

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

### **St Mary and All Saints Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School**

Maxwell Road Beaconsfield Buckinghamshire HP9 1RG

<b>Current SIAMS inspection grade</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Oxford</b>
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Date of inspection	23 May 2018
Date of last inspection	13 June 2013
Type of school and unique reference number	Primary Voluntary Aided 110459
Headteacher	Mrs Jenny Barnett
Inspector's name and number	Helen Crolla 918

#### **School context**

St Mary and All Saints Church of England Primary School is a large and popular voluntary aided primary school in Beaconsfield. There are 419 pupils on roll. Since the previous SIAS inspection, there has been a significant expansion, converting the school to two form entry. A new headteacher has been appointed along with a recently formed leadership team. The majority of pupils come from White British backgrounds. The percentage of pupils in receipt of pupil premium or requiring support for special educational needs and/or disability are below the national average. The school retained its outstanding status at the previous Ofsted inspection.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Mary and All Saints as a Church of England school are outstanding**

- The Christian distinctiveness is woven throughout the life of the school so that it impacts on the lives and achievements of all pupils and adults.
- Due to the consistently strong Christian vision, the Christian values are deeply embedded within relationships, attitudes to learning and service to the community.
- There is a highly developed understanding of spirituality which promotes inclusivity, enhances Christian beliefs and enriches the well-being of all.
- Inspirational collective worship (CW) led by staff, clergy and pupils, focuses on the teachings of Jesus and the Bible whilst providing rich opportunities for prayer.
- The teaching of Religious Education is creative and challenging for pupils, with teachers being deeply committed to planning high quality learning opportunities.

#### **Areas to improve**

- Work with the Worship Ambassadors to identify and increase spiritual opportunities for children and adults within the outside areas of the school.
- Continue to develop relationships with a variety of faith communities, to enhance learning in religious education and deepen pupils' understanding of religious practice.

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

Explicit Christian values of wisdom, creation and love enrich the lives of pupils, their families and adults within school. Relationships are extremely strong, which deepen levels of respect. Pupils thrive within this climate. They attend school regularly, achieve high levels of attainment and make good progress across the curriculum. The consistent Christian message articulated and modelled by all adults supports pupils academically and emotionally. There is a commitment to developing the wellbeing of the whole child, through a highly engaging curriculum, supported by opportunities to reflect on the awe and wonder of God's creation. Pupils confidently articulate the events of the Bible, quoting a range of stories. The display of Biblical history in the main entrance demonstrates that learning opportunities are well planned to ensure pupils have an in-depth knowledge of both Old and New Testaments. The school's motto 'With our heads we learn, with our hands we create and with our hearts we love and care for each other' is woven into the fabric of school life. Pupils proudly explain that the motto and values affect their behaviour and their daily actions, both at home and at school. A Reception pupil shared that he had learned to 'love his friends more when playing'. An air of genuine respect for all underpins relationships so that there is a strong commitment to valuing all God's children. The Christian ethos of the school provides a nurturing and inclusive environment which parents value. One parent commented upon the deep relationship between church and school which has strengthened their own family's faith. There is an uncompromising commitment to ensuring that pupils are well supported. 'Time to Talk' which offers an opportunity to share concerns to the deputy headteacher is testament to the staff's generosity of spirit. The rich opportunities for the spiritual, moral and cultural development of pupils is actively promoted within the main turret area. Pupils engage with the wonderful tree leaving prayers or thoughts, developing their personal spirituality. The Christian distinctiveness enfolds pupils so that they participate in opportunities to reflect naturally and regularly. The school takes great care to share that Christianity is a world faith, with The Lord's Prayer written in Arabic proudly displayed alongside the school agreed definition of spirituality. Visits to organisations within the community enhance the Christian character of the school; pupils share skills with older members of the local area and demonstrate their charitable giving. Through worship and religious education, the school ensures pupils develop a deep understanding of Christianity as a world faith. Strong relationships amongst the staff team are also enriched by the Christian values of love and peace. The 'staff shout out board' recognises each other's strengths and values all. One staff member shared, 'Our Christian values are consistently implemented throughout the school', reinforcing that the essence of the community is built upon Christian principles and actions. Through highly effective religious education, pupils learn about the beliefs of others, which they say excites and challenges their thinking. Pupils demonstrate respect for a variety of faiths confirmed by pupils who felt welcomed and able to share their beliefs. This also deepens their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, enriching the Christian character of the school.

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

Worship Ambassadors proudly share the planning of worship for younger pupils with the local vicar. Their fortnightly meeting to select a story is woven with the values of the school. One Year 3 pupil felt that they enjoyed 'teaching the younger children about Christianity and the Bible'. As a result, worship is inspiring and engaging for all gathered whilst emphasising the Christian vision. Careful thought is given to providing visual representation of Christian beliefs. The spread of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost being presented as red dye mixing into water reinforces the Christian message being spread through the early church. Pupils share that worship enriches their thinking through music, drama or story in addition to reflective prayer. Worship Ambassadors would welcome more feedback from other pupils but demonstrated their thoughts on moving this forward. Due to strategically planned collective worship, pupils develop a deep knowledge of the church year and Anglican practice. Worship within school enriches the lives of all through its inclusivity whilst gatherings in church enhance the spirituality of the wider community. A parent of a non-Christian child shared that she felt worship was 'nurturing' whilst another thought it evoked feelings of 'a big family' gathering together. Parents enjoy opportunities to join the school with the Christmas and Easter services particularly valued. The silent acting out of the crucifixion at Easter being mentioned as a particularly moving and spiritual experience for all. The lighting of the three wicked candle elicits the response 'God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit' at the start of worship demonstrating that Christian theology is deeply embedded with the life of the school. Pupils and staff remember the school motto within prayers before departing. The school enjoys strong links with both parish churches within Beaconsfield which support the school as a worshipping and prayerful community. Pupils readily engage with the main reflection area demonstrating that they relish opportunity to contribute prayers. One written reflection praises God saying, 'Thank you for your wonderful creation.' whilst others pray for peace. Class reflection areas are used beyond static displays with pupils provided with additional times to reflect to music after play. Such whole school commitment to spirituality enables pupils of all faiths and none to develop their spiritual well-being. Worship Ambassadors identify that they would like to plan opportunities for spiritual reflection outside. Pupils demonstrate an impressive knowledge of the Bible sharing stories about Jesus or those he told to illustrate God's love. One pupil explains that the story of Jesus stilling

the storm is 'inspirational' because it illustrates 'faith and hope.' Governors and leaders are committed to worship enriching the wider life of the school so monitoring is effectively planned and influences the planning of future opportunities.

### **The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding.**

Highly effective planning and delivery of RE lessons ensure all pupils make good progress. The leadership team skilfully articulate a strong vision whilst offering support based upon regular feedback or monitoring. Teaching is of a high standard due to the well organised scheme of work offering pupils opportunities to compare Christian beliefs with those of others. Skilful questioning encourages pupils to reflect upon beliefs, enriching their knowledge. A meaningful visit to Bhaktivedanta Hindu temple, Watford inspired pupils and parents making them reflect upon the similarities and differences existing within religious practice. Pupils are challenged by exciting activities, with the teaching of Christianity a particular strength. Debate is enjoyed by pupils where teachers observe a deeper level of learning. Books confirm that RE is taught expertly linking other areas of the curriculum to achieve creativity. The impact of the enquiry approach using 'big questions' provides pupils with confidence to discuss ethical questions. One parent identifies that their 'child is keen to have in-depth conversations as a result of their learning in RE.' Pupils receive timely feedback but could benefit from more RE specific marking. RE displays within all classrooms demonstrate the high priority afforded to the subject within the school. Pupils are able to access content at an appropriate level, which enables all to enjoy good outcomes. They expertly articulate links between RE and school values. A Year 6 pupil shared, 'It is important to learn about many religions because it helps me realise and respect lots of religions with different views.' Inherent views such as this, illustrate the deep impact of the RE on pupils' thinking. Visitors from the Maidenhead Mosque enriched learning about Islam. Rich opportunities such as these are welcomed by the pupils who would like more opportunities to either visit places of worship or welcome representatives from a variety of faiths. Leaders ensure that assessment is built into planning and effectively monitor to plan future development for teachers. Performance information is collected by the subject leader to track achievement. This is then reported to governors which informs strategic planning. The school is well supported by the diocese, makes good use of available training which leaders skilfully apply to improve practice further.

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

The headteacher, supported by governors and senior leaders articulates a strong Christian vision. There is an uncompromising commitment to reflective practice which leads to very effective improvement. The leadership team are keenly supported by all staff, who are provided with opportunities to contribute to the ethos of the school. Following a period of expansion, the headteacher has skilfully maintained the existing strong Christian character of the school whilst establishing a fresh direction. Parents speak of a 'softness' where pupils are encouraged to talk openly about their feelings or make responses of a spiritual nature. The school places great emphasis on maintaining supportive relationships with families. Parents notice the visibility of the leadership team which they find reassuring. Parents whose children have required particular support express their gratitude for the care shown by the school. Values are promoted through reward systems to create a calm, harmonious environment. The praise book within the main entrance area celebrates individual achievement whilst the tree in the dining room allows the lunchtime team to reward manners or values based behaviour. Governors identify that such practice develops every child whilst nurturing spiritual and moral development. They value the relationship with the local churches which provide intensive support for families when required. Highly effective monitoring by governors impacts on key areas of the school, for example the reflection areas within all classes. All leaders demonstrate a deep commitment to ensuring new and existing staff feel well supported in their professional practice or personally. One member of staff stated that 'the values permeate through everything' so adults feel nurtured and respected. School self-evaluation involves all adults which ensures skilful support for learners, particularly those who require additional time. Leaders refer to 'zippy bag interventions' as an example of the schools deep commitment to a strong focus on improvement. Pupils enjoy opportunities to participate in fundraising activities for the wider global community. Hope4Malawi and Operation Christmas Child are well supported by families. More locally interactions with residential homes allows pupils the opportunity to demonstrate their service to others. The leadership of worship and religious education, by the newly formed leadership team skilfully guarantees that both have a consistent high priority. Leaders regularly work alongside governors to measure the impact of changes, examining data or parent questionnaires. Governors observe teaching with senior leaders to monitor pupil engagement with the enquiry approach. Leaders have a strong commitment to providing high quality training to ensure that the Christian distinctiveness of the school is enriched further. They take full advantage of diocesan training which is disseminated to the wider staff team. Staff meetings on prayer writing and reflection areas have been used to good effect with the Understanding Christianity materials being implemented by teachers. The involvement of the link advisor has supported the school to recognise its many strengths and the impact of its distinctiveness as an exceptional church school.