

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Longford Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

High Road
Britford
Salisbury
SP5 4DS

Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese	Salisbury
Previous SIAS inspection grade	Satisfactory
Local authority	Wiltshire
Date of inspection	29 November 2016
Date of last inspection	2 November 2011
Type of school and unique reference number	Primary 126304
Headteacher	Louise Knipe
Inspector's name and number	Andrew Rickett 201

School context

Longford is smaller than the average size primary school with 67 children in roll. They are arranged into three class groups. It is situated on the outskirts of the city. The majority of children are of White British heritage and come from mixed socio-economic backgrounds. The number of children with learning needs and/or disabilities is above the national average while the number entitled to receive the pupil premium is average. Attendance has improved and is currently broadly in line with the national average. The headteacher was appointed in January 2016. All members of the teaching staff have been appointed since the previous inspection.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Longford CE VC Primary School as a Church of England school are good

- Christian values support the children's growing understanding of themselves and how to treat others in an environment that values them as individuals.
- Collective worship contributes to the children's developing appreciation of Bible stories and how they have meaning and purpose in their own lives.
- The headteacher, fully supported by her staff and governors, has ensured that the Christian ethos has become more meaningful to the whole school community and is serving the needs of children and their families.

Areas to improve

- Ensure that the revised vision is fully embedded among the whole school community through close links with the core values and make an impact on the children's wellbeing and love of learning.
- Ensure that children have more opportunities to explore their spirituality by supporting them in acquiring a richer language to express their thoughts and ideas in greater depth.
- Ensure that children have quality time to reflect throughout the school day so that they explore the thoughts and ideas behind the school's Christian values and their links to the children's own lives.

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

The school has recently reviewed its vision and is in the process of implementing it throughout the whole school community. The new vision builds on the existing one and makes it more accessible to all members of the school community. A set of five core Christian values have been in place for a number of years and these will support the school's developing understanding of the vision and how they link to the children's learning and wellbeing. The core values of compassion, trust, respect, wisdom and friendship are well known to children who confidently articulate how they help them in their relationships and manage their behaviour both in and out of school. They are less sure how they link to their learning and support them in their school work. However, adults in school are becoming more assured in how they integrate values into their teaching and promote them in the children's learning. Opportunities in lessons such as religious education (RE) are identified to link values to the topic being covered. For example, older children explored how they could make their school as more thankful place when studying the Ten Commandments. Children are attentive and engage well when challenged to answer difficult questions. Their responses sometimes lack depth and they find it hard to put into words what they are thinking because they do not yet possess the richness of language to express their ideas clearly. This is particularly so when children try to link their understanding of what they are learning to their own lives and find relevance to it. Standards of achievement are rising. More children are working towards achieving a secure level in the core subjects including their reading and writing. Support for children who are not achieving as well as they might has been put in place to accelerate their progress and this is making a successful impact on their learning. Relationships in the school are positive and based on kindness and care. There is a high level of nurture for children from adults in school which is modelled by the headteacher and her staff. Children know how to treat each other and appreciate that, although this can sometimes be hard, they need to keep trying to 'do the right thing'. They have a good sense of right from wrong and are aware that others, from whatever background, should be valued and treated with dignity and respect. Children at Longford are given opportunities to aspire and believe in their own abilities and are supported in their striving to achieve their best both academically and spiritually.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

The school's five core values provide the basis for planning themes in collective worship and are closely linked to stories from the Bible. Children thereby recognise the Christian nature of these values and are able to relate them to specific teaching of Jesus. Because, worship planning includes the exploration of other values, such as justice, reverence and thankfulness, children are developing their appreciation that Bible stories are not linked to a particular value but can be interpreted in a number of ways using a range of values to explain their meaning. Messages delivered in collective worship are therefore distinctively Christian. Further links between themes based on Bible stories and personal and moral development ensures that worship contributes to the children's growing awareness of a sense of right and wrong and social justice. This is reflected in the numerous charities that the school supports throughout the year. Younger children have a good understanding of the purpose of collective worship saying that it is a time to 'talk about Jesus and God' with time for prayer and singing. Older children say that worship gives them the opportunity to be still and reflect on the meaning of messages and think about their relevance in own lives. They are confident when explaining that Bible stories, such as the good Samaritan, have a message that can be of use 'whether you have a faith or not'. In a similar way, children are adamant that God listens to everyone's prayers, whether they believe in Him or not, because 'God created everyone equally'. Children have a good understanding of the purpose of prayer and how it helps. They know that prayer is not a wish list and that God doesn't always answer prayers in the way we might expect. Children think carefully about their answers when talking about faith and do so with a respect and reverence that reflects their attitudes towards praying in worship. The school prayer includes the core values. Their openness to discuss matters of faith and belief means that they naturally turn to discussion of the nature of the Trinity but do so in a way that isn't contrived. Children have time to reflect during collective worship. They have some other opportunities to reflect in the school day although they do not always have sufficient time to explore their thoughts in depth. The recent award from a local charity to support the creation of a spiritual space is intended to give children greater opportunities to be still and reflect. Children have some involvement in planning and leading worship, particularly during class based worship, but the full potential for them to take greater ownership of worship has not yet been fully explored.

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

The headteacher has ensured that the school has made good progress in developing a distinctively Christian ethos based on explicit values rooted in Bible teaching. The school is now a stronger church school than at the time of the previous inspection and has a good capacity to continue to develop its Christian ethos. This is because the headteacher has a clear grasp of what it means to be a church school and how a Christian vision supports the children's learning and wellbeing. She has led the school through a review of the vision and a new, more easily

accessible version, is due to be ratified at the next meeting of the governing body. The headteacher understands how the vision needs to connect with values and children's learning and clearly articulates the school's next steps to achieve this. Self-evaluation as a church school is therefore realistic and accurately reflects where the school currently is. The work of the Christian ethos committee is an important contributor to self-evaluation and the drive to improve as a church school. Members of this committee meet regularly and are proactive in monitoring and evaluating the impact of collective worship, RE and values on the lives of children. Through scrutiny of children's work and gathering evidence by walking round the school, they have a secure grasp of the school's strengths as a church school and what it needs to improve to become even better. The committee is very effective and reports to the full governing body which ensures that areas for improvement are an integral aspect of school improvement action plans. This ensures that all governors are informed and aware of the school as a church school. They are aware, for example, that a focus on prayer in collective worship has made the school a more peaceful and calm place and children treat each other with greater care and kindness. Links with the local church are strong and the vicar is a regular visitor to school as she leads a team of clergy from the benefice to deliver worship on weekly basis. This is supported by a team from the church community who deliver an 'Open the Book' worship which is very popular with children as it involves them in retelling Bible stories through drama. The school celebrates major Christian festivals at the church and this contributes to the children's understanding of the meaning of times such as Easter and Christmas. Children say that these celebrations at the church are part of what makes them a church school. The headteacher is the leader for RE and has ensured that the subject has a high profile in the overall curriculum and that it keeps up to date with latest developments. Parents agree that the school's Christian ethos is reflected through its core values and in the quality of relationships. They say that a family feel comes from the quality of care and kindness from adults in school based on respect, trust and truthfulness delivered through collective worship. Parents agree that the school has a distinctively Christian vision that they wholeheartedly support and the way that it is promoted. The school meets the statutory requirements for RE and collective worship.

SIAMS report November 2016 Longford CE VC Primary School Salisbury SP4 5DS