

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Saviour's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Junior School

Elm Grove, Westgate- on- Sea, Kent CT8 8LD	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Canterbury
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local authority	Kent
Date/s of inspection	13 November 2017
Date of last inspection	27 November 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Controlled Junior 118695
Headteacher	Nick Bonell
Inspector's name and number	Jane Garrett 618

School context

St Saviour's Junior School is a three form entry school with 384 pupils on roll. Most pupils are from a white British background. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is in line with the national average. The percentage of children with special educational needs is above the national average. Most children enter St Saviour's from the local infant school which is not a church school. The current headteacher has been in post for three years.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Saviour's Junior School as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The strong leadership of the headteacher is effectively supported by the senior leadership team and governors. This means that the school's Christian vision and values have had a deep impact on the school. This has led to improved attainment, the closing of the gap between vulnerable pupils and others and an outstanding attendance record.
- An expression of the school's Christian values is that pupils have a positive attitude to learning and their behaviour is exemplary both in classrooms and around the site.
- Both collective worship and religious education (RE) enhance the school's Christian ethos. They provide relevant experiences which impact well on pupils' understanding of religious, moral and spiritual issues.
- The links between the school and parish church are well established and the church makes a valuable contribution to the spiritual life of the school.
- There is a strong culture of inclusion which sustains the view that all are special in God's eyes.

Areas to improve

- Review the guiding principles of policies so that they reflect the Christian distinctiveness of the school.
- Further build relationships with other Christian denominations in order to broaden the worshipping life of the school.

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

The school's values are deeply embedded and underpin all aspects of its life and work. The values are: reverence, wisdom, thankfulness, humility, endurance, compassion, trust, peace, forgiveness, friendship, justice, hope, creation and community. The Christian values are clearly linked to Bible stories which the pupils know and articulate. When teaching or talking with the pupils, staff members refer to the values as a matter of course throughout the day. This means that the values contribute effectively to supporting pupils' successful learning alongside their personal growth and wellbeing. Parents are very aware of the values as they are displayed on newsletters and postcards which the children may receive for their work. Friendship and respect are evident in relationships between staff and pupils, in a community where Christian love promotes the wellbeing and nurture of all. Achievement is above the national average for English and maths. The support put in place in order for vulnerable pupils to reach their potential is helping to close the gap between their results and those of other children. In some cases, such as reading at Key Stage 2, they make greater progress than others. The provision put in place to support pupils' learning addresses their personal development and helps them to build positive relationships as well as meeting academic targets. The school is a happy, supportive and caring place. Pupils enjoy coming to school and feel safe. Attendance is excellent at 97.76 %, well above the national average. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions. Behaviour is excellent, promoted by a policy of Christian forgiveness. The senior leadership team leads collegiately, this means that there is consistency of approach to learning and teaching and to managing behaviour which ensures that the school's Christian values are well known and implemented by both staff and pupils. A rich and creative curriculum is offered in which all pupils are encouraged to develop their artistic, musical and sporting abilities. This maximises the social, moral, spiritual and cultural (SMSC) growth of all.

Playground leaders (Year 6 pupils) look out for and care for any other children who might feel isolated. They talk through occasional minor incidents, helping fellow pupils to empathise with the feelings of others. They are able to relate these opportunities to the school values of friendship, community, and compassion. In a mainly white, British community, everyone recognises that the school successfully promotes understanding and mutual respect for people of other faiths and cultures. Visitors from other faiths include the rabbi from the synagogue in Ramsgate and the imam from the local mosque. Pupils have visited a gurdwara. Charitable giving is seen as an expression of Christian care and concern. The school council is involved in organising which charities the school supports. These have included Lepra, Macmillan Nurses and Cancer Relief. Children enjoy religious education (RE) and recognise that it helps to develop their understanding of Christianity and otherworld faiths. One pupil wrote about RE, 'It makes me know that, if I am being mean, I am doing something wrong'. There is an ethos and environment that encourages spiritual reflection, such as interactive prayer areas in every classroom. These are well used by pupils, helping them to reflect on profound issues raised. They feel able to discuss these questions without embarrassment or judgement. Opportunities for prayer are also made available during lunchtime and this facility is well supported. Recently, the prayer life of the school was augmented by a 'pop up' prayer space organised by local churches. This gave opportunities for pupils to experiment in different ways with prayer, for example writing prayers in sand.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship is at the heart of the school community. It is inspirational and includes all pupils. Children and adults respond well, listening carefully, participating enthusiastically and responding to questions. It enriches the lives of both pupils and staff. Pupils say that worship influences attitudes and behaviour across the school. 90% of pupils said that the Christian values remind them to be kind and compassionate to others. The school's Christian values are reinforced during worship through skilful teaching. Pupils are helped to relate these values to their own lives. In the worship observed, pupils were challenged, inspired and engaged throughout as they actively participated in exploring the meaning of 'trust'. For example, the story of Jesus asleep during a storm on the Sea of Galilee challenged the children to think about the value of trust and how trustworthy they were as friends. Pupils have opportunities for active discussion with a partner, so engaging and giving them involvement in how the themes might apply to them. Worship is biblically based. The vicar regularly leads worship in school and these occasions are enjoyed by pupils and develop their understanding of Anglican traditions. This raises pupils' awareness and understanding of the importance of the school's link with its parish church. One pupil wrote that collective worship, 'makes me think about God and how He's around us'. Aspects of Anglican liturgy and symbolism are an integral part of worship. Pupils enjoy using words from the liturgy as part of their worship and these act as a focus for reflection. They know the Lord's Prayer because it is said regularly. Pupils recognise who Jesus is and are aware that God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Pupils understand the importance of prayer. They respect the space that is created for prayer and reflection during collective worship. A pupil explained that, 'prayer is a good way to talk to God and Jesus'. Pupils welcome opportunities to actively participate and lead prayers in class worship. They play a key role in leading whole school worship. It is clearly planned using the diocesan framework and so fulfils one of the

developmental issues from the previous denominational inspection. Worship is held in the parish church on special occasions such as Christmas, Easter and the school leavers' service. This gives positive messages to pupils about the role of the church in the community, as well as developing their understanding of Anglican practice. These services are popular and well attended by parents. There are few opportunities for pupils to experience worship led by other Christian denominations. The school council and governors regularly evaluate worship and this effectively shapes future planning.

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

Significant progress has been made since the previous denominational inspection, with all areas for development being addressed. The headteacher models strong, focused and compassionate leadership. The school's Christian vision is articulated strongly by leaders and governors who all model Christian attitudes and responses. However, its centrality is not sufficiently clear in documentation. The recognition of each child and adult as unique and special in God's sight drives a concern to motivate and include all, with their wellbeing prioritised. An example of this is counselling and play therapy that is provided for both pupils and for staff when necessary. There is a culture of continuous improvement in which staff, governors and pupils strive to do better. The commitment to the school's Christian values has resulted in steadily improving attainment which is now above national data. Successful approaches to attendance, inclusion and behaviour are rooted in the school's Christian vision and values. Parents are full of praise for staff in terms of their care and concern. They say that this is shown not only in care for pupils but for the whole family. Parents are very supportive of the school and show confidence in school leaders. Comments include 'everyone is made to feel welcome' and 'the values are so important because they live them'. One parent spoke about the enthusiasm with which her child discussed the values and how she could apply them to her daily living. The school has been assisted by the diocese in supporting the planning of the new RE curriculum. Teachers have started to deliver this with great enthusiasm and the challenge to pupils is evident. Monitoring and assessment of RE are used effectively to support future learning, so addressing a focus for development from the previous denominational inspection. Appropriate professional development is in place in order to hand over the leadership of RE to other staff. Pupils attend school festivals and workshops held by the diocese. This has helped pupils to understand the relationship between the national and local church. Governors are engaged with school life, providing effective challenge and support. The relationship between school and church is mutually beneficial, resulting in the church supporting various activities such as the 'pop up prayer space'. This provided a variety of different activities for prayer, so augmenting the spiritual life of the school. The school's Christian values have inspired pupils and staff to engage with the local community. Examples include Pilgrims Hospice where the children have made decorations, the local food bank and the choir singing at various care homes. The school works closely with other local schools. The statutory requirements for collective worship and RE are fully met.

SIAMS report November 2017 St Saviour's C of E Junior School, Westgate on Sea CT8 8LD