



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

West Raynham Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

West Raynham
Fakenham
Norfolk
NR21 7HH

Diocese: Norwich

Local authority: Norfolk
Date of inspection: 4 February 2014
Date of last inspection: 2 July 2008
School's unique reference number: 121052
Executive Headteacher: Mr Chris Allen BA [Hons]
Inspector's name and number: Mrs Lizzie McWhirter MA 244

School context

West Raynham Primary School converted to Voluntary Aided status in January 2014 when it became part of The Unity Federation of Church Schools in close association with Colkirk and Sculthorpe Primary Schools. The Executive Headteacher divides his time between all three church schools. Each school has an assistant head, known as the Head of Teaching and Learning. Currently there are 56 pupils on roll at West Raynham, who are mostly from a White British background. The school is within walking distance of the Anglican churches of St Mary's and St Margaret's as well as The Methodist chapel.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of West Raynham as a Church of England school are good

- The strong sense of a welcoming and inclusive family community, underpinned by Christian values.
- The positive attitude of the pupils, who become confident learners and are encouraged to achieve their best within a supportive Christian environment.
- The experiences offered to pupils in collective worship and religious education[RE], nurturing their spiritual development.

Areas to improve

- Establish a forum for clergy and pupils to discuss together the big questions of life and faith.
- Embed the tracking of attainment in RE so that accurate analysis of progress and standards can be made.

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

West Raynham Primary School provides a very positive learning environment where pupils are proud to belong, feel valued and achieve well. It has the reputation of being a nurturing school, adapting topics to suit the interests of individual pupils. Three children with recent exclusions have all made significant progress in the last year. Data shows an improvement in attendance from last year, with supportive programmes in place for any children in need. As a result, parents are trusting of the school's programmes to aid effective learning. A dedicated teacher provides good leadership with a rigorous programme of intervention, ensuring that pupil premium children make good progress. Indeed, those pupil premium children are currently achieving more than those who are not. Good examples include those pupils who succeed on school residential visits as well as those who make chutney for the Christmas fair. Parents are actively involved in their children's learning journey by taking photos and adding notes to their profile. All this takes place within an environment where the school is looking out for all individual needs. Parents praise the fact that this school gives 'each child a chance and is a lifeline for some parents', supporting those children who need extra help. Parents also appreciate the friendliness they find at West Raynham, saying they are 'welcomed in'. Pupils value their teachers and their friends. Fundraising activities such as providing Harvest parcels for the residents of Fakenham Day Centre enable pupils to experience the Christian values of service and gratitude, reflecting on and exploring the outworking of these values in collective worship. Pupils' cultural and global awareness is enhanced through learning about other faiths and cultures in similar and diverse communities, not just in RE and worship, but through the school's links with a school in Uganda, providing water aid. Bright, prominent displays around school, together with the reflection area in the foyer, the views from the school grounds and the nearby Forest School woodland area, just down the road, all enhance pupils' spiritual development.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

The attitude of pupils to collective worship is good because the quality of worship offered to them is making a difference in their lives, contributing greatly to their spiritual development. Prayerful and meaningful worship takes place daily, with a focus on Christian values and Jesus' teaching in the Bible. A hallmark of worship at West Raynham is that one of the classrooms is transformed effortlessly into a space for worship as the whole school comes together. The majority of pupils value their parish priest, and the Methodist minister who are welcome and regular visitors to school. They say their rector 'helps us with our prayers as he knows more about God' and shows us that 'I'm not just ordinary and I can do things that I thought I can't'. Older pupils excellently explain The Holy Trinity as 'three forms of God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit. God makes us, looks down on us and loves us. Jesus helps us pray to God and believe in him and when and how to pray. The Holy Spirit is inside us if we believe God and trust in him'. Other positive experiences include meeting The Archbishop of Canterbury on his pilgrimage of prayer at Norwich Cathedral, saying 'he prayed for God to help us'. Pupils also say that 'the Ethos group works well' when members fill out evaluation forms with the Ethos governor. They comment on the fact that 'we talk together and we learn and say to each other what we like, give our opinion, and what can be better'. Some pupils have the opportunity to plan and lead worship in school and church and for the termly school Eucharist, saying 'we like doing it as we can have a say in what happens and we think of some things, not just adults'. Prayer has an important focus, with pupils speaking of the importance of forgiveness as 'being friends again'. They speak of the avoidance of temptation and evil as 'helping us to make the right choices'. They appreciate worship outdoors, especially in the ruins of St Margaret's Church in the village. Key festivals in the church year are celebrated in St Mary's Church, such as Harvest, Christmas, Candlemass and Easter.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

Pupils clearly enjoy their RE lessons in this school where RE is important and is co-ordinated across the federation by a senior teacher who is also a specialist RE teacher. The teaching and learning at West Raynham is good and in line with standards in other core subjects. Each class has an RE portfolio to capture the story of the learning enquiry. Good examples include 'What I think heaven looks like' and 'Milestones' such as confirmation. Other subject areas include pilgrimage when pupils made a cross of shoes on a visit to Norwich Cathedral, asking 'If life is a journey, does it ever end?' Some pupils have studied Christmas around the world to address Christianity as a world wide faith. This results in many pupils making good progress in their RE lessons which help them to achieve well and supports their spiritual development. Most pupils collaborate well, think independently, and show respect to teachers and each other. Older pupils have a very good level of theological literacy, saying 'incarnation means when Jesus came down to earth from heaven and was given a human body and set to work to help the people in need'. They go on to explain that, 'God loved the world so much that he sent his son to live among us'. All pupils have positive experiences of visiting a range of places of Christian worship, such as the many shrines at Walsingham as well as Norwich Cathedral. They welcome visiting other places of worship for different faith traditions. Older pupils know how to improve in their work and value 'teachers writing comments', as well as 'merits and prizes so we know we are getting it right' which they listen to and take on board. They enjoy asking big questions in their RE lessons and welcome the opportunity to extend this by regularly discussing deep questions of faith with their rector. Careful tracking of differentiated tasks, marked work and book scrutinies inform progress as well as developing a tracking tool for teachers to record pupils' skills. Most pupils are working at expected levels, with some pupils exceeding these. Slightly more pupils are attaining or exceeding in Learning From Religion. Next steps include embedding the tracking of attainment in RE to inform pupil progress and standards and the monitoring of the impact of the new Agreed Syllabus for RE.

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

The school's Christian heritage is embraced by the headteacher, senior leadership team, clergy, governors and staff so that West Raynham's Church of England foundation is celebrated and secured. The effect of the school's procedures on every child's learning is good. The school has been a National Teaching School since 2011. Positive relationships show the key role which Christian values play in the life of the school. Parents praise the good teaching their children receive to support family beliefs and values. Foundation governors are committed to the life and work of the school and are open to new ways of helping the school move forward. Governors have addressed all areas from the previous inspection. Good relationships exist between the diocese and the school, not least because the headteacher is a member of the Board of Education. West Raynham has been able to support other schools in the diocese with different aspects of their own journey, such as school Eucharists. The school values support from the diocese for staff and governor development. For example, the RE subject leader has attended diocesan courses. As a result, the school has identified key priorities for development, such as embedding the assessment of RE. Pupils have a voice through the Ethos group and through The Advocates. The rector helps foster positive attitudes to the Christian faith and the Anglican tradition. Partnerships with the village community and local schools both within and outside The Unity Federation are strong. Whilst this new federation is still in its infancy, there is much to celebrate in the excellent model seen at West Raynham. This school, and indeed the federation, has the potential to grow from strength to strength.

SIAMS report February 2014 West Raynham VA Primary School, Fakenham, Norfolk NR21 7HH