

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

West Tytherley Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

West Tytherley, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP5 1JX

Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Winchester
Previous SIAS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local authority	Hampshire
Date of inspection	6 December 2016
Date of last inspection	1 November 2011
Type of school and unique reference number	Primary VC 116323
Headteacher	Mike Warren
Inspector's name and number	Andrew Rickett 201

School context

West Tytherley is smaller than the average size primary school with 76 children in roll. They are arranged into four class groups. It is situated in a rural setting. The majority of children are of White British heritage and come from mixed socio-economic backgrounds. The number of children with additional learning needs and/or disabilities is broadly in line the national average as is the number entitled to receive the pupil premium is average. Attendance is broadly in line with the national average.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of West Tytherley CE VC Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding

- An explicit Christian vision brings purpose and meaning to the lives of children and adults in the school community and makes a significant contribution to their spiritual development.
- Acts of worship provide regular opportunities for children to learn about Bible stories that they relate to their own lives and experiences.
- The commitment of leaders and managers to the Christian ethos ensures that it is continually developing to meet the needs of children.

Areas to improve

- Develop the children's understanding of the connections between the school's vision and its core Christian values so that they have a better appreciation of how, together, they impact on their learning and personal development.
- Develop the role of children in leading and planning collective worship so that they have more opportunity to explore themes in ways that are of interest to them.
- Develop opportunities for children to become more aware of different faiths and cultures as part of a multi-cultural society and the wider diversity of Christianity across the world.

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

A vision that has meaning and purpose to the whole school community, which drives the ethos, that makes a significant difference to the children's spiritual development as well as their academic success, is the reason why the Christian character is outstanding. Four values really are at the core of the school's vision and provide the means through which it is lived out. This is because strong links between values and vision give the school leaders clear direction in meeting the children's learning and personal needs. Care, respect, trust and responsibility are confidently articulated by all members of the school community who understand how they relate to a distinctively Christian ethos through links to Bible stories. Children explain with clarity how these four values are at the core of school life and impact in the classroom and beyond. Moreover, children are becoming clearer about how the values link to four aspects of learning: believe, enjoy, grow and succeed. Children explain that to succeed in their work they need to trust their teachers who care for them and believe in their own abilities. Children do well at school and data indicates that most children attain standards that are broadly in line with national expectations. The school has a clear understanding of how opportunities for spiritual development contribute to the children's understanding of the vision and values. The actual opportunities for these links to be promoted in the classroom are developing. They have not yet been fully explored particularly in equipping children with the skills to ask their own challenging questions and acquire a language to explain their views in greater depth. However, when given time to explain their thoughts on matters of faith and belief, children relish the opportunity to discuss their opinions in an atmosphere where the views of others are listened to with respect. Religious education (RE) makes an important contribution to the children's understanding of moral and social issues such as justice and equality. They are becoming more aware of different faiths and cultures both in Britain and around the world and are developing their awareness of the multi-cultural society in which they live. Children feel strongly that everyone, regardless of background, should be treated with dignity and that difference should be celebrated. Religious education ensures that children learn about how Christianity and other world religions make important contributions to culture and society and how faith guides people in their lives. The views of children have been gathered through feedback and these have informed improvements.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Substantial work has been done to improve the impact of worship since the previous inspection and this has borne fruit in the children's understanding and awareness of how worship helps them in their lives. This has been particularly underpinned by a four year programme of worship themes that emphasise core values and the vision. This has given greater opportunities to develop a shared language across the school community to explore values and how they have meaning both within the school and outside of it. In particular, worship themes explore a wider range of values that help support the children's understanding the core set. For example, learning about generosity is helping them to appreciate a deeper understanding of care and trust. Children use their knowledge of Bible stories to support their understanding of values such as forgiveness saying that 'we should forgive, not just once, but seventy seven times'. There are fewer times when children ask their own questions about what they hear in worship and explore their own interpretation of those messages. The excellent contribution of the vicar to support planning together with the headteacher means that a strong focus on Bible teaching and understanding of Christianity within an Anglican tradition helps children appreciate a deeper meaning of worship. Children understand that worship is a central part of what it means to be a church school and that it is a time to 'be with God' and learn about Jesus and what he taught. The lighting of candles, prayers with time for reflection and hymns all denote the distinct time of worship. Children have a good understanding of the significance of the different elements of worship. Older children, for example, say that the lighting of candle means that 'God is here' and that 'God shows through light the hard times and easy times, but always guides us home'. Other children find that the candle gives them a focus on which to concentrate when they think about the messages they hear and what it means to them personally. Collective worship helps children grow in their appreciation of the nature of the Trinity and what it means to them. They are aware of God as Father and Jesus as the Son of God. They are less sure about the Holy Spirit and 'what He does'. Children do know that they can pray to God and Jesus to say thank you, sorry or to ask for help. They are adamant that God listens to everyone's prayers, whether they have a faith or not, because 'He created everyone equally'. Younger children, for example, describe how God 'might help someone in a dream'. Children have some opportunities to be engaged in leading acts of worship and they say that they enjoy the times when they can actively participate in them.

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

A significant strength of leaders and managers is their commitment to the ongoing development of a vision that has meaning and purpose for the whole school community and their passion to ensure that they get this right. The process to do this has been extremely thorough and involved all members of the school community over a number of years. The outcome is a vision rooted in clear Christian principles underpinned by Bible teaching. The vision gives the school a clear direction upon which its future development can be built. Strong links between the vision and the children's learning and wellbeing ensure that the Christian ethos makes a significant contribution to the children's academic success and personal development. The headteacher confidently articulates the vision and has a very clear grasp of how this is lived out in the life of the school. This is shared by other senior leaders, particularly the deputy headteacher, and the governing body who together ensure that the vision drives all aspects of school improvement and is continually developing to meet the needs of children. Development of the vision and values has been an integral part of overall school improvement planning and its implementation has been supported through a number of training opportunities for staff and governors as well as times when parents have been invited to contribute their views. This robust process has been accompanied by ongoing monitoring and evaluation to review how well the vision is making a difference to the lives of children. These reviews form the basis for the school's self-evaluation as a church school which are accurate. They also ensure that leaders are continually identifying further challenging areas for improvement. The headteacher and his deputy share responsibility for religious education and, following a time when it wasn't moving forward as much as it could, have raised its profile as a subject and have created an action plan that clearly identifies priorities that reflect current developments in the subject. The leadership and management have a good capacity to continue to develop as a church school. Links with the local church are an important part of the school's identity as a church school. Children and their parents regard the church as integral to the life of the school; indeed children refer to the church as 'theirs'. They understand that the celebration of significant Christian festivals in the church mark special times in the church year but also contribute to the ethos of the school because they provide times for the school to come together as one community. The vicar is a staunch supporter of the school and makes a valuable contribution to its life. He regularly contributes to worship and supports the headteacher and staff and is well known to children and their parents. He is supported by a foundation governor who, although relatively new to the role, is developing her knowledge of the school. Parents say that the vision is inclusive and gives their children opportunities to engage in learning about faith and belief. They say that the values are important because they instil respect and responsibility in an environment which recognises the individual worth of their children. The school meets the requirements for RE and collective worship.

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