

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Peppard Church of England Primary School (Voluntary Controlled)	Church Lane, Peppard Oxon RG9 5JU
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese/Methodist District	Oxford
Previous SIAMS inspection grade:	Good
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Name of multi-academy trust	N/A
Date/s of inspection	30 September 2016
Date of last inspection	14 November 2011
School's unique reference number	123135
Headteacher	Nick Steele
Inspector's name and number	Jane Tuckett 668

School context

Peppard CE Primary is a small village school of 100 pupils set in an affluent rural area. After a period of falling numbers it is now at full capacity. Most of its pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium and those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) is well below the national average. There are four classes for the seven year groups. The school has been through a very unsettled period with five heads in five years and significant staff changes. The current head took over in September 2013. A new rector was installed just before the inspection after an interregnum, during which a house for duty priest maintained the church connection with the school.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Peppard CE Primary as a Church of England school are good

- Strong values based on support, tolerance and respect and linked implicitly to Christian principles and teaching underpin excellent relationships, behaviour and attitudes to learning and daily life
- Pupils benefit from the broader horizons offered through excellent extra-curricular opportunities and good links with the village church, clergy and community resulting in good spiritual as well as moral, social and cultural development.
- The new head, supported by the governors, has built a strong staff team and is energetically addressing standards and issues surrounding Christian distinctiveness, resulting in a more recognisably Christian ethos.

Areas to improve

- Carry out then communicate overtly a revision of the school's Christian values so that all stakeholders are involved in their discussion, choice and implementation, giving them a greater sense of ownership and understanding of their Christian distinctiveness.
- Give opportunities to pupils for planning and leadership of worship and through monitoring and evaluation assess its impact on the spiritual development of the whole school community.
- Set up and embed robust monitoring and evaluation of the different aspects of the Christian ethos.

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

The school has a strongly caring and nurturing ethos based on Christian values which have been firmly embedded since 2011. Since taking up the post in September 2013 the head has attributed the values to Biblical stories and made them more overtly Christian around the school strengthening the Christian character. However, the values as stated on the website are not yet clearly attributed. Pupils are very aware of the current termly value of service and know it as Christian because of a display at the school entrance quoting the story from the Gospel of John where Jesus washes his disciples' feet. Values genuinely permeate all of school life; the school lives out in practical ways the implications of its values such as never giving up on anybody, supporting those who are vulnerable and including all its members equally. The well-managed and highly effective buddy system where new pupils are paired with Year 6 pupils from the summer before they join the school epitomises this. As a result, all pupils make good progress and achieve good standards. The small size enables staff to focus on individual needs and strengths and attendance is good. Robust attention to attainment through rigorous monitoring and the resulting shift of focus to address curriculum areas in greater need of attention means that progress across the board is strong. However, pupils are not yet able to articulate reliably where all their values come from. Revisiting and refreshing the values would be very valuable in increasing their profile and distinctiveness. Staff form a committed, hard-working and highly effective team and behaviour and personal development are outstanding as a result of the strong focus on care and respect for others and support for the less able. Behaviour issues are well-managed and relationships at all levels are positive and supportive. Christian forgiveness features as part of the process in the behaviour policy. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are all excellent as a result of the broad curriculum and many extra-curricular opportunities, especially in sport and music where the school holds the gold standard in both Arts Mark and School Games Mark. The school choir performs widely in the community enabling its members to develop culturally through their love of music and experience other settings. The School Council offers responsibility to its elected members who are proactive in choosing and managing charitable events. The school promotes self-esteem and confidence, recognising success and achievement in its celebration 'Starbook' assemblies. Pupils are happy at school and keen to learn within its caring, inclusive and cooperative ethos. Diversity is an issue of which all staff are very aware given the school's mono-cultural nature and every opportunity is taken to extend the pupils' horizons in terms of cultural and racial awareness through visitors and visits. Religious Education makes a good contribution to understanding differences resulting from different faiths while also giving a strong foundation of knowledge of Christianity through Bible stories and core beliefs. However, pupils do not understand Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith. The beautiful setting at the edge of Peppard Common which the school uses as its playground offers excellent opportunities for 'awe and wonder' and most staff are proactive in creating opportunities for pupils to appreciate the spiritual aspect of life. However, space within the school is limited with no school hall for assemblies and worship or for lunch. Display space is at a premium and the proposed new school to be built on a nearby site would hugely improve the physical experience of the pupils in school. However, to quote one parent, 'My children may not have a hall or even a proper playground but one thing I am certain of is that they have experienced life through the spirit during their time at Peppard'. Another church-going parent said that her family are pleased to have chosen the school in preference to another Christian school because it felt 'more Christian'.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Daily collective worship is considered an important part of school life and crucial to linking the values to Biblical teaching and how this can impact on everyday life. The current head has raised the profile of collective worship, establishing a more coherent and structured programme based on the values and the Values for Life scheme, with staff attending worship regularly thus broadening its impact throughout the school. Historically the local rector has also led worship once a week with the house-for-duty priest during the interregnum becoming very involved in worship and teaching of RE using 'Faith through Drama' which was very popular and beneficial in bringing the Bible to life. Whole school worship, which is still universally referred to as assembly, takes place in classrooms and

pupils behave respectfully and respond enthusiastically. Given the situation that worship takes place in different places there is no use of a cue for worship such as the lighting of a candle; this could be helpful in separating worship from notices and other school business. The lack of a hall undoubtedly limits what can be achieved but there is still a strong sense of a worshipping community, through shared prayer and reverent worship. The weekly Starbook Assembly celebrates the success of individual pupils in following the values, thus further embedding the values in school life while enhancing self-esteem. Worship is led solely by the head or visitors including local clergy and it is important now for pupils and other staff to become involved in leading worship to ensure ownership by pupils and succession for staff. Monthly services are held in the church, sometimes although not always focusing on one of the major church festivals such as Harvest, Christmas, Easter or Pentecost. At these services pupils play a more active part with their contribution master-minded by the elected Worship Council and its staff leader who is keen to improve consultation with the classes. Parents attend the church services regularly and talk about meaningful and accessible worship. This strong link with the church enables pupils to have regular experience of Anglican liturgy and practice within the framework of the church's year. Theological teaching, especially about the Trinity, occurs mainly through Bible stories linked with key liturgical festivals such as Christmas, Easter and Pentecost. Pupils knew that God the Father created the world, God the Son was born as a child at Christmas and died on a cross at Easter and God the Spirit came at Pentecost. Stories chosen for worship are largely Biblical although worship can focus on the festivals and stories of other religions thus broadening the experience of other faiths, The Worship Council are active in writing the prayers used in the church services and all pupils know the Lord's Prayer which is used regularly. Grace is said before eating lunch. Monitoring and evaluation of worship and its impact have been done but are not yet robust or formative enough to ensure continuing development and improvement. Spiritual or reflective areas are not provided inside or outside the school buildings although the common which adjoins the school offers excellent opportunities for both reflection and spiritual development.

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

The head is enthusiastic, energetic and dedicated to helping every child reach his or her potential as a child of God in all areas of school life, thus ensuring a wealth of opportunities for the pupils. He was appointed through a process which placed great emphasis on awareness of the importance of Christian distinctiveness in a church school. Staff are also appointed with this in mind and after a period of considerable change there is now a very effective, strong and hard-working team of dedicated teachers who actively support the Christian ethos. They are happy with the professional development opportunities they are offered and are beginning to take on responsibilities, although paid leadership roles are impossible in such a small school. The governing body is chaired by one of the two foundation governors, both of whom are long-standing governors and immensely involved and supportive and constantly bring Christianity into the school. Governors start their meetings with prayer and increasingly articulate the school's Christian vision, considering it good stewardship to spend their money wisely for the benefit of all pupils. They have always supported the deeply embedded values of the school in their decision making and would now support a revisiting of the values and more overt communication of them. The school has good working links with the diocese giving Christian grounding to decision making on the school's ethos. The local school partnership provides enhanced opportunities for pupils and shared moderation of pupils' work and support for staff. Governors are aware that monitoring of the different aspects of the Christian ethos has not been as robust or embedded as they would like and are keen to address this situation. Parents are very supportive of the school with many of them making valuable contributions by helping in different capacities. Parents feel able to raise any problems, confident that they will be speedily and appropriately managed by caring staff. Links with the parish church have been strong historically and look set to continue under the new incumbent. The school actively supports village community life as well as the church at such events as the local fete, Macmillan Coffee Morning and visit a local care home, contributing to the sense of belonging to a caring community.

