



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

George Fentham Endowed School

Fentham Road
Hampton in Arden
Solihull
B92 0AY

Diocese: Birmingham

Local authority: Solihull

Dates of inspection: 5th November 2014

Date of last inspection: 6th July 2009

School's unique reference number: 104094

Headteacher: Ms Julie Gaughan Incumbent: Rev Duncan Ballard

Inspector's name and number: Mrs Helen Gilbert 633

School context

George Fentham Endowed School is endowed by the George Fentham Trust and is a one-form entry Voluntary Aided Church of England School by usage. There are 219 pupils on roll coming from the village of Hampton-in-Arden and the surrounding areas. Most of these are white British but there are also pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and a few from Traveller families. The proportion of pupils with disabilities and special educational needs is below average as is the proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of George Fentham school are outstanding

- The headteacher models strong, effective and compassionate Christian leadership which empowers her team.
- The vicar has a very strong influence in articulating Christian teaching and demonstrating pastoral care to the whole school community.
- Highly committed Foundation Governors provide support and challenge to the school.
- Confident and articulate pupils are excellent ambassadors for their church school.

Areas to improve

- Enable more opportunities for pupils' spiritual development through the creation of an outdoor reflection area.
- Involve pupils in shaping the development of school based worship.

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

The head teacher, staff, governors and pupils all talk about the Christian values that underpin everything that the school does. They describe how trust, kindness, respect, compassion and forgiveness are modelled through caring and supportive relationships throughout the whole school community. One teacher described this as, '*a palpable feeling in the school.*' These

Christian values are embedded in everyday language and are specifically promoted through religious education (RE) and worship. They are meshed together with pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development (SMSC) and the attributes of effective learning and this ensures that they also permeate the wider curriculum. Staff, pupils and parents describe the school as a safe, secure and happy environment. It is a place where *'it is ok not to know,'* where it is safe to disclose problems and to ask for help and where those with additional needs are well supported. The school celebrates the diverse backgrounds and faiths of its pupils. As a result all groups of pupils know that they are valued as individuals and attendance is very good. Pupils enjoy school, behave very well and are developing as articulate, confident and resilient learners. High quality intervention and support from mentors ensures that pupils from all groups make very good progress and overall standards and progress are better than those achieved locally and nationally. Consequently George Fentham is popular with parents, many of whom make an informed choice to send children here. Parents are confident that pupils are taught well and that there will be early intervention for children needing more support. One parent said, *'her confidence has so grown'* and another that *'preparation for secondary school is exceptional.'* Links with St Mary and St Bartholemew's church are excellent. Parents speak very highly of the vicar, describing all the support he brings to the school and the wider community. RE makes a very significant contribution to the Christian character of the school. This is reflected in displays around the school and the RE and worship areas within each classroom. Pupils are stimulated and challenged during RE lessons and have a respect for people of other faiths and cultures. They are able to talk about things that Jesus said and relate these to caring for each other and to looking outwards at the needs of others. They talk enthusiastically about visiting the elderly persons' Lunch Club, the Shoe Box Appeal and about fundraising for WaterAid and Cancer charities by running their own bake sales.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Pupils value collective worship and see it as a central and influential part of the school day. The co-ordinator ensures that in addition to following the Christian calendar throughout the year, worship themes underpin pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development with explicit Christian teaching. Worship regularly provides opportunities for pupils to consider and reflect upon their own attitudes and actions and the impact of these upon others. As a result pupils say that hearing about Christian values through daily worship helps them to develop caring and supportive relationships and positive attitudes about working and learning together. They describe the lively and engaging acts of worship led by a range of staff and they particularly look forward to the vicar's visits. Pupils of all ages enjoy preparing church services and would welcome further opportunities to lead and shape worship on a daily basis. The school has recognised and acted upon the need to include more systematic teaching of Bible stories during worship times. As a result of this, together with all that they learn during RE, pupils are developing an understanding of the Bible and the significance of what Jesus said and did. They can talk about the importance of the crucifixion and the resurrection, the parables, healings and miracles of Jesus and can relate his teachings to their own lives. They can enjoy an insightful discussion about the relationship between the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Pupils have an understanding of the main celebrations of the Anglican church particularly Harvest, Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter and the coming of the Holy Spirit. They also understand the significance of Baptism, Confirmation and Communion. As a result of the close relationship with the church, a number of Year 6 pupils attend confirmation classes each year. The Lord's prayer is central to daily worship. Pupils see prayer as an important part of school life and enjoy writing their own prayers. They value the prayer box that is available because they know that the vicar takes their prayers into church and prays for them individually. This enhances their understanding that they are special to God. The worship co-ordinator and vicar work very well together. They regularly evaluate worship, looking for ways in which to enhance the spiritual development of pupils. They have rightly identified the need for a quiet place that children could go to if they were feeling sad or want a little peace and quiet.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

Pupils are overwhelmingly enthusiastic about religious education and see it as a very valuable area of their learning. They say that it has a strong influence on attitudes, behaviour and relationships in the school. The subject is very well led by the co-ordinator who models effective practice. Assessment and monitoring are thorough. The co-ordinator uses a range of strategies for evaluating the subject each term and reports regularly to the governing body about provision, standards and progress and identifies the next steps for development. The Solihull agreed syllabus is an excellent tool and the co-ordinator uses this well to create a strong whole-school framework that has Christianity at its core. Although pupils study a number of different themes, they learn about an aspect of Christianity as a discrete topic and about another major faith in every school year. Teaching is creative and of a consistently high quality and enables pupils to develop the skills of enquiry, interpretation and reflection. As a result they enjoy RE lessons and they value learning about other faiths as well as Christianity. Pupils appreciate visiting a range of places of worship and those from other faiths say that their own faiths and beliefs are taught well. They say that what they learn in RE helps them to empathise with others. One child said, *'it helps us to get into other people's shoes.'* Consequently pupils make very good progress and achieve high standards in RE. The school is using the new curriculum as an opportunity to develop stronger links between RE and other subjects. The influence of St Bede and St Cuthbert is linked to the Anglo-Saxons and Islam is linked to the history of early Islamic civilisations. It is evident that this is helping children's understanding of the world in which they live and the cultures that are their legacy. As one teacher said, *'We are making children aware that there's something much bigger than them.'* The school ensures that there are strong links between religious education, the social, moral, spiritual and cultural development of pupils and the skills that 'build learning power.' This is enabling all groups of pupils to develop as confident, reflective and socially competent learners.

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

Leaders at all levels articulate and promote the Christian vision of the school. The headteacher, staff and governors successfully ensure that the school meets the needs of all groups of pupils within an atmosphere of Christian care and support. There is no place for complacency in the school and the headteacher both leads and empowers her team to grow professionally and to develop best practice. All members of the school community are involved in evaluating the school's Christian distinctiveness including the foundation governors. There is a good skill mix on the governing body. Governors take very seriously their role as critical friends and are confident to interrogate school data and ask searching questions. As a result governors have an accurate understanding of the success of the school as a church school. They are well aware of the challenges teachers face and seek to be supportive. The governors' strategy committee comprises the chairs of all the governing body committees and meets termly to ensure that governors hold themselves to account. Governors are mindful of the importance of succession planning and growing the next generation of school leaders. As a result they ensure that staff at all levels have appropriate professional development opportunities. The school has thoroughly addressed the areas identified for development at the last inspection. Governors value the work of the RE and worship co-ordinator and have made it possible for her to work in collaboration with subject leaders from other schools to share best practice and moderate standards of achievement. The vicar makes an excellent contribution to the life and work of the school, fulfilling the role of chaplain to staff, pupils and their families as well as supporting governance, RE and worship. As one child said, *'He brings the church and school together as a family.'* As a result relationships between school and parents are very strong and the school is recognised as being part of this Christian community within the village. The school instils confidence in pupils, enabling them to develop their leadership as members of the school council, class monitors, buddies and mentors. Consequently the school council value their role and believe they have a role in improving the school and can cite numerous examples of bringing change such as addressing the issue of litter.

SIAMS report November 2014 George Fentham Endowed School, B92 0AY