

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

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| Ashbury with Compton Beauchamp Church of England Aided Primary School | Ashbury, Swindon SN6 8LN |
| Current SIAMS inspection grade | Outstanding |
| Diocese | Oxford |
| Previous SIAMS inspection grade: | Good |
| Local authority | Oxfordshire |
| Dates of inspection | 20 October 2016 |
| Date of last inspection | 21 September 2011 |
| School's unique reference number | 123220 |
| Headteacher | Marcia Northeast |
| Inspector's name | Toby Long |
| Quality assurance assessor | Allyson Taylor 768 |

School context

Ashbury with Compton Beauchamp Church of England Aided School is a smaller than average rural village primary school with 75 pupils on roll in three classes. Children attend the school from a number of surrounding villages and a local town. Since the last inspection in 2011, the school has grown in number by 35%. The headteacher has been in post since 2008 and all other teachers have been appointed since the last inspection. The majority of learners are from white British backgrounds. The proportion of learners eligible for free school meals is below the national average. A pre-school, previously located within the school, has recently relocated to the local Free Church.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Ashbury with Compton Beauchamp CE (A) School as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The caring nature of the children and staff is lived out in the motto: 'We Care', which runs through the school like a golden thread.
- The highly motivated and committed leadership of the headteacher creates a harmonious team that shares a common vision. This ensures that the outstanding care and support for pupils, including the most vulnerable, is very effective.
- Learner's reflection skills are highly developed and used throughout the school to great effect.
- Children achieve well beyond the expected standards as a result of the deeply embedded Christian distinctiveness of the school, where all learners are able to flourish.
- The behaviour of learners is of the highest standard and first class relationships between all members of the school community are clearly attributed to the Christian character of the school.

Areas to improve

- Develop learner's knowledge and understanding of Anglican traditions of worship in order to extend opportunities for learners to clearly identify the seasons of the Church's year.
- Analyse the impact of Christian values on learning as well as personal development and well-being, so that the impact is more fully articulated.
- Ensure chosen values are linked to more specific biblical texts in order to increase learners' knowledge and understanding of the Bible origins of the Christian values.

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

The outstanding Christian character of the school has a high profile and clearly shapes the school's approach and attention to learner's high levels of attendance. The chosen Christian values of courage, justice, respect, thankfulness, wisdom and peace, have a significant impact on the spiritual, moral, social and culture (SMSC) development of the children. As a result, children's behaviour is outstanding across the school. The school's approach to behaviour is underpinned by the Christian value of forgiveness and children understand and articulate this clearly. The school's motto: 'We Care', is lived out by the entire school community and is evident in all areas of the school's work. Exceptional nurture and personal well-being is provided for all children; the impact is greatest for the most vulnerable children. Relationships, at all levels, are exemplary, reflected in the high quality of care given. This is modelled effectively by the headteacher. As a result, the children feel safe in school and enjoy themselves. Pupils commented, 'I love everything about our school'. Parents enthuse about the church school ethos and ethic of care. To support and enhance this caring environment older children act as buddies for the younger children. Distinctively Christian values are expressed by the school community, but these are not all linked to specific biblical texts to enhance their impact on the children's learning and daily lives. Learners across all ages are excited and challenged by religious education (RE). Lessons are well linked to developing learners' understanding of Christian values and pupils have some understanding of Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith. Across the school community there is a highly developed interpretation of spirituality. Learners have regular opportunities to develop a personal spirituality through experiences such as reflection/prayer spaces in school and the Hope Tree in a quiet area outside. Leaders plan with clergy to extend and enrich these opportunities throughout the year. Highly engaging experiences, such the Prayer Initiative, seen during the inspection at Shrivvenham church, are used by learners to deepen their understanding of Christian values in their daily lives. Children confidentially articulate their spiritual development through 'I think' reflections in RE lessons and in opportunities to share positive attributes about other children in the weekly Golden Assembly.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Prayer and personal reflection play a vital role in the spiritual development of children in this school. Learners demonstrate a good understanding of personal prayer in school and at church. Children work in mixed age groups to create and write thoughtful and reflective prayers building on the value of the term. The use of prayers written by children in worship at school, at church and in governor meetings, also supports spiritual development. Prayer spaces, opportunities to write prayers as mixed age groups across the school and children's high quality of individual prayer are most evident. During Golden Assembly children suggest why their peers are nominated by staff and this exemplifies the whole school commitment to caring for each other. Children carefully articulate the values each child represents. Team work was celebrated in a recent tag rugby tournament as one child commented, 'we were caring about each other even when we didn't win'. The school community recognises the importance and value of worship on learners and staff. Parents and villagers regularly attend collective worship in school. A teacher commented that collective worship 'is of great value to me personally, as much as it is to the children'. Learners' views are used regularly to monitor and evaluate collective worship and suggested improvements are acted on. For example, the children joining in with 'Amen' when a candle is blown out to signify the end of collective worship, was a child's idea. Children make valuable contributions to collective worship through playing musical instruments as others enter, singing hymns and writing prayers that are used every day. Local clergy are heavily involved in planning the programme for worship. Members of local churches lead the Open the Book sessions which the children speak fondly of. Themes planned for collective worship are relevant to learners and pay close attention to their spiritual and moral development. Learners have some understanding of different Christian traditions in worship and this is linked to the major Christian festivals. Children have a more limited knowledge of Anglican traditions and the Church's seasons of the year. Worship nurture groups (small year group specific) are used to develop each year group's sense of identity and enable almost all staff members to lead worship. This prepares children well for the next step in their spiritual development. School worship often teaches about the person of Jesus Christ and includes regular reference to the Christian belief in God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Learners are able to talk about their understanding of the Holy Trinity with some clarity and confidence, which is age appropriate. Collective worship sometimes includes biblical material and references. Learners are able to make some links between this and their own lives, for example the school motto: 'We Care', is linked to the story of the 'Good Samaritan'. However, not all children could give examples of where the Christian values are shown in the Bible.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

As RE leader, the experienced headteacher enables the school's ambitious vision to be shared with the whole school community. The distinctively Christian character of the school ensures that the contribution RE makes to the school is outstanding. Standards of attainment are high for all learners. Progress is rapid in developing an understanding of Christianity and a broad range of religious beliefs. Since the last inspection assessment systems have been successfully transformed and are robust and effective in setting next steps in learning for children and use careful self-assessment to enhance pupil's learning. High quality marking in books and children's thoughtful responses ensure thinking and reflection on themes covered are well developed. In reading children's comments, their understanding is very clearly articulated and shows that learning is well advanced and assessment has a very positive impact. However, opportunities are not always taken to capture non-written activities in RE. Children are given a rich curriculum with regular, exciting and thought provoking first hand experiences. In an infant lesson observed, children explored the feelings of Moses and the Pharaoh through role play and in tasting manna from heaven. This reflects regular practice. Detailed planning in various different cycles ensures that children cover a wide range of religious beliefs during their time in the school. Learners demonstrate their impressive understanding of the knowledge and skills learnt, for example in the reflective responses the oldest children made about the Holy Communion. The majority of RE teaching is outstanding and is taught effectively by the headteacher. The high profile of RE across the school ensures that it provides valuable learning experiences for all children as a core part of the curriculum. Members of the local congregation have input into RE lessons, for example, a local vicar was interviewed by children on the theme of leadership. The subject leader conducts rigorous and extensive monitoring and evaluation of RE. Considerable improvements in assessment have been actioned from this monitoring. Passionate subject leadership is highly effective and governors have recently put into place rigorous monitoring systems. The impact of their work is evident in the challenge and support they provide which results in RE of exceptional quality.

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

The headteacher lives out a vision for her school rooted in Christian values. Leaders at all levels contribute to insightful self-evaluation which leads to an excellent knowledge of the school as a church school. Christian vision and values are embedded through weekly newsletters, the school website and around the school in stunning examples of collaborative art works. Careful monitoring and evaluation of the distinctiveness of this church school ensure that the school community's views are listened to and often acted upon. Staff are given time for peaceful reflection and the leadership enables them to feel safe in the knowledge they are serving God in a caring and understanding place. Leadership of collective worship and RE are retained by the headteacher and as such, have a very high profile across the school and are high priorities for governors. Partnerships with parents, the local church, diocese and villagers make a substantial contribution to the Christian character of school life. Parents comment on the genuine open door policy upheld by school leaders. One parent explained how they were re-engaged with their children's education due to the work the school does to live out its Christian character and to reach out to families. This shows the impact of the values beyond the school day. Clergy drive the planning systems for collective worship in partnership with the headteacher and themes are shared in local church schools across the benefice and in church worship. The mutual and substantial benefit is seen in the amount of time clergy and parishioners give to supporting the school and developing the Christian character. Recent professional development training with the diocese has given opportunities for governors to have a clear impact on the school's work and governors are providing the appropriately amount of challenge to school leaders. Governors are undertaking a two year training programme with the diocese to continue their development. Leaders ensure that the school motto: 'We Care' threads throughout the school. All leaders live out a vision which is highly effective in promoting the personal development of learners. The school has developed learning opportunities for children to explore experiences of pupils of different faiths and to share their uniqueness in a safe and nurturing environment. Multi-cultural enrichment days enable pupils to explore global communities and develop their understanding of Christianity as a world faith.

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