems are rare within the school, those that do occur are dealt with quickly and sensitively by staff. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of children is only satisfactory because RE teaching makes an inconsistent contribution to the development of learners. Occasional cultural and spiritual curricular experiences are provided, such as visits to different places of worship including a Sikh temple and a range of Christian buildings, but learners do not have sufficient opportunities to explore spirituality as part of their everyday lessons. There are some engaging displays around the school, which encourage spirituality and thought, however the prayerful reflection spaces are quite a recent addition and a stronger impact will require more time. RE is taught in mixed age groups where further differentiation is required to meet the needs of all learners. The children's survey showed that they value the distinctive ethos they experience in school and enjoy regular visits to church and the work of the incumbent. There is a focus on raising standards in religious education and this is already recognised as a central area for the school's development planning.

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

The whole school community is included in a worship cycle, which centres on its partnership with the associated churches. Parents are welcomed to worship on a weekly basis, an opportunity they clearly value. A wide range of teaching staff and pupils are given opportunities to plan and lead worship both in school and in church. Children also experience worship delivered by members of the wider community through the Acts 2 programme. The incumbent clearly has a major impact on the rich opportunities to worship in school and partner churches. Children take an active role in preparing the assembly hall for worship everyday. They sing worship songs with enthusiasm and older children take a lead role in modelling actions for younger children. Collective worship nourishes the prayer-life of the community. Children are comfortable and confident when joining in with prayers. Prayer outside collective worship, such as before lunch or in personal moments of reflection, is less well developed. The headteacher, with valued support from the incumbent, maintains an effective coordination and strategic overview of worship. School worship provides a strong framework for children's understanding of Anglican practise within a broader context of Christian traditions. The life of the school and the behaviour of members of the community is shaped and influenced by the strong worship traditions. Children show some understanding of God as the Holy Trinity but this would need further development to support an outstanding judgement. To become highly effective, the monitoring, evaluation and strategic planning for worship would require the deeper involvement of a larger group of staff and governors. Opportunities to develop a more inclusive leadership of worship in school have already been considered.

#### **The effectiveness of the religious education is satisfactory**

RE is recognised as an important subject by staff and children. Children clearly enjoy aspects of religious education, such as the visit for younger children to church for a role-play of a christening service, lead by the incumbent. Teaching in RE is satisfactory, however there is limited use of assessment. Pupils broadly attain standards expected for their age but there is no indication of the progress they are making or whether it is fast enough. The monitoring and assessment of RE work requires significant development in order to measure standards more clearly and ensure that all children reach their full potential in RE. Children respond positively to opportunities to learn about other world faiths and some children were seen to be developing their understanding of the five pillars of Islam by considering events in the news. RE is taught in mixed year group classes but learning



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

activities are not sufficiently well differentiated to meet the needs of different groups of learners. Children would also benefit from more opportunities to discuss and ask questions in RE in order to develop their skills of inquiry and reflection. Work in RE is supported by some engaging displays around the school. These are most effective where children have made contributions through their own work and where the display encourages interaction either independently or at the direction of the teacher. The RE curriculum provides some opportunities to enhance the SMSC development of children, such as through visits to sacred buildings. These clearly have a powerful impact on learning for staff and pupils but more frequent opportunities for spiritual reflection through RE are also needed. The agreed syllabus was introduced after the last inspection and the school is now in the process of introducing the new agreed syllabus. Further training and development opportunities are needed to facilitate this process.

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

Corvedale is meeting its statutory requirements as a Church of England school. Leaders provide a concerted approach to the distinctiveness and effectiveness of the school as a church school, although the creation of a clear Christian vision requires further development. The governing body are actively supportive in developing the school's Christian foundation. They have worked hard to refresh their own structure and to nurture a more vibrant partnership with the local churches. The school is clearly careful during staff appointments to ensure that successful applicants recognise the importance of the school's distinctive church school character to the wider community and are committed to the development of an effective church school environment. Christian values, such as service and thankfulness, have begun to contribute to the leadership of school and the relationships which exist between key stakeholders. Whilst learners recognise the school as a church school, they are not always able to recognise the impact this has on their SMSC development and well being. The improvement strategies adopted by the leaders of worship and RE are having some positive impact but are not yet sufficiently rigorous enough to bring about sustained improvement. The school engages in some self-evaluation of its distinctive character with consideration of pupil views as part of this process. The school leadership recognises the need for improvements in RE but this needs to be highlighted as a key area within the school development plan. Effective monitoring in RE requires significant development of the assessment and tracking system across the school. More rigorous assessment in RE needs to contribute to more effective differentiation, so that learning opportunities are well-matched to the needs of all groups of learners. Worship provides the hub for involvement of the church and wider community in school life. The headteacher, with some governors and teachers, attended diocesan training on nurturing spirituality in recent months and this is beginning to have a positive impact on leadership. The leadership structure is now well placed to preserve and develop the distinctive Christian character of the school. In order to be good the leadership within the school, for key strategic areas such as religious education and worship, needs to be more widely shared within the staff. This will enable them to develop as leaders within a church school setting and will provide valuable support for the wide ranging leadership roles and responsibilities of the headteacher.