



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Wadham Church of England Community School

Wadham School
Mount Pleasant
Crewkerne
Somerset
TA18 7NT

Diocese: Bath and Wells

Local authority: Somerset

Date of last inspection: 19th October, 2009

Date of inspection: 15th October, 2014

School's unique reference number: 123893

Headteacher: David Derbyshire

Inspector's name and number: Rev John Angle (119)

School context

Wadham School is a 13-19 Church of England Community School with 602 students, 75 of whom are in the Sixth Form. It serves the towns of Crewkerne and Ilminster and the surrounding villages.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Wadham School as a Church of England school are good.

- Enthusiastic and committed Christian leadership has ensured significant progress in all areas of school life.
- Christian values permeate the life of the school. They are effectively promoted in a wide variety of ways.
- The school chaplain makes a strong and effective contribution to the Christian character of the school.
- The care and nurture shown to disadvantaged and vulnerable students and students with additional needs makes a significant contribution to their personal development.

Areas to improve

- Ensure arrangements for collective worship are fully compliant with statutory requirements
- Ensure that students' spiritual development is more strongly encouraged through acts of collective worship, assemblies, the 'Thought for the Week' and other areas of the curriculum
- Involve students in the planning, delivery and evaluation of collective worship and assemblies.

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

The school's values deriving from its distinctly Christian character permeate the ethos and life of the school in a way which is meaningful and relevant. Students are encouraged to become good human beings and to live harmoniously in society. The school's Christian character and values impact on the achievement of students, their personal development and well being and their attitudes to school life. For instance, an outside wall sculpture, 'The Gift', makes a strong visual impact at the heart of the school campus. Depicting the centrality of Christ's birth, death and resurrection, it declares this is a school with a distinctively Christian character. The high quality of pastoral care and attention given to students models Christian love and creates a learning environment of forgiveness, fairness and hope. Students respond by behaving appropriately, building good relationships and aspiring to do their best. Students have a clear understanding of right and wrong. The resolution of a breakdown in relationships or behaviour is supported by a strong emphasis on the value of forgiveness and the need for a new start, in line with the principles of restorative justice. The values – driven curriculum and variety of extra-curricula activities and visits promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Specialist Student Support Workers are also encouraging this growth and development in students. The Christian character of the school is reflected in the fact that all students take a full GCSE course in Religion and Philosophy, giving them opportunity to explore faith and belief. Attainment in other core subjects is currently at the national average and close to or above the national figure for 6th forms. Students throughout the school make good progress. All students are accepted as made in the image of God and therefore of immense worth and value. As a result, students with special needs and often multiple disadvantages achieve well. Teachers understand their needs, intervene and develop personalised nurturing and caring programmes. A 'TLC group' was formed for a group of students who needed emotional and personal support leading to their GCSE examination this year with successful results. The school's commitment to equality of opportunity ensures students of both genders achieve equally. The school has a positive reputation for its work with vulnerable young people at risk of exclusion and the work it does with young people who have been excluded elsewhere. Attendance has improved and is now in line with the national average. According to a recent questionnaire 96% of parents reported their children were happy and felt safe in school. As a community which is rooted in Christian values students are committed to the well being of others and often take the initiative in asking for the opportunity to support a variety of charitable activities.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good.

Collective worship is distinctively Christian and is regarded by school leadership as an important and valued part of the life of the school. Wadham School differentiates between the acts of collective worship offered, and 'broadly Christian' assemblies. Students gather together in half school or year groups twice a week for an assembly or an act of collective worship. Both assemblies and acts of collective worship promote a sense of community and challenge staff and students to reflect on human values, and their roots in the Christian tradition, in accordance with the school's ethos. Both contribute to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of participants and the values in all gatherings underpin improved academic standards, good relationships and student's behaviour. All staff are encouraged to attend and engage with acts of collective worship and the termly communion service. Opportunities are given to celebrate the major festivals of the Christian faith, these are often led by clergy and take place in local churches. Festivals celebrated by those of other faiths, are also recognised, supporting student's cultural development. Prayer is usually offered when the students meet together but opportunities for reflection, both within collective worship and assemblies and at other times and in other places in the school need to be encouraged so as to further enhance students' spiritual development. The worship programme includes biblical teaching, and the current theme based on St Paul's teaching is displayed in all classrooms. However, throughout the school year, with all groupings of students, a wider body of distinctively Christian teaching

needs to be presented. Students benefit from individual acts of collective worship that are relevant and related both to their lives and to local, national and global issues. These are well planned and well led. Students are very attentive and engaged when they meet together, and now need to have more opportunities to plan, lead and evaluate worship themselves. The school chaplain's thought for the week' is distributed to all staff for use in tutor time, which offers an opportunity for pupils to reflect. This needs to be used in the school more consistently. The collective worship policy clearly outlines the objectives of collective worship and how it should be organised. The school is attempting to be fully compliant with the law, with regard to collective worship.

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

Leaders articulate and promote a vision of the school and an ethos underpinned by distinctively Christian values. The school leaders and governors are proud of the Christian foundation and seek to make it meaningful for pupils. Their leadership ensures that the school is a happy community where the good relationships are highly valued. Christian values of forgiveness and redemption are put into practise using the principles of restorative justice. Effective behaviour management, based on the school's Christian ethos, ensures that there is a calm and purposeful atmosphere in which achievement is valued. There is evidence of continued academic improvement. Older pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is encouraged by the full GCSE course, where 59% of students gained grades A-C in recent examinations, in line with other humanities subjects where there is an element of student choice. Strategic planning has ensured that all RE teachers are fully qualified and therefore offer the best learning opportunities for students. In addition students have good opportunities to learn about other cultures through various aspects of the general curriculum. Student initiatives and leadership is encouraged throughout the school, particularly in the 6th form and this has a direct impact on improved learning, behaviour and also the general well being of students. The Diocese, local churches, individuals and grant making bodies have been encouraged by the staff and governors to appoint a school chaplain who contributes to the spiritual life of the school, encourages the schools Christian distinctiveness and values and also provides valuable pastoral support. The chaplain has had a positive impact, leading to displays around the school exemplifying the Christian values that build a caring community. Students now have regular lunch time meetings to explore faith and termly communion services. The school has excellent supportive partnerships with the surrounding Anglican parishes and other churches and with the Diocese. The school seeks to develop other partnerships consistent with its inclusive Christian ethos. Parental partnerships and support enhances the strong sense that the school is a living and lively learning community. It also draws richly on the local community for support and this is mutually beneficial. Governors ensure that senior leaders' skills are exploited and developed and there is good leadership capacity at all levels. All leaders model good team work and ensure shared responsibility; they also share their professional expertise within the wider educational community, often bringing a Christian perspective on educational policy and practise. Although good monitoring and evaluation procedures ensure that school leaders have a good picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses, this is not so robust with regard to the schools' Christian distinctiveness. Most issues in the focus for development in the previous inspection report have been addressed.

SIAMS report. October 2014. Wadham Church of England Community School, Crewkerne, Somerset. TA187NT