

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Trinity St Mary's Church of England Voluntary Aided School	
Trinity Square, South Woodham Ferrers, Essex, CM3 5JX	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Chelmsford
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local authority	Essex
Date of inspection	15 June 2017
Date of last inspection	June 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Primary 115200
Acting Headteacher	Janet Hoy
Inspector's name and number	Gillian Holmes 849

School context

Trinity St Mary's primary school is part of a complex site which includes Holy Trinity Church (shared by Anglicans, Roman Catholics (RC) and Methodists) and St Joseph's RC primary school. There is also a shared pre-school. The school has a below average percentage of pupils from socially or economically deprived backgrounds or with special educational needs. Very few pupils enter or leave at times other than usual school transfer times. The deputy has been acting headteacher since October 2016. A new headteacher will take up the post in September 2017. The school has recently received a good Ofsted report.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Trinity St Mary's as a Church of England school are outstanding

- All members of the school community have worked with the acting headteacher to ensure that the outstanding grade from the previous diocesan inspection report is still an accurate reflection of the school.
- The very effective staff team, supported by the experienced governors ensure that the school's Christian values are the foundation for every aspect of school life.
- The Christian ethos is palpable through the friendly, caring atmosphere and is reflected by the positive attitudes of all pupils and staff.
- The high quality of collective worship and religious education (RE) contributes significantly to the ongoing development of the school's Christian character.

Areas to improve

- In order to deepen understanding of difference and diversity develop further opportunities in the curriculum for pupils to extend their understanding of Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith.

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

The school is committed to, and successful in, providing high quality Christian education for all pupils. This means that all aspects of Trinity St Mary's school exemplifies their motto, 'Many hearts make a school'. The Christian values of love, honesty, forgiveness, sharing and dedication are seen both explicitly and implicitly across school life. They are deeply embedded in everything it does. Behaviour is excellent, based upon the Christian values which the pupils can apply to all aspects of their lives in school and at home. The relationships between staff and pupils and between pupils are outstanding. Incidents of bullying are very rare and are dealt with swiftly and fairly, in keeping with the school's Christian ethos. As an expression of its caring Christian ethos and the importance of pupil wellbeing, pupils enjoy coming to school. Attendance is at the national average. A fixed-term exclusion has been successfully used lately as part of a strategy to support one pupil's emotional needs. Ofsted recently praised the school's very effective safeguarding curriculum. Able pupils have challenging extension work as well as opportunities for workshops with pupils from neighbouring schools. Current pupil progress data shows that all pupils make good or better progress from their starting point in reading, writing, maths and RE. Disadvantaged pupils receive tailored support to enable them to access all aspects of the curriculum. Attainment is inline or above local and national expectations for all groups. Teaching is at least good and often outstanding and teachers are supported by an experienced, well-trained and resourced team of learning assistants. Together the staff ensure that the pupils receive excellent educational and pastoral support underpinned by the Christian ethos. There is a rich learning environment, inspiring and interactive which supports the development of pupils' reflection and deepening thinking skills. All displays incorporate questions for pupils to consider and respond to. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their learning. They are excited and challenged by RE and collective worship. They talk knowledgeably about how their growing Christian spiritual understanding affects how they behave and their attitudes to other people. The school curriculum has a clear focus upon developing pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural (SMSC) understanding. This contributes towards pupils having a good degree of understanding and respect for diversity and difference including religious beliefs and practice. This is supported by visitors to the school from a range of faiths and Christian denominations. Pupils have a more limited understanding of Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Pupils have a positive attitude to worship which plays an important role in school life. Prayerful and meaningful worship takes place with a focus on Christian values and biblical teaching. This contributes significantly to the school's life, to pupils' very good spiritual and moral development and to enhancing the school's Christian distinctiveness. The enthusiastic and knowledgeable worship coordinator works closely with the pupils, who form the collective worship group, and the clergy to plan the worship programme. The programme is inspirational and inclusive incorporating different activities to engage all pupils. As part of the school's celebration of the Christian festivals this half-term's focus has been on the gifts of the spirit and the meaning of the Trinity for Christians. Displays around the school illustrate pupils' discussions and developing understanding of these. Positive links are made between RE and worship. An example of this is the introduction of concepts from the course 'Understanding Christianity'. This has helped pupils to talk confidently about the timeline of the Bible and how God has guided his people through the Old and New Testament and still does today. The worship group also help lead worship. They read Bible passages, say prayers, set up the hall for worship and help the clergy at Eucharist in the church. The church is used for worship three days a week and the hall for two. Parents are invited and some attend Wednesday worship in church. Main festival services in church, led by the pupils are very well attended and appreciated by the parents. This enhances the school's community feel as they say it is one of the ways they feel included. Clergy lead worship at least once a week and recognising the importance of worship all teachers are on a rota to share the leading role. Monday worship begins with all pupils taking part in 'walk and talk' which allows for reflective discussion on the worship theme for the week. As a result of this pupils feel very involved in worship. As an expression of Anglican worship all pupils join in saying the responses at the start and end of worship. Pupils listen attentively to the talk and enthusiastically answer questions. Pupils understand the value of prayer as 'a way of communicating with God'. All pupils have the opportunity to pray corporately three times a day as well as having opportunities to write prayers and pray privately. Pupils say the Lord's Prayer daily and often end the day with a blessing. Reflection has a central place in school. Worship and all lessons in the curriculum have planned reflection times to consider how the Christian values are relevant and can be applied. Each classroom has a reflection area. Worship is regularly monitored and evaluated by staff, governors and pupils. Parents are also asked their views in regular questionnaires. Evaluation informs planning and there is clear evidence of resulting refinements and improvements taking place.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

RE is given a high priority in the school and is led very effectively by the enthusiastic subject leader. There is an accurate and focused action plan to drive continued progress. The subject leader has attended training opportunities provided by the Diocese which have enabled her to develop a high level of skill. She has delivered a number of well-planned training sessions for staff which have been very effective in raising staff expertise. Staff follow the diocesan syllabus along with resources from a course which focuses on key Christian beliefs and concepts called 'Understanding Christianity'. It is clear through talking with pupils and looking at their books that pupils also have the opportunity to learn about other faiths. Teachers deliver well-planned, exciting and challenging lessons. This means that teaching in RE is consistently good and often outstanding. As a consequence attainment is high and pupils make rapid and sustained progress. Pupils are given the opportunity in all lessons to reflect on their learning and to consider which Christian values are relevant to the lesson. Pupils talk confidently about the Christian faith and are able to compare and contrast their knowledge of other faiths with Christianity. They talk very positively about how teachers make RE lessons exciting and interesting through drama, art and other creative opportunities. RE contributes significantly to the development of pupils SMSC through discussion and in-depth questioning. Pupils' Bible knowledge is impressive and they can confidently apply what they read to modern day situations. Teachers' marking ensures that pupils know how to improve. They use challenging questions in their marking to deepen understanding and pupils are given time to respond to these. Assessment of RE now takes place half- termly and teachers' judgements are monitored by the school's leadership. This provides consistency of expectations. Governors also monitor pupil progress and regularly review the RE action plan to ensure continued improvement.

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

The acting headteacher has effectively worked collaboratively with teachers and governors to retain the Christian vision that drives every aspect of school life. She has ensured that both RE and collective worship have retained their high priority and both meet statutory requirements. The focus point from the last denominational inspection has been addressed through greatly improved assessment in RE. All leaders recognise and promote the Christian values which underpin both policies and practice. They have a very clear understanding of all aspects of school performance and underachievement in any area is quickly identified and support implemented. This includes focussed continuing professional development (CPD) for staff as well as focused deployment of support staff to address pupil's needs. Rigorous self-evaluation is carried out by staff and governors which results in clear action plans. These are regularly reviewed to maintain high standards. Leaders of English, mathematics and RE are well supported and have been encouraged to develop their own skills as they support their colleagues. The governors have encouraged the development of staff as potential leaders in church schools through CPD opportunities. Communication between the staff and parents is very good, supported by a very informative website. The weekly parent newsletter includes the theme and details of the week's worship so that parents can share the topic with their children. Parents rightly recognise the school's caring Christian ethos and its effect on their children's personal and academic development? Weekly 'family learning' sessions, curriculum workshops and parental surveys enable them to understand and support their children effectively. A very active parent group organises a number of activities in the year to raise money for the school. The parents also enthusiastically support the wide range of charity fund raising events organised by the pupils. These events illustrate pupils' concern for local as well as global issues. The school works closely with the local consortium of schools sharing resources, teacher expertise and shared events for pupils. The unique position of the school allows very close links and collaboration with the church and with the Catholic primary school. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 from both schools worship together once a week in church. The school has close links with the Diocese. Pupils take part in workshops and services at the cathedral. The school has strong links with the local community, for example pupils sing in the local care home and the town bandstand and run stalls at the church bazaar.

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