

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Charleton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

West Charleton, Kingsbridge, Devon, TQ7 2AL

Current SIAMS inspection grade	Satisfactory
Diocese	Exeter
Previous SIAS inspection grade	Good
Local authority	Devon
Date of inspection	6 March 2017
Date of last inspection	21 May 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Primary 113391
Executive headteacher	Susan Rowe-Jones
Inspector's name and number	Andrew Rickett 201

School context

Charleton is smaller than the average size primary school with 57 children on roll. They are arranged into three class groups. It is situated in a rural setting. The majority of children are of White British heritage and come from diverse socio-economic backgrounds. The number of children with special learning needs and/or disabilities is broadly in line with the national average while the number entitled to receive the pupil premium is below average. The school is part of a federation with two other church primary schools. An executive headteacher, from the Learning Academy Partnership (LAP), was deployed to the federation in September 2016 and day to day responsibility is with the head of school. At the time of the inspection, the school was in the process of joining the LAP multi academy trust. Attendance is below the national average.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Charleton CE Primary School as a Church of England school are satisfactory

- A core set of Christian values underpin relationships throughout the school community and make a valuable contribution to the children's personal development. These values are not yet making sufficient impact on the children's learning and progress.
- Collective worship makes a valuable contribution to the children's understanding of core values within a Christian context and their relevance to their own lives.
- The executive headteacher, supported by other leaders from the Learning Academy Partnership, is rapidly developing the rigour of the school's systems to effectively monitor and evaluate as a church school.

Areas to improve

- Refine the school's interpretation of spirituality so that opportunities for children to acquire a wider vocabulary to explore a personal spirituality in greater depth are identified across all areas of learning.
- Develop existing opportunities for children to reflect and pray so that they have a clearer understanding of the purpose and personal reflection and how it supports them.
- Develop links between school and church communities so that together they reach out to the wider local community.

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

A core set of six values are well known to all members of the school community who readily describe how they contribute to the good quality of relationships throughout the school. They are an important aspect of the school's approach to managing behaviour and in supporting children to build relationships that respect and value others. Children have a good appreciation that fairness is an important part of being a good friend as well as being honest with yourself and others. Children treat each other with respect and show regard for the views and opinions of others. The six core values are known by children and adults to reflect the school's Christian ethos as they are explored through Bible stories in collective worship. Older children understand that the values are not exclusively Christian in nature and that they apply to everyone regardless of their belief. These core values are explored in some aspects of the curriculum particularly through religious education (RE) where they help children develop an appreciation of how values have relevance to the lives of those who have a faith. The values support the children's personal development through good opportunities to explore social and moral issues through RE and some other areas of the curriculum. Values have less impact on the children's learning which varies across the school with not all children making enough progress to meet expectations for their age. The school is addressing an area for improvement identified in the previous report to make spirituality more explicit in school life. Following some recent work to explore this, there is a better understanding of spirituality which is mainly delivered by giving children opportunities to reflect through a variety of ways in collective worship and RE. There are less clearly defined opportunities to develop spirituality as an integral part of teaching and learning and children have a more limited experience to develop the vocabulary to explore questions of meaning and purpose in depth. However, when they are given opportunities to discuss big questions, they respond with enthusiasm and an eagerness to share their ideas and listen respectfully to those of others. Attendance is below the national average and school leaders work hard with families to ensure that all children receive their entitlement to an education by attending school regularly. Religious education has a high profile within the school curriculum and children have positive attitudes towards the subject. The school receives excellent support from the Christian Distinctiveness Lead from the LAP and is giving staff the confidence to trial units from the 'Understanding Christianity' material which is improving the level of challenge of their expectations of teaching Christianity. The school works hard to give children an understanding of the diversity of life and culture in modern Britain and diversity around the world. Children appreciate differences and strongly feel that everyone should be treated with dignity and respect regardless of their background.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship has improved since the previous inspection as it now more explicitly makes links between Bible stories and the six core values. Indeed, acts of worship are the main way through which the school promotes distinctively Christian values and this has given worship a more central role in the life of the school. The planning of worship has improved since January 2017 with the support of the Christian Distinctiveness Lead. Weekly themes are closely linked to values which are explored each half term in considerable depth. Following the introduction of the theme on Monday, children explore its meaning in greater depth in family groups later in the week. This gives an opportunity for children to work in smaller, more intimate groups led by a teacher. Responses are recorded in journals which show that children support each other when discussing and recording their ideas. Furthermore, children have good opportunities to reflect on how messages from worship themes affect their own lives from a spiritual aspect. Comments are recorded, based on the 'Windows, Doors and Mirrors' framework, which helps them reflect on how values impact on their own lives and the lives of others. Collective worship is a distinct time in the school day and includes elements that make them special. Children understand that the lighting of three candles to start worship indicates Jesus as the 'light of the world' as well as representing the Trinity. Some older children explain with insight what the 'light of the world' means saying that it symbolises 'Jesus guiding' them to 'follow the right path'. Children are aware of the concept of the Trinity and recognise God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. They are developing their understanding of what this means and, although they are confident to express their views, they sometimes lack the language to do this articulately. There are good opportunities for children to pray in worship and at other times in the school day. Children have a good awareness of different types of prayers and are comfortable to say them. They are less clear about the purpose of prayer and how it can support them. Children have positive attitudes towards collective worship and respond eagerly when asked questions or have opportunities to share their thoughts and ideas. They participate through drama and contribute to planning special services. Older children are involved in evaluating worship working alongside members of the ethos committee.

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

The executive headteacher is bringing far greater rigour to the quality of the school's leadership and management. She has an excellent understanding of the purpose of being a church school and clearly articulates its Christian

vision. Systems are quickly being put in place to ensure that monitoring of the Christian ethos has greater clarity through a sharper emphasis on accurate evaluation of evidence that more directly leads to challenging improvements. She is being very ably supported by the Christian Distinctiveness Lead from the LAP whose encouragement and advice to the head of school and RE leader is making a considerable impact on their skills and ability to lead the development of the school's Christian ethos. The head of school and RE leader have now developed a good understanding of the expectations of their role in leading the development of the Christian ethos. Self-evaluation as a church school is realistic and has accurately identified areas to continue to improve. Moreover, school leaders and managers, including governors; approach their work with integrity and a strong commitment to provide the very best for children. It is too early to evaluate the impact of the recent initiatives as convincing evidence of the progress being made is not yet apparent. However, leaders and managers have a good grasp of how to measure the success of these initiatives and a good capacity to move the school forward as a church school. This is reflected in the developing role of the ethos committee which is becoming more strategic in how it challenges the school rather than becoming too involved in the school's operations. Developments in the quality of leaders and managers place the school at an exciting place where together they possess the skills and enthusiasm to grow as a church school. Parents strongly feel that the school's Christian values make a difference to their children's lives. They explain how their children talk about the values at home and refer to them outside of school. In particular, parents feel that their children have 'ownership' of the values and get excited about sharing them. The school has good links with the local church through the involvement of the curate in the life of the school and the celebration of major Christian festivals at the church. Children and their parents value these times as they help to build a sense of belonging to a community. There are less well defined links between the actual school and church communities and how together they make a contribution to the life of the village. The school meets the statutory requirements for RE and collective worship.

SIAMS report March 2017 Charleton CE VC Primary School Kingsbridge TQ7 2AL