

# National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

## Woodstock Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Shipton Road  
Woodstock  
Oxfordshire  
OX20 1LL

**Diocese:** Oxford

Local authority: Oxfordshire

Dates of inspection: 28<sup>th</sup> November 2013

Date of last inspection: 6<sup>th</sup> November 2008

School's unique reference number: 12318

Headteacher: Lisa Rowe

Inspector's name and number: Lynne Thorogood

Moderator: Lyn Field NS151

### School context

Woodstock C E school is an average sized primary school with a nursery. Most pupils come from a white British background, with a small number from other ethnic groups. The proportions with disabilities or special educational needs, or who are eligible for the pupil premium, are below average. The school serves the local small town, with a minority of pupils coming from villages further afield. The school is undergoing a major building programme until September 2014 because it is expanding to accommodate more pupils.

### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Woodstock C E Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding

The Christian character of the school and the prominence of its Christian values are central to all the school's work and are the major drivers for high academic standards, outstanding behaviour and the excellent achievement of all its pupils.

### Established strengths

- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are promoted to a high degree, and have a positive impact on behaviour and attitudes both in and out of school.
- Collective worship is a strength of the school because its weekly theme provides the foundation for work throughout each day and across a range of subjects.
- Decision-making by the school's leaders and managers is collaborative and is based on strong Christian principles and an ethos of mutual respect, support and care for all.

### Focus for development

- Develop ways of recording and monitoring pupils' personal and spiritual journeys as well as their growing knowledge and understanding of Christianity.

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

All pupils, regardless of ability or background, thrive within the warm Christian environment that is so successfully provided by Woodstock School. The strong Christian ethos is based on core Christian values known and understood by all members of the school community. These values underpin the outstanding teaching and shine through the excellent support offered to pupils that enables them to achieve outstanding academic results and demonstrate exemplary behaviour. One parent commented, 'The values permeate

every aspect of the school; they are instilled here and rub off on their behaviour outside school as well. They really care for each other.’ Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a notable strength of the school, and is promoted through religious education (RE) teaching, collective worship and regular opportunities to learn from experiences such as visiting a care home, working towards being a “Fair-trade School” or raising money for charities. Charity giving and caring for others and the environment stem from faith based moral understanding. Pupils articulate their faith and their understanding of Christianity in a mature manner, and also show in their actions and sometimes in their writing that their spiritual and moral development is strong. Much RE is taught through themed days, and pupils say they enjoy learning about different faiths and cultures. Shared books are compiled to record activities and the high-quality learning that results from these popular events. Pupils have regular opportunities to write and share prayers, particularly in the ‘Reflection Room’, (prayer space) which many pupils say they value. Opportunities to record their developing spirituality and their knowledge and understanding of Christianity are offered occasionally, and more structured recording of this is an area for further development. This has been identified by the school as an area for action.

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

Collective worship, held daily, has a special and central part in the life of the school and makes an outstanding contribution to spiritual and moral development. Pupils fully engage in the regular whole school act of worship, and contribute enthusiastically because worship is lively, interactive and relevant. A local minister from the Methodist church as well as the C. of E. clergy lead worship once a week. They follow an agreed and consistent pattern of worship. Collective worship is planned collaboratively by the worship co-ordinator and the local vicar who is also a foundation governor. It is based on the liturgical year, with a clear, appropriate theme for each week. A high staff presence ensures that key elements of the act of worship can be followed up and reinforced during the day. Daily worship is sometimes led by pupils and at the end of the week individual pupils’ achievements are celebrated during the service. This affirms their personal worth within the context of worship. One pupil remarked that for him, ‘Assembly is the best part of the day. You can be quiet and pray by yourself or join in with everyone else.’ Worship at the local church for the celebration of festivals is a regular event, and parents speak highly of these special times in church. As a result of their learning and experience during worship times, pupils gain an understanding of the nature of the Holy Trinity appropriate to their ages. Older pupils express a mature understanding; as one pupil put it, ‘The Lord God is father of Jesus, and so Jesus has God’s spirit flowing through him. The Holy Spirit is God’s goodness, and that is all around us.’ In line with recommendations from the previous inspection, collective worship has been regularly and thoroughly evaluated by pupils, governors, staff and parents. Feedback has shaped and re-shaped the pattern of worship over the course of the week and the structure of each day’s service. Collective worship continues to be regularly evaluated by the whole school community to bring about further improvement to the already excellent provision.

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

The standards achieved by the pupils are very high, and the ethos of collaboration and mutual support, together with the school’s Christian values has supported this. The distinctive Christian vision is clearly evident and effectively promoted by the head-teacher, clergy, governors and staff so that the school’s Anglican foundation is celebrated. The vision and spiritual leadership of the head-teacher is supported by the governors and the clergy team. It is very evident that an excellent partnership exists with church, school and community working together, which enables the school to go from strength to strength. All governors, including foundation governors carry out their responsibilities very effectively offering an appropriate balance of challenge and support. There are clear procedures for evaluation of the impact of initiatives, and the views of all concerned, including the pupils, are actively sought. This ensures that all planning is shared, and everyone involved including parents are kept fully informed. The teaching of RE and collective worship go beyond statutory requirements, and are developing and evolving in a continuous spiral of evaluation and improvement. The school works hard to ensure that staff are given opportunities for training that will be of benefit both to individual staff members and the school, whether as worship leaders or future leaders of faith schools. Training courses attended are run by the diocese or the National College, and school-based training is provided by senior staff for colleagues. There are good and supportive links with the diocese.