



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

### Langley Fitzurse Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Middle Common  
Kington Langley  
Wiltshire  
SN15 5NN

**Previous SIAMS grade: Good**

**Current inspection grade: Outstanding**

**Diocese: Bristol**

Local authority: South Gloucestershire

Dates of inspection: 8 March 2016

Date of last inspection: 25 January 2011

School's unique reference number: 126334

Headteacher: Becky Harris

Inspector's name and number: Patricia Morris 626

#### School context

Langley Fitzurse is a smaller than average primary school with 89 children on roll. The school serves a mixed semi-rural community from the village of Kington Langley and the surrounding area. Some children travel from the nearby town of Chippenham. The majority of children are of white British heritage. The number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below the national average. The proportion of children supported by pupil premium is also below average.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Langley Fitzurse as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The very strong commitment and dedication of the school's leadership and management, and staff members, secures the continual development of the Christian character of the school.
- Core Christian values, embedded in the life of the school, are reflected in exemplary behaviour and attitudes to learning.
- The quality of relationships between all members of the school community ensures a nurturing and caring Christian environment for every child.
- Exceptionally strong links with the local church underpin the school's Christian distinctiveness.

#### Areas to improve

- Improve the effectiveness of the Christian Distinctiveness team so that they have the skills and abilities to accurately identify innovative improvements as a church school.
- Provide opportunities to engage with other faiths to enable children to gain first hand experiences of the diversity of other beliefs and religions.
- Raise the importance of collective worship by providing creative opportunities for parents to be involved.

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

A set of distinctive Christian core values are clearly expressed and permeate school life. Children identify the effect they have on daily lives and achievements saying 'we are good learners because our values give us something to work for'. Five core values, underpinned by a new value each term from the 'Values for Life' scheme, are firmly embedded and all members of the school community acknowledge the significant impact they make to the Christian distinctiveness of the school. When deciding these values, children were determined that they reflected life in the school as well as being rooted in the teaching of Jesus. They are strongly underpinned by the school motto of Amaze, Excite, Inspire. The prominence of these words around the school, such as being woven into the school fence, helps remind children that they should endorse them in their daily lives. Children are particularly proud of a mosaic made during a spiritual art project to represent core values which show them in action. Every child created a piece of the mosaic and invited the local community to be involved by contributing their own piece. Such activities promote the school's family feel and its place at the heart of the community. This was affirmed in the way children were eager to create another mosaic for the local church showing St Peter as a shepherd with his sheep. Many Christian signs and symbols are visible around school which children understand reflect the importance of being a church school. Christian displays are extremely reflective with big questions such as 'Where is God?' and 'What is heaven like?' Children respond with diverse and thoughtful responses that reflect a deep understanding. Relationships are a strength of the school. Children relate to each other as well as having excellent relationships with staff. A 'buddy' system, between the oldest children and younger ones, is very effective because, as children explain, it is 'an opportunity to look after each other'. The gift of a yellow rose to a 'buddy' at the leaver's service is highly valued by children because it represents an appreciation of the care and nurture within the school family. Children say they are very happy. The security they feel enables them to express their thoughts and opinions openly knowing that their peers will listen to them with respect. This in turn impacts on the quality of behaviour which is exemplary. The Christian character and values of the school have a significant impact on children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Spiritual development is effectively promoted through good opportunities for reflection which encourage children to believe in themselves. Children have a developing understanding of Christianity as a world faith and this is well supported through religious education (RE) and fund raising activities to support a child in Africa. Religious education makes a positive contribution to the Christian character of the school through the strong link with values and their impact on the school's ethos.

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

Collective worship is highly valued because it plays a central role in the life of the school. Christian values underpin themes for worship and are supported by references to Bible stories. Worship engages children and challenges them to take responsibility for their own behaviour and responsibilities. A variety of different leaders offer children a rich experience of worship. The introduction of a children's worship council has been instrumental in developing worship. For example, children are now much clearer about how they focus on 'what we can improve on' to further enhance worship. A variety of children also takes responsibility for reading Bible stories to younger classes each week. They feel that this is a very important part of being a church school. Reflection times are a natural part of worship and these are enhanced through various opportunities to spend time in the quiet, reflective spaces inside and outside the school. These opportunities to reflect, such as the special cushion embroidered with a bee in younger classes inviting children to use it as a place to 'be quiet', are highly valued. Outdoor opportunities for reflection include a gazebo with a wooden cross and the school prayer. Children talk animatedly of the prayer flags they are currently making to hang inside the gazebo to add to its ambience. The worship council are confident to regularly plan and lead worship and feel their contributions are highly valued. Their guidance on how to deliver worship, written for

visitors, helps to maintain consistency in the quality and approach to worship. Children say the Lord's Prayer, a school prayer and other responses as part of worship. They write their own prayers and share them at different times of the school day. Prayer tables and books in every classroom reflect the depth of understanding that children put into their prayers. They provide excellent evidence of their mature grasp of the meaning of personal prayer and reflection as part of their spiritual journey. The Grace accompanied by specific actions, said at the end of collective worship, significantly contributes to children's understanding of the Trinity. This growing appreciation of the Trinity is supported by individual work in classes reflected in designs that represent God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Children confidently explain their understanding, saying 'without one there is no Trinity'. Children are aware of special Christian festivals most of which take place in the church. The majority of parents attend these services but would also welcome opportunities to be part of daily worship in the school. Monitoring and evaluation of worship take place regularly by both children and adults. Feedback provides evidence of how worship influences life in the school community.

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

The headteacher provides exceptionally effective leadership and is well supported by a well-informed and very committed team of governors. A Christian distinctiveness governor group has recently started. A very clear focus on evaluation, through learning walks and talking to staff and children, is continually extending the impact of the Christian ethos and its pivotal role at the centre of school life. Link governors regularly visit classes and stay with the same children throughout their time in school. Consequently, there is an excellent understanding of how the Christian distinctiveness of the school impacts on children's lives and prepares them for the future. Leaders have a very good understanding of the school's performance based on insightful self-evaluation that leads to effective strategies for improvement. The distinctive Christian vision contributes to children's exemplary behaviour and attitudes to learning as well as their spiritual development. There are invaluable links with the Diocese and the partnership between the school and the church is a high priority for both. Local clergy in particular work extremely closely with the school supporting children's learning and regularly leading worship. The content of worship is consistent in encouraging children to be reflective. Children take part in community events such as Rogation Sunday, planting seeds in the community and singing Christian songs as they parade through the streets. Festivals are celebrated at the church and are well attended by parents who praise the family feel of the school and the commitment of the staff. They appreciate the 'open door' policy and say any concerns are dealt with quickly. They have opportunities to give their views at parent forums. Governors' attendance at parent's evenings, to talk informally and seek their views, helps parents feel they are listened to. An example of this is parent's requests for more information about RE which now appears regularly in newsletters. Leadership of RE is given a high priority. The RE co-ordinator has excellent subject knowledge and is committed to supporting staff in their delivery of RE. Observations and work scrutiny have substantiated that RE is extremely well taught with teachers asking challenging questions and making good links between Christianity and other world faiths. The co-ordinator acknowledges the need to be more proactive in providing further opportunities to link with other faiths. Children find learning fun and are eager to share when they know they are doing well because 'we earn a pair of stripy socks because we are working our socks off'. Standards in RE are in line with other core subjects and the co-ordinator regularly attends governor's meetings to keep them informed. The school meets the statutory requirements for RE and collective worship.

SIAMS report March 2016 Langley Fitzurse CE VC Primary School Kington Langley SN15 5NN