

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Southrop Church of England (VC) Primary School

Southrop, Lechlade, Gloucestershire, GL73NU

Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese / Methodist District [delete as appropriate]	Diocese of Gloucester
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Local authority / Date of academy conversion [delete as appropriate]	Gloucestershire
Date/s of inspection	11 January 2018
Date of last inspection	29 November 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	115651
Headteacher	Allan Brown
Inspector's name and number	David Crunkhurn (NS884)

School context

Southrop Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School is a smaller than average primary school. There are currently 53 pupils on roll taught across two classes: YR/1/2; and Y3/4/5/6. The headteacher leads the school four days a week, with the fifth day shared termly by other members of teaching staff. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below the national average as is the proportion identified for special educational need and disability support (SEND). 7% of pupils are adopted from care, which is higher than average.

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

- The headteacher provides strong, Christian leadership, which impacts on all areas of learning and school life. He is supported well by dedicated senior leaders and governors.
- Christian values, based on Bible teaching, are embedded throughout the school and impact positively on achievement, behaviour and relationships.
- There is a demonstrative commitment to sharing God's love with the whole community, through the development of strong, compassionate pastoral provision.
- Religious Education (RE) and collective worship are enthusiastically led by the headteacher. He works hard to ensure that RE makes a significant contribution to the spiritual development of all pupils.
- Parents hold the school in high regard and are appreciative of the care that is given to their children.

Areas to improve

- Strengthen the monitoring and evaluating of the school as a church school to show depth of impact in all areas, including religious education and collective worship.
- Further develop the training for pupils leading collective worship, enabling them to elicit deeply reflective responses to themes explored.
- Strengthen the Christian distinctiveness in school policies, to make clear how each one links with the school's Christian character.

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

Southrop Church of England Primary School is a caring and nurturing Christian community, where everyone matters. The headteacher is unwavering in his determination to provide the best care possible to the pupils, rooted in Christian values. This is shared by a highly dedicated team of teachers and support staff. As a result, pupils feel safe and make good progress academically from their starting points. Pupils' well-being is well catered for. This is particularly so for the most vulnerable children, for whom, specific support has been provided so that they too may achieve and progress well. The creation of 'The Cabin'; a specific intervention room for supporting the emotional and academic needs of all pupils, is an example of the commitment the school has to the well-being of all its pupils.

Parents are very supportive of the school and its ethos. They said they feel 'blessed to have the school on their door step'. Families who have transferred to the school appreciate the care given to their children when they arrive. This is also noted by the pupils who are grateful for the support given to them as they settle into school.

The behaviour and social skills of the pupils are excellent and the values, such as perseverance, stimulate a positive outlook to learning. By linking learning to the school's Christian values, school staff have created a culture in lessons where pupils give of their best and make contributions, without fear of failure. Whilst the school's core values are Christian in their roots, pupils recognise that they are values owned by all, regardless of personal faith. Pupils make links between the values and their biblical root and share stories of how Jesus lived out those values. This encourages the pupils to do the same. Reflecting on these values enables pupils to learn more about themselves as individuals and their place in their school and wider community. This then translates into practice through the respect, care and support that pupils give to one another inside and outside of lessons.

The headteacher enthusiastically leads the teaching of religious education (RE) across the school. He provides pupils with lessons that are engaging, and which challenge their thinking. The implementation of the 'Understanding Christianity' material is impacting on the depth to which key stage two pupils engage with biblical texts. Strategies for recording and assessing pupils' responses during these deep discussions are developing.

As most pupils are from white British families, day-to-day contact with visitors from other cultures and faiths is limited. However, the headteacher has worked hard to ensure that visits to different places of worship are planned across the RE curriculum. In addition, he also ensures that there are visits to the school from members of different faith communities. This is helping to broaden pupils' understanding of the diversity of religion and develop values of respect and tolerance for peoples of differing cultures. Pupils recognise how Bible stories shared during collective worship, and taught about during RE, shape their own attitudes towards behaviour and relationships. RE is therefore making a very positive contribution to the Christian character of the school.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of pupils is well catered for across the curriculum. For example the impressive work of 'Project Touchline' provides pupils with experiences to see Christian values lived out in sport. Older pupils took part in a joint visit with two other local church schools to Ypres in France. Whilst there, they commemorated the lives of those from their own villages, who died during war. Pupils' personal spirituality is therefore developing well through these experiences, as well as through worship.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

The headteacher's enthusiasm for developing worship in school is clear. Collective worship is fully inclusive and inspires pupils with faith as well as those with none. It is given a high priority across the whole school community. It provides an important moment in every day for both pupils and adults to come together, to develop their spirituality. Planning is effective and over a cycle, ensures that a wide range of biblical stories are covered. These stories provide the biblical root for the values explored in worship. However, the regular monitoring of worship by all members of the school community is not strong enough to evaluate the impact of these times.

Pupils lead worship well and enjoy sharing these occasions with their peers. They plan worship carefully and are supported well by the headteacher. He provides good guidance, ensuring that all elements of worship are included. As a result, pupils are developing into competent worship leaders. However, their questioning skills are not strong enough to elicit deep reflection from their peers on the values and themes explored.

Pupils' understanding of Anglican tradition is being strengthened using simple liturgy. A candle, Bible and cross on the worship table, provide a clear focal point for worship. A focus on God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit is deepening pupils' understanding of the concept of the Trinity. Pupils' respect for worship is clear through their engagement with these occasions. They willingly participate through responding to the stories and Christian values being explored.

Prayer, along with the well-used prayer and reflection area in the school garden, makes a very significant contribution towards pupils' spiritual development. Reflection spaces have also been created in each main area of the school and provide pupils with additional times of personal prayer and stillness. The impressive display of The Lord's Prayer, provides a specific focus for meditation. Pupils say that this gives them the 'words to pray when we can't think what to pray'.

Values explored in worship are rooted in the Bible and made relevant to the lives of all members of the school community. This has a very positive impact on behaviour and relationships. As a result, children regularly take action to serve others. Collective worship also contributes positively to pupils' sense of personal responsibility. Pupils commented that because of participation in collective worship, 'We learn how to use values in everyday life. For example, by being kind and generous with what we have.'

Parents participate in regular worship times and enjoy sharing in times of school celebration on a monthly basis. They also appreciate the special acts of worship that take place in church, such as Easter, Harvest and Christmas. These celebrations strengthen links between school, church and community.

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

Strong leadership from the headteacher, supported by committed governors, ensures that the school continues to grow positively as a distinctly Christian community. The nurturing vision places importance on Christian values, which are effectively used by all staff as the foundation for learning. This impacts positively on the well-being and achievement of all pupils. It ensures that staff feel valued and respected in a school where morale is high. Pupils who are more vulnerable, or who have additional educational needs, are cared for well and given effective support. This impacts positively on their academic achievement.

The headteacher and senior leaders have a clear understanding of what it means to lead a church school and carry out their roles very effectively. This is supported by relevant professional development. The distinctive Christian character and vision for the school is shared, agreed and upheld by all members of the school community.

The governing body are right to be proud of their church school. They have put good plans in place for leadership succession, through the development of existing staff. This is ensuring that the future leadership of the school upholds its strong Christian ethos. Governors know the school well and are aware of the next steps needed to move the school forward.

The partnership with the local church is supporting the leadership in its development of the school's Christian Character. The vicar has only recently taken up post but is already supporting the school and governing body well. He is providing strong guidance to the newly created ethos committee in developing the Christian distinctiveness of the school. Whilst this committee works hard to oversee the provision for this aspect of the school's work, monitoring and self-evaluation is not strong enough to fully demonstrate the impact of the work of the school as a church school. Policies do not always reflect the Christian values that are evident in the day to day life of the school.

Arrangements for collective worship and religious education (RE) meet statutory requirements. The subject leader, who is also the headteacher, leads RE extremely well. He is enthusiastic, highly competent and knowledgeable about both the subject and its relevance to the life of all the members of the school. He attends regular training provided by Gloucestershire's statutory advisory committee for religious education. He is leading the implementation of the new local agreed syllabus very effectively.

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