

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Kingsclere Church of England Primary School

Ash Grove, Kingsclere, Newbury, Hampshire RG20 5RE	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Winchester
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Local authority	Hampshire
Date of inspection	7 February 2018
Date of last inspection	20 March 2013
Type of school and unique reference number	Primary VC 116295
Headteacher	Steve Wells
Inspector's name and number	Sally Jenkins 913

School context

Kingsclere Church of England Controlled Primary School is a medium sized school with approximately 260 pupils on roll. It is situated in a village with the majority of pupils coming from professional and middle class backgrounds. There has been a significant change of leadership since the last inspection. The headteacher, deputy headteacher, early years leader, phase leaders, RE leader and vicar are all new to their roles in the school. The number of pupils with learning needs and/or disabilities is below average as is the number entitled to receive pupil premium funding. Pupils' attendance is above the national average.

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

- The school's distinctively Christian values are explicit throughout the school, underpinning the pupils' excellent behaviour.
- The pastoral support which the school offers makes a highly significant contribution to the wellbeing and achievement of pupils.
- The nature of collective worship allows pupils to grow in appreciation and understanding of the Christian faith and makes an outstanding contribution to the school's Christian ethos.

Areas to improve

- Further develop the role of governors in the self-evaluation process, in more formally monitoring and evaluating the distinctiveness of the school as a church school.
- Develop and evidence pupils' personal spirituality through a rich variety of styles and media.
- Ensure the leadership of RE is given higher priority, so that the good practice that is being developed throughout the school can be monitored and evaluated.

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

Kingsclere Primary School's Christian values of love, trust, forgiveness and integrity are explicit and deeply embedded throughout the school. They are used to guide and support the pupils and are understood by the whole school community. The values have a high profile within the school, and relevant links between these values and the Bible are frequently made. All staff and governors, led by a highly effective headteacher and deputy headteacher, have worked with passion during the last five years to significantly develop the school and its Christian character so as to meet the needs of the all pupils. The Christian values work in tandem with the school's learning values to enable pupils to make good academic progress. Attainment is above the national average in the majority of areas. Staff work with and support individual pupils and families to ensure good attendance and outcomes for every pupil. The personal well-being of each pupil is clearly important to all adults within the school. A strong development since the last inspection, is that the school's documentation, policies, website and the school environment reflect the school's vision statement and Christian values. This consistency has impacted greatly on the Christian distinctiveness of the school and the pupils' ability to speak with enthusiasm and pride about attending a Church of England primary school. They clearly feel safe and valued and as one Key Stage 2 pupil remarked "the school is one big community, individuals coming together as one." Staff also speak of the inclusive, welcoming nature of the school where the Christian values and vision statement are lived out each day. Religious education is implicitly linked to the school's Christian character, with clear examples of the contribution RE makes to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There are meaningful links between the RE units of work and the themes within collective worship, so that RE is not seen as separate from the school's Christian character but integral to its development. There is a clear definition of spirituality across the school community although this needs to be developed further in order for pupils' personal spirituality to be increased. Within this school, relationships are particularly important and of the highest standard. Pupils are able to make clear links between their behaviour, which is outstanding, and the school's values. All members of the school talk about links between biblical principles and stories, in relation to behaviour. There are also specific roles in school that enable pupils to support each other, for example play leaders, school councillors and reading buddies. These roles are eagerly sought after by pupils and are spoken about with pride. Pupils are able to clearly verbalise their understanding of Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith. The school has a strong link with a school in Kyankowe, Uganda, raising money to help them and lighting a candle each day to remember the children of that village. Pupils speak with excitement and some understanding of the children of Kyankowe and of the Christian views they share. Pupils are given opportunities to learn about difference and diversity within faith communities, showing a high degree of respect and understanding.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship is outstanding because of the opportunities provided to think about God and to learn how Jesus taught us to live our lives in love and forgiveness for each other. The majority of worships involve the whole school coming together, often at the end of the school day. The lighting of a candle from each class, a candle from Kyankowe, Uganda and three Trinity candles signifies the beginning of worship, the unity within the school and links to their partner school. Pupils speak with great fondness of this start to worship. A Trinity prayer is said each day and pupils are able to discuss their understanding of this and of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Pupils speak of "feeling safe in God's arms" and knowing that "someone is watching over you". Collective worship engages the pupils and they are keen to participate in acting, singing and reading. There are plans for them to begin leading their own worships and having watched them and spoken to them about their ideas, they are clearly capable of doing so. Pupils have a mature understanding of the purpose and nature of prayer. They use the reflection areas within each classroom and are keen that these areas are not identical across the ten classrooms but include items important to each class. The prayer tree within the library area is an important feature for the whole school community. Prayers and thoughts are hung from its branches and pupils are able to sit here when they want to be quiet and to think. It is clear that prayer is contributing to pupils' spiritual development. More opportunities are planned for pupils to write their own prayers for collective worship and for other times in the day. Collective worship is very well planned by the deputy headteacher, who has worked with other members of staff and the vicar, to ensure that Christian values and the Bible are central to this important part of the day. Worship has undergone a significant change in the last few years with themes inspiring a high level of spiritual and moral reflection. Currently the themes for collective worship change each week. There are now plans to keep each theme for a longer period of time in order to allow for even deeper understanding and thought. Collective worship is now regularly monitored and evaluated with improvements made as appropriate. Pupils can clearly identify features of Christian traditions and of the liturgical year and speak with enthusiasm about Christian festivals and their importance. Worship is mainly led by members of the senior management team and the vicar from the local church. There are occasions

when other ministers are invited into school, an area the school would like to strengthen further.

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

The headteacher provides strong and dedicated leadership and is supported by a diligent senior management team and committed governors. The school has a clear vision in terms of its direction and the importance of the well-being of all pupils and staff. Leaders articulate the Christian vision and values for the school and can describe how these impact on the lives of the pupils, in particular their behaviour and the ethos within the school. Governing body minutes show that the governors hold the headteacher to account. This has recently included the teaching of religions other than Christianity and discussions about the reflection areas within school. Governors' level of challenge has strengthened since the last inspection and they are undertaking some monitoring as well as some pupil conferencing. Although there are improvements since the last inspection, governors are not as clear as they could be as to the distinctively Christian character of the school and are therefore unsure as to how they need to monitor the effectiveness of the school, as a church school. RE is well led by a hardworking and effective leader. She has helped to increase the confidence of other teachers in teaching RE, supporting them and bringing about real improvements in the teaching of this subject throughout the school. However, her time for leading this subject is limited and therefore she is unable to monitor and evaluate the teaching and impact of RE across the school. Parents are enthusiastic and passionate about the school. They are particularly pleased with the support and care their children receive from all adults in school, emphasising the school's inclusive ethos. They feel that any worries or concerns they have are dealt with quickly and sensitively with an open approach to listening. Parents commented on how the Christian values are woven throughout the school. One parent highlighted the 'culture in school of support, care and the overwhelming love of each other providing children with the confidence to talk about their faith'. The association between the school and the local church is strong and mutually beneficial. The vicar regularly visits the school, taking collective worship and giving support during some RE lessons. The whole school visit the church at least four times a year and classes are able to visit to support their curriculum. The school is also keen to support the local community, an example of this was when pupils were part of a carol concert in aid of a children's hospice. Senior leaders and governors ensure that the school meets the statutory requirements for collective worship and religious education.

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