



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

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

### George Carey Voluntary Aided Church of England Primary School

Rivergate Centre, Minter Road, Barking IG11 0FJ

**Previous SIAS grade: N/A**

**Current inspection grade: outstanding**

Diocese: Chelmsford

Local authority: Barking and Dagenham

Date of inspection: 2 March 2016

Date of last inspection: N/A

School's unique reference number: 136431

Headteacher: Christopher Harrison

Inspector's name: Virginia Corbyn (86)

#### School context

George Carey Church of England Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is above that found in most schools. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average. The school accommodates an additional resource provision for pupils with autism. Most families state that they are Christian. Almost a fifth of pupils are from Muslim families and a small number are Buddhist, Hindu or Sikh. The school was opened in 2011. It is integrated with a church and a community centre as part of a regeneration project along the Thames Gateway.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of George Carey as a Church of England school are outstanding

- School leaders articulate a clear Christian vision which puts the uniqueness of each pupil and the wellbeing of staff at the heart of all that they do.
- Pupils can confidently articulate the ways in which they apply the school's Christian values to their learning and to their everyday living.
- All stakeholders describe an inclusive and welcoming school community shaped by Christian values and characterised by loving relationships.
- Collective worship supports the spiritual development of all pupils creatively and thoughtfully.
- Religious education (RE) is extremely well led and managed with a focus upon deepening pupils' thinking and making learning relevant to pupils' daily lived experiences.

#### Areas to improve

- Develop the explicitly Anglican identity of the school so that pupils have a clear understanding of this aspect of the life of their school.
- Ensure that the particular place of RE in the school is clearly understood so that the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of the pupils is extended in the ways that are most appropriate for a church school.

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

George Carey is a school whose leaders have agreed an ambitious and aspirational vision for all members of its community. The school's explicit Christian values of unity, peace, love and respect underpin policy and practice at all levels. All stakeholders can articulate how they model and live out these values in carrying out their particular roles and responsibilities. This has resulted in all pupils making at least good progress, with the achievement of vulnerable groups being particularly strong. The work of the safety and welfare team and the inclusion team in school contribute to this progress very well. The pupils in the additional resource provision for autistic pupils also make very good progress. They are well integrated into the main school whenever this is appropriate for their personal development. Parents and carers of all faiths and of none speak about the welcoming and inclusive nature of the school. They are confident that their children are treated as unique individuals supported by values which all faiths hold in common but which are expressed in distinctively Christian ways. They appreciate the moral foundation which is set by the school and which their children also put into practice at home. Pupils understand how to apply the school's Christian values to their learning, for example by saying that, 'unity in lessons means that I can compromise when I do not agree with someone else'. They also talk about the high expectations which they set for their own behaviour and attitudes based on the school's Christian values. Relationships in the school are excellent. For parents, it is vital that all members of staff are approachable and open, which gives them the confidence to be fully involved in their children's education. For pupils, high quality relationships mean that they know that their opinions are listened to and acted upon to improve their school. Interactive prayer areas in each classroom are well used. Pupils are able to offer the prayers which they write in the context of worship as well with each other in their own classes. Pupils value the fact that all opinions are equally valued in their RE lessons especially those from the different religious traditions found within the school. This supports extremely well the pupils' understanding of the diversity of God's world. However, in a few cases, there is a lack of clarity between the teaching of RE, sharing the school ethos, and the place of prayer in the school.

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

Pupils are enthusiastic about collective worship. They are able to contribute in a variety of ways including through drama, prayer and music. There is a very clear focus on the school's Christian values and embedding them across school life. The hall does not easily hold the entire school and, therefore, worship is usually held in key stage groupings or in classrooms. This means that worship is always age appropriate. It is used well to develop the school community spiritually by encouraging thinking about important questions of faith and belief. It is planned creatively and thoughtfully with opportunities for paired talking, reflection and meaningful interaction. Pupils can talk about the messages of worship and how they can be applied to their lives. One pupil spoke about a Bible verse which helped her to think about being called as a child of God. Parents express appreciation that acts of worship are inclusive and that they feel welcomed no matter what their faith tradition might be. The church worship space within the school is used for some acts of worship which strengthens relationships with the local Christian community and with its leaders. The Salvation Army major and the Anglican incumbent lead worship regularly. The celebration of major Christian festivals is well supported by families and explored creatively so that the pupils' understanding of Christianity is enriched. Pupils and governors are able to contribute to developments in worship through the monitoring and evaluation process. The distinctive features of different Christian traditions, including Anglicanism, are however, underdeveloped.

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

Pupils make very good progress in RE. The school's detailed analysis of RE data demonstrates that attainment is at least in line with national expectations. Strategies for improving rates of progress for all pupils are in place and are having an impact for all pupils, especially for the very few who are making less than rapid rates of progress. RE is extremely well led and managed. There are aspirational expectations of teaching and of learning in RE. Pupils enjoy and are challenged by RE.

They apply their learning very well to their everyday lives. There is a great deal of evidence of deep thinking and exploration of big ideas in RE which supports the school's Christian values and learning about Christianity particularly well. This thinking also enhances other areas of the curriculum in which pupils are required to justify a particular point of view. RE has been enhanced by using the principles of 'Philosophy for Children' within lessons. Teachers are given clear guidance and support in planning their RE. This means that high level questioning encourages open-ended discussions with mutual respect for all opinions offered by pupils. They are able to articulate their learning about and their learning from religion clearly and confidently. Reflections written by pupils in key stage 2 at the end of each unit of work show depth and maturity. For example, one pupil wrote, 'my learning this term made me realise all the miracles that Jesus had done because he loved people'. Developmental marking means that pupils respond to personalised questions and reflect upon their life experiences. Next steps for learning are made clear and acted upon to drive improvement in RE.

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

The headteacher, together with his senior leadership team, articulates a very clear Christian vision. This is focused upon all pupils reaching their full potential as individuals created in the image of God. This is well understood and supported by all stakeholders and it has successfully contributed to an upward trend in achievement for all pupils. The governing body has been strengthened over recent months. This has led to improved monitoring and review which is evident in the school's accurate self-evaluation documentation. Statutory requirements for worship and for RE are met. Pupils are supported in taking leadership roles in school, for example as learning ambassadors and as playground ambassadors. They act as role models for school values to younger pupils. This helps them to grow in confidence and self-belief. Teachers speak confidently about playing an active part in the development of the school as a church school. The RE subject leader supports teachers well. They appreciate her enthusiasm and her ability to help them to develop their knowledge and understanding in RE. There are excellent links with the local church, and the pastoral support offered by church leaders is much appreciated by school families. The school building is very well used by a wide variety of community groups. This helps pupils and families to understand the importance of extending their values, especially respect and unity, beyond the school gates. The school works closely with the Diocese and with other church schools to ensure that it is outward-looking and open to ways of growing as a church school.

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