



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

St. Andrew's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Stonyacres
Yetminster
Sherborne
Dorset
DT9 6LS

Previous SIAMS grade: Good

Current inspection grade: Good

Diocese: Salisbury

Local authority: Dorset
Dates of inspection: 27th April 2016
Date of last inspection: 23rd May 2011
School's unique reference number: 113781
Headteacher: Jane Prelogauskas
Inspector's name and number: Lorraine Pugh 819

School context

St. Andrew's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School is a smaller than average village school serving a rural community. 143 children are taught in six mixed aged classes. The majority of learners are of white British origin. There are higher than average numbers of children with special educational needs and the proportion of children eligible for Pupil Premium funding is lower than average. The most recent Ofsted inspection (2016) placed the school in the Requiring Improvement category. The headteacher was appointed in April 2015 after the tragic death of the previous headteacher. A new deputy headteacher joined the school in January 2016 and a new vicar has very recently started working with the school.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St. Andrew's as a Church of England school are good.

- The commitment of the headteacher, supported by governors, clergy and staff, in developing the school's explicit core Christian values.
- Highly supportive staff who consistently model the school's Christian values which impacts positively on children's well-being and personal development.
- The strong focus of the school's work as a 'Rights, Respecting School', which is enabling children to interact successfully with others.

Areas to improve

- Increase children's understanding of worship and prayer by involving them to a greater extent in planning, leading and evaluating collective worship.
- To develop children's understanding of God as the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- Governors to develop formal systems for monitoring and evaluating the impact of the school's Christian character on children's personal development and academic achievement.

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

Distinctive Christian values support the positive relationships that exist between all members of St. Andrew's school's community. These core values support children's thinking when explaining and reflecting on the impact they have on others. Adults in the school know the children very well and encourage them in their learning. This has resulted in excellent behaviour within lessons and outside in the playground. School leaders are aware of the need to raise challenge and expectations in order to accelerate the academic progress of its children. They are confident that their detailed, planned actions will be successful in raising standards to at least National levels of attainment and progress. The school's focus on attendance has reduced absence and raised parental awareness of the negative impact of school absence. Children have positive views about religious education (RE) and demonstrate a good understanding of the main concepts of the Christian faith. In the lessons observed, sound levels of teacher expertise, combined with a supportive learning environment, resulted in children being engaged and interested. The importance of rights and respect supports children in developing strategies for resolving conflict. This emphasis on social learning supports independence and positive behaviour. Biblical references are displayed in the school worship area so children are made aware of how each 'Article of Right' links to the school's core Christian values. 'Playground Buddies' help other children when resolving conflicts in the playground and Christian values of tolerance and care for others are clearly demonstrated. The children have been instrumental in raising money towards a school playground 'Buddy Bench' which exemplifies their positive attitudes towards inclusiveness. Children say they feel very safe in school and always have someone to turn to if a problem arises. The headteacher is very well respected and has led the school through an extremely difficult period, due to the tragic and untimely death of the previous headteacher. Despite great loss and sadness, the school's Christian character has been a strengthening force in the healing process for adults and children. Skilled and sensitive bereavement counselling allowed the community to celebrate the life of their much loved headteacher. Children positively interact with others through local and global charity work such as fundraising for Myanmar and 'School in a Bag'. The children are active participants when choosing which charities to support. A planned visit by the local MP has been arranged because the children would like to question him on the 'Right of everybody to clean water'. These opportunities have helped St. Andrew's children to grow into responsible, confident and caring individuals who appreciate and value what they have, realising how the lives of others may be different.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good.

Collective worship is at the heart of what the school does in making its Christian values explicit to the whole community. Children have positive views saying they enjoy worship and see it as an important occasion in the life of the school. Themes are based on Christian values and Articles of Respect, each linked to Bible stories and the teachings of Jesus. In this way children are able to explore and gain a growing understanding of the meaning of each Christian value and how they impact on daily life. Children confidently recall Bible stories they have heard and they are able to explain the lessons within them. In the worship observed the children showed they valued its importance by listening attentively and responding enthusiastically. The worship atmosphere was created and enhanced by the children's beautiful bell-ringing rendition of the hymn 'All things bright and beautiful'. Worship is helping children to grow spiritually because the themes capture their interest. The shared understanding of spirituality among the teachers strengthens the provision of spiritual experiences across all areas of the curriculum. An atmosphere of honesty and trust within the school enables children to reflect on their own feelings. They are able to explain the importance of quiet prayer saying they often 'take a minute' to reflect. They say that this helps them throughout the rest of the day. The children enjoy being actively involved in worship services and say they would like to have opportunities to have an even greater role. The local clergy lead worship regularly giving positive messages about the strong relationship that exists between church and school. The new vicar has been very recently welcomed into the school's community and is enthusiastic about her future working with

the school. Regular visitors lead worship, including the 'Open the Book' team, and this is giving pupils a wide range of worship styles. Extra-curricular Christian activities and Messy Church, all held at school, are also giving children rich experiences in which to explore faith. The children have limited knowledge of the Trinity at the moment and further development is needed to aid their understanding. Currently governors informally monitor the effectiveness of worship.

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

The headteacher has a clear Christian vision for the school and an awareness of how this positively impacts on children's personal and academic development. The partnership with parents is increasing in strength and parents say they feel encouraged to be involved in school activities to support their children. Parents speak positively of their children's pride in their school and their sense of belonging. During the past year the attentions of governors and senior staff have been focused on supporting the school community through a very difficult period of loss and the school's close working relationship with the local church and Diocese provided invaluable guidance and support at this critical time. The leadership of the school is aware that attention needs to be directed towards the raising of academic standards. The new headteacher and her newly appointed deputy headteacher have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and a very strong commitment to addressing the identified areas for development. Governors are extremely supportive and regular visitors for worship and other school events. However, their systems for self-evaluation remain informal and are not yet rigorous enough to accurately identify priorities for improvement. Formalising the self-evaluation programme was also a focus for development arising from the previous report in 2011 and has yet to be fully addressed. Religious education (RE) is well planned by the RE leader and teachers are supported in their teaching with appropriate resources. A regular cycle for RE monitoring has not yet been fully established. This limits the leadership's capacity to evaluate RE learning and to accurately identify future plans for improvement. The clergy are regular visitors who are valued and highly respected as a visible presence of the church. The school's leadership has detailed plans in place for general school improvement and are aware that these need to include the school's development as a church school. Determined leadership by the headteacher, combined with reflective governance and effective partnerships with the local churches, is providing the potential to considerably strengthen the school's capacity to improve. The school meets the statutory requirements for RE and collective worship.

SIAMS report April 2016 St. Andrew's CE VC Primary School, Yetminster, DT9 6LS