

## Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

### Whickham Parochial Church of England Primary School

Broadway, Whickham, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 6 5QW

<b>Current SIAMS inspection grade</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Durham</b>
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local authority	Gateshead
Date/s of inspection	20 June 2018
Date of last inspection	8 July 2013
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary controlled 108381
Headteacher	Peter Armstrong
Inspector's name and number	Paul Rusby
Quality assurance	Lyn Field 151

#### School context

Whickham Parochial Church of England Primary School is a one form school which is oversubscribed. There are currently 210 children on roll. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The headteacher has been in post for 12 years. The percentage of pupils who are eligible for free school meals and those pupils who have a special educational need are both below national averages. In 2017, a private nursery provision was established on the same site as the school. The school is linked with St Mary's Church in Whickham.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Whickham Parochial as a Church of England school are outstanding

- Exceptional caring and loving relationships exist throughout the school and deliver the school's mission to be a family living by Christian values.
- The Christian vision of the school impacts positively on the progress, attainment and attendance of all learners with pupil outcomes in all areas very high.
- The nurturing leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher enhance the wellbeing of adults and pupils enabling all to thrive.
- The strong relationship between the school and St Mary's Parish church is a significant strength that unifies and serves both communities excellently. This mutually beneficial relationship is one of the keys in enabling the school to flourish as a church school.

#### Areas to improve

- Ensure that the school's Christian vision, character and values are articulated explicitly on the school's website and in policy documentation so they reflect the exceptional practice of the school as a Church of England school.
- Further extend the range of opportunities that pupils have to develop a personal spirituality through the establishment of outdoor prayer areas and the enhanced provision of indoor areas of reflection.

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

This is an inclusive and nurturing school where caring relationships, based on Christian teaching, are explicitly lived out in the actions and words of adults and pupils alike. As a result of this, pupils and adults feel valued as unique and cherished individuals. The deeply embedded Christian vision which seeks to prepare each child to live 'life in its fullness' frames all that the school does. This vision is underpinned by the school's desire to provide the very best for its pupils so that all thrive.

Christian values are deeply embedded in the school. This is widely recognised and known as the 'Parochial spirit'. This is deeply valued by parents, one of whom described the 'Parochial spirit' as 'a really consistent sense of kindness and family which pervades the culture of the whole school'. Underpinning this, and central to the school's mission, is a sense of the school being a caring school family. Staff, pupils, governors and parents can confidently articulate that Christian values have an incredibly positive impact on the lives and wellbeing of all pupils and the personal development of the whole child. These values inform pupils how they relate to one another and create a caring and inclusive ethos combined with exceptional behaviour.

The Growth Mindset training has positively enhanced the school's determined drive for all pupils to achieve highly and is characterised by an aspiration for all adults and children to flourish. This has ensured that progress is rapid because staff identify exactly where additional support is required for individual pupils. As pupils are happy in school, attendance is good and significantly above national averages.

The individual care and support that surrounds each child is greatly valued by parents and pupils. The weaving together of religious education (RE), spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) and Christian values significantly contributes to the Christian character of the school. Pupils have many rich and varied opportunities to reflect on what the values mean to them and how they impact on their lives. High quality displays showcase values but often are without Bible references to promote their Christian basis. In spite of this, pupils are able to relate the values to Bible stories.

Pupils' behaviour and manners are exemplary because RE gives them time to reflect on how they can demonstrate Christian values in their lives. Problems are resolved swiftly and staff vigilance ensures that bullying is rare. Children learn about a variety of cultures and faiths in RE and the school is actively looking to enhance this through the Global Neighbours initiative. Pupils learn the importance of respect and tolerance and have a very secure understanding that everyone, regardless of race, religion or needs, should be treated in an equally loving way. One pupil articulated this in following the words of Jesus to 'love your neighbour as yourself'. The school's decision to include 'Understanding Christianity' as part of the RE curriculum from September 2018 highlights its ambitious nature in ensuring that the further development of pupils' understanding of the Christian ethos on which the school is founded.

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

Collective worship that is both inspirational and inclusive is valued by all members of the school community. Pupils and adults speak extremely positively about the importance that they place on coming together to reflect, pray and worship. One member of staff described the impact of collective worship in enhancing personal wellbeing in school as it 'brings everyone together and provides time to sit and reflect'.

Pupils see the value and importance of prayer and reflection and are able to openly talk about how prayer helps them in their own lives. Attractive worship areas have been established in classrooms to provide meaningful opportunities for pupils to reflect, write prayers and develop their own spirituality. These do not extend to the outdoor area but the prayer tree in the main hall is used well by pupils and is valued by them.

Collective worship is a joyful gathering of the school community which greatly enhances the Christian character of the school and is both inclusive and highly engaging. Biblical teaching and Anglican traditions are fully embedded and themes are in line with the liturgical calendar. Inclusive Eucharistic services are valued by children and adults alike. Parents speak of the joy of being invited into the Eucharistic service and the impact that all worship has on their children in terms of the respect and care that they show to one another. The services are jointly led by the headteacher and the vicar and deepen pupils' awareness of Anglican traditions and practices.

The use of images supports pupils' strong understanding of the Christian belief of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit and they articulate this in their own words. Pupils enjoy participating by leading prayers, singing and reading. However, they do not have a role in planning and delivering worship for themselves.'

The school's Fun and Faith club has a positive impact on spiritual growth of the pupils and adults who attend and is greatly valued by parents. Pupils enjoy the club and talk enthusiastically about the impact it has on their understanding of Christian values. The Fun and Faith club exemplifies the mutually beneficial strong links between the school and local churches.

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

The headteacher humbly and passionately believes, prioritises and models the school's Christian vision. It creates a shared desire amongst all staff to live out these values. The impact of this caring leadership is that Christian values are not just words but a guiding set of values which are like the heart beat to the life of the school. School leaders make families feel valued through being very welcoming and the exceptional care shown to all. One family echoed this in the way the headteacher knows every child by name.

Governors are a challenging and supportive body who ensure that the Christian vision remains at the heart of all school life. Governors confidently articulate the way that the mission and strategic direction of the school is deeply enhanced by Christian values and ensures the holistic development of all children. Emanating from the headteacher, governors and senior leadership team, a highly supportive family feeling has been created which is centred on the love and example of Jesus.

The school's vision and drive to support all to reach their full potential is insightfully articulated by all school leaders and enhanced by the school's high quality work on creating an aspirational mindset. This results in high standards of attainment for all pupils including vulnerable and disadvantaged children.

Through the living out of the Christian vision there is a tangible sense of love and compassion for every pupil and family. The impact of the headteacher's thoughtful leadership of collective worship and RE are much appreciated by parents, one of whom described this as being, 'very insightful and biblically based.' The exemplary modelling of caring leadership by governors and school leaders is a highly effective coaching model to develop future church school leaders.

The mutually beneficial relationship between the school, diocese, parish and the local community is one of the keys in enabling the school to flourish as a church school. The local vicar's strong link with the school is greatly valued by all members of the school community and contributes to the school's loving ethos. He is well known to children and substantially enhances the spiritual development of the school through running confirmation classes and leading collective worship. The strong relationship between the school and St Mary's Parish church is a significant strength that unifies and serves both communities.

The strong Christian vision for the school is consistently articulated and lived out by all school leaders including governors. Strategic planning and development plans are similarly rooted in the Christian vision. However, policies and documentation do not make sufficient reference to the biblical basis to ensure that they express the excellent practice so evident throughout the school. The school meets the statutory requirements for collective worship and RE.

SIAMS report June 2018 Whickham Parochial Church of England Primary School, Whickham. NE16 5QW