

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Staverton Church of England Primary School

Glebe Lane Staverton Daventry Northamptonshire NN11 6JF

Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Peterborough
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Date of academy conversion	01 August 2014
Name of multi-academy trust	Peterborough Diocese Education Trust (PDET)
Date of inspection	18 May 2017
Date of last inspection	13 June 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Primary Academy 141068
Headteacher	Ruth Walker-Green
Inspector's name and number	The Revd Dr Jason Phillips 598

School context

Staverton CE Primary is an oversubscribed, small school of 105 pupils. Although in a rural context, around 80% of the pupils are drawn from the nearby town of Daventry. The vast majority of pupils are White British. The number of pupils attracting government funding for deprivation is well below the national average. The percentage of pupils with a special education need is broadly average. The school converted to an academy within PDET in 2014.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Staverton Primary as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The Christian values of the school are expressed both explicitly and implicitly creating a strong sense of an inclusive Christian community at this school.
- The Christian values of the school result in positive relationships at all levels and inform behaviour choices so that behaviour at the school is strong.
- The Christian leadership of the headteacher supported by a committed staff and governing body prospers the school's vision to enable the all-round flourishing of each pupil as a unique child of God.
- Reflection time has a hugely beneficial impact upon personal and communal spiritual development.

Areas to improve

- Ensure all pupils are fully stretched in religious education (RE) by deepening their learning. For example, by using the Understanding Christianity resource and apply similar rigour to the planning, teaching and assessment of units of learning for the other focus faith traditions studied at the school.
- Ensure all pupils have an age appropriate understanding of the elements that comprise an act of collective worship and have frequent opportunity to apply this understanding so that they all become confident in leading acts of worship.

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

This church school is outstanding because its wide-ranging Christian values, such as compassion, respect and responsibility, flow seamlessly through all aspects of the school's work. The biblically based values are communicated both explicitly and implicitly. They create a school that is an inclusive Christian community where all are valued. The underlying theology of the school is expressed in its purpose of ensuring all pupils flourish as unique children of God. This too is the aim of the PDET which the school prospers extremely well. These Christian values and convictions result in a school that is focussed on the all-round development of each child with a focus on ensuring all pupils achieve. Consequently, attainment and achievement for most pupils is high. Where additional support is required this is rapidly put in place. As the Christian values are encouraged and well-modelled, relationships at all levels are positive and the pupils' behaviour is conducive to learning. There is a good balance between rights and responsibilities fashioned by the school values. This gives the pupils a structure to determine their behaviour choices by. If issues arise pupils are well supported. The school makes effective use of best practice detailed in the Church of England's anti-bullying guidance, 'Valuing All God's Children'. Pupils develop leadership capacity in various aspects of school life, such as serving as UNICEF ambassadors, as big-friends or on the worship committee further strengthening the application of the school's Christian values. Due to the quality provision, attendance is high with absence predominantly due to unauthorised holidays. The school works sensitively with families to demonstrate the negative impact upon pupils' flourishing by being absent in term time. Reflection times are a strong aspect of the school's work that is valued by all. Its effective use gives staff and pupils of all faiths and none, the opportunity to grow spiritually. Reflection enhances a shared sense of Christian community and a respect for a diversity of people within and beyond the school. Pupils respect and understanding of diverse communities is developed further by quality RE that promotes skills and attitudes that strengthen the inclusive Christian character of this school. RE makes a good impact on the school's Christian character. The school has a carefully considered understanding of spirituality arising from its Christian values and theological purpose. This spirituality is encouraged by a charter of spiritual entitlement and wide ranging opportunities for pupils to develop talents and skills. As a consequence, pupils grow as confident, compassionate and responsible people who have due regard to care for self and care for others. An expression of this is the school's recent support of less fortunate children through fundraising for the Compassion charity as well as Comic Relief and the Toilet Twinning Project. Active involvement in charitable endeavours helps the pupils to gain some sense of their responsibility for the wider world. The school clearly practises its acronym of LOVE, that is 'live our values every-day.' One member of staff said, 'We really do value the children as individuals. We work as a team to really help them so the values are within them and become virtues that guide them in life.'

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship is a positive experience that draws adults and children together as a Christian community to celebrate who they are, part of the family of God. Despite being at the end of the day, the worship experience is usually vibrant and inspirational. It is often a transformative experience where human experience and biblical precedent are applied to the school's Christian values and to the lives of the pupils and gathered adults. For example, pupils recognised how the visit by athlete Ben Smith and his work on anti-bullying was related to the Christian value of friendship. Similarly, the video footage of Alastair Brownlee carrying his brother in a triathlon final was considered in relation to the Christian value of compassion as well as to several biblical psalms. The school makes appropriate use of Christian and Anglican symbols and forms. Examples of this include the opening invitation to collective worship, 'The peace of the Lord be with you' and the use of liturgical colours to dress the worship bench. Pupils develop some sense of the Anglican tradition as a result. Reflection and prayer are valued greatly by the school. Reflection makes a particularly strong impact upon pupils and staff alike. Some pupils even express a desire for longer and/or more reflection time. Reflection enables the pupils to be still and thoughtful and significantly strengthens empathy for others as well as their own spiritual growth. Further, as a communal activity it strengthens the spiritual dimension of the school collectively. Worship music further enhances pupils' spiritual growth, shown for example, by their spine-tingling, joyous singing of contemporary worship songs such as 'Light of the World'. Collective worship, through its careful planning, helps pupils to grow in understanding of the person of Jesus and also the Christian understanding of God-as-Trinity. Whilst some children articulate an impressive understanding of Jesus and the Trinity, for a proportion of children this awareness is not as deep as it might be. The children are involved in the planning and evaluation of collective worship, especially those involved in the child-led collective worship committee. Pupils are given opportunities to lead especially when recognising the times and seasons of the Christian year, for example, in the recent Easter Salvation worship in church and the David and Goliath worship for the leavers' service. However, pupils' understanding of the elements that comprise an act of worship is limited. Consequently, their appreciation of how these elements structure and enhance worship and bring out the fullness of symbol, story, ritual and values is under-developed. Pupils do, however, have a growing sense of the Eucharist as a central sacrament of the Church of England. Whilst the development point of the last inspection was to initiate a school Eucharist, this has not come to fruition. Instead the school has purposely structured worship time, RE and church visits

to highlight the significance of this central Christian act of faith. The involvement of the St Mary's Church in worship is greatly valued. Adults and children alike remark upon the significant positive impact of the recently retired parish priest in collective worship. The bishop's vicar is supporting the school well whilst there is no parish priest, helping to maintain this positive link. Governors monitor collective worship effectively drawing in a range of stakeholders. Their evaluations make a difference, for example, in reviewing and reviving the use of reflection areas in the classrooms as a result of pupils articulating that these had not been as user friendly as they might be. The headteacher leads collective worship well ensuring it is a central experience to spiritual development.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

The headteacher leads the subject well articulating high expectations and ensuring RE makes a good impact on the life of the school. Its impact is good because RE extends the school's Christian values and has a high profile. RE develops pupils' understanding of Christianity and the Bible. It also encourages in pupils an openness and respect towards faith issues enabling them to explore a variety of world religions such as Islam and Hinduism with interest. One child said, 'I like exploring all the world religions as it helps me understand more about people, because there's others in the world than just us.' Learning outcomes in RE are good because teaching is good and pupils are positive towards the subject. Standards are broadly in line with other core subjects. The curriculum is well planned and interesting. It engages pupils in a variety of ways. The curriculum is enriched by themed days, such as Diwali Day and God Day, enabling pupils to express their learning creatively. Examples of this include the outstanding Diwali patterns displayed in school and dancing the foundational story of Diwali. However, whilst pupils' religious knowledge is broad and their skills of RE are generally strong, the learning about Christianity and other world faiths for many pupils is not deep enough. An example of this is the erratic use of religious vocabulary. This is because lessons, whilst generally effective, are not always sufficiently structured to challenge all pupils to reach their potential. The school's assessment system is insufficiently nuanced and rigorous to shape lessons as fully as it might. Due to effective monitoring and evaluation, the school's self-evaluation systems have highlighted this and plans are in place to improve, for example, in the introduction and application of the 'Understanding Christianity' resource.

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

Building upon a strong foundation, the headteacher has incrementally and sustainably improved this church school since the last inspection. The headteacher leads the school with a clear Christian vision. Her summary of this vision is, 'To develop the potential of each child as a unique child of God'. This vision replicates closely that of PDET. Staff and governors support the headteacher in communicating this vision, leading the way in actions, not just in words. The headteacher's Christian focus shines through in every aspect of her work, with the focus always on the well-being of the pupils. The school's involvement in the 'Northamptonshire Healthy Child Project' and the 'Church of England's Character Development Project' further exemplify this. The leadership team, staff and governors follow and support the headteacher's lead with immense commitment. The Christian love and support given to every pupil and staff member releases their full potential. The whole community benefits from the fact that the Christian values are not just written about and displayed in the challenge area balloons, but are lived out by staff and pupils day-by-day. The impact made by the school's Christian vision is secured by detailed, efficient and strategic planning. This is open and honest, with governors ready to challenge when appropriate, for example, upon the progress of higher attainers. Further, the headteacher and governors bring well-deserved encouragement to the staff team. Issues raised by the previous inspection have been tackled appropriately. Future leadership in church schools is promoted through excellent teamwork, good delegation and high quality in-service training. This includes the effective support and development of the headteacher as RE and collective worship leader, enabling her to develop the quality practice at the school. The over-arching leadership of PDET makes a positive impact upon local leadership and governance, standards and staff development resulting in substantial benefit for the pupils. Statutory requirements for worship and RE are met. Partnerships and relationships with other local schools, PDET, the Peterborough Diocese and the community at large are strong and mutually beneficial, for example, the Daventry Schools Year 5/6 Candlemas service and the church Pentecost picnic for pupils. Parents rightly appreciate the openness and warm hospitality of staff and the beneficial sense of Christian community the school prospers for their children.