

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Hayfield Cross Church of England Primary School

Hayfield Crescent, Kettering NN15 5FJ

Current SIAMS inspection grade

Good

Diocese

Peterborough

Previous SIAMS inspection grade

N/A

Local Authority

Northamptonshire

Name of multi-academy trust

N/A

Date of inspection

21 March 2018

Date of last inspection

N/A

Type of school and unique reference number

Voluntary Aided Primary 142113

Headteacher

Craig Charteris

Inspector's name and number

Jane Lewis 27

School context

Hayfield Cross Church of England School is located on the 'Kettering East' Hanwood Park development and opened in September 2015. Currently the only building on the development, pupils attend the school from neighbouring communities. There are 186 pupils on roll from years R-4. The school is linked to two local parishes. The number of pupils registered as pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), in receipt of free school meals and those for whom English is an additional language are all below the national average. Mobility rates, both inwards and outwards have been significant since the school opened. The school has not yet been inspected by Ofsted.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Hayfield Cross C of E School as a Church of England school are good

- Senior leaders and governors show both ambition and Christian service in their leadership of the developing Christian character of the school so that in a short time it has become a thriving Christian community.
- The school's Christian character strongly influences both daily school life and the leadership of the school so that everyone in the school community can talk of ways in which the vision and values impact on them.
- An inspiring religious education [RE] teacher who leads and teaches the subject with commitment, ensures that it contributes significantly to the Christian character of the school.
- Rigorous and robust monitoring of the school's Christian character ensures that leaders are clear about the next steps the school needs to take in its development.

Areas to improve

- Develop the programme for collective worship so that it provides more opportunity for pupils to grow in their understanding of key Christian ideas and the Anglican tradition as well as the Christian teaching that underpins their school values.
- Involve pupils in the development of worship and the monitoring of the impact of the school's distinctive Christian character so that they can work with school leaders in the development of these key areas.
- Provide opportunities to develop global links to enable the school community to widen its awareness and understanding of diverse communities.

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

This school's Christian character is firmly established. It has a significant impact on pupils' achievement, spiritual development and wellbeing. Since its inception, governors and senior leaders have had a sharp vision for the kind of school Hayfield Cross should be - a school 'with a clear Christian foundation where every child is valued and supported to be the very best they can be in both their academic and spiritual life.' The values of joy, integrity and fellowship are directed into all key areas of school life. The 'Hayfield Cross promise' is a clear and visible statement - 'It reminds us what teachers will do for us and how they will help us into our future' said one pupil. The vision, values and the promise are shaping the school's journey. Through shared consultation, including with the diocese, and using the Church of England report on character education [Fruits of the Spirit] as a starting point, the values were chosen. They underpin everything that goes on in school. They guide collective worship themes and influence the writing of policies at governor level. Embedding the values has been challenging due to significant mobility of pupils both inward and outward. Consequently, current pupils are not able to make links between the values and biblical teaching. Pupils talk about joy as being 'happy no matter what happens to you' and integrity as 'doing the right thing even when no one is watching'. They show age appropriate understanding of how values such as forgiveness play a part within the school values explaining that 'it goes with fellowship, if you forgive people you can go back together again'. School data is complex, again due to the levels of pupil mobility. However, pupils generally make expected or better progress in their learning. This is because they receive individual support whatever their ability or needs. Leaders are clear that every pupil is recognised as a child of God with unique potential. This underpins all decisions made so that comprehensive assessment and monitoring of pupils enables targeted intervention and support to be effectively deployed. They develop as confident and reflective learners because of the compassion and care given by all members of staff who view their work through the same lens. A further outcome of this approach is that attendance rates are above the target set by governors. Pupils are happy to attend school because they know they are valued expressing this as 'God's love being shown through people'. Issues of low level unacceptable behaviour and bullying, including homophobic bullying, are dealt with in the same spirit. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural [SMSC] development is increasingly being expressed in a distinctively Christian way. Religious education [RE] is a significant strength of the school. It contributes meaningfully to the Christian character because all pupils are given opportunities to take time out to reflect on how their learning might impact on their own life and beliefs. Pupils do not yet understand Christianity as a world faith. Their awareness of diversity and difference is growing. Opportunity to engage with people from both the Jewish and Muslim faiths resulted in one pupil commenting 'I respected our Muslim visitor and I felt something warm in my heart'.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Pupils and adults value collective worship because it reinforces the sense of belonging to a family and the importance of the school's Christian foundation. 'Worship Wednesday' is a highlight of the week when worship is often led by local clergy. Parents regularly attend. They say that coming into school for worship helps them to feel connected with the churches. Pupils too appreciate this weekly act of worship saying that it is 'always fun and always helps us think about stories from the Bible'. In worship pupils are encouraged to find ways of responding to the messages shared. Collective worship that focussed on joy inspired one pupil to hold a cake stall for her family and friends, raising money to bring joy to others. The policy clearly sets out the expectations for collective worship. This is reflected in practice so that the whole school community can 'worship with gladness and come before him with songs'. This Bible verse from the Psalms roots both policy and practice. Pupils' understanding of key Christian ideas such as the person of Jesus and the Trinity are not yet well developed. They can talk about Jesus as a 'good and kind man who did lots of amazing things' but are not able to articulate an understanding of the significance of Jesus within the Christian faith. Pupils know that Christian festivals provide times for people to celebrate, expressing delight at being able to celebrate Christmas in the churches because it made 'churches and school seem more like one thing'. Prayer is a central activity. The school prayer is said in classrooms and in worship. Some pupils talk about how this prayer helps them to remember that they need God to help them follow the school values. Reflection areas are used to good effect by pupils and they explain the benefit they get from having opportunities to reflect and pray - 'we get time to think about important things and maybe about Bible stories'. Pupils are beginning to understand elements of the Lord's prayer and can talk about 'give us this day our daily bread' as a way of asking for the things they need. Times of prayer are key moments in governor meetings, ensuring the Christian character pervades all aspects of school life. Clergy play an integral role in developing the spiritual life of the school offering both support and challenge in the development of worship and prayer activities. A breadth of the Anglican tradition is expressed through these parishes but pupils do not yet show understanding of any liturgical structure in worship. Collective Worship is monitored by governors and staff. An outcome of this is to explore ways in which pupils can now be involved in this process.

The effectiveness of Religious Education is outstanding

RE is explicitly underpinned by the school's Christian values and has a high profile. Standards in RE are high, being measured against the assessment criteria in the Northamptonshire syllabus for RE. Marking of work is detailed and focussed so that it is clear what pupils need to do next to make progress. Progress for pupils is therefore rapid. The subject is taught across the school by a highly talented teacher who is the subject leader and deputy headteacher. Good and outstanding teaching means that children engage well with the subject, and recognise its importance to everyone. A year 4 pupil commented, 'even if you don't have a religion, you can still enjoy learning RE. I think it's really important'. Pupils know that the study of Christianity is important, and appreciate the contribution the other major faiths make to their learning. They say this learning really helps them 'to learn about others who might seem different to me'. RE is taught as a separate subject to ensure its integrity, and is delivered in a creative way. Pupils in Year 1 followed clues around the school to find key artefacts that would be in a church at Easter and brought them back to the classroom. In a lesson on Muslim worship year 4 pupils were engaged in making links with previous learning from their Muslim visitor. The teacher skilfully encouraged deeper thinking with her questioning. A Divali day across the school enabled pupils to explore in creative ways the significance of this festival for Hindus. It developed their awareness of faith and practice in a different community to their own. Philosophy for Children [P4C] recently introduced, is causing pupils to think more deeply. They know that it is possible to disagree with someone else's ideas and still respect them as a friend. Parents appreciate their children's positive attitudes to RE and attribute this enjoyment to the variety of approaches used. They see the school's teaching about different faiths as being important and relevant to their children's lives. The subject is effectively monitored by governors and other senior leaders so that they are clear about the strengths and areas in which the subject should move forward. Clear priorities have been identified into the next phase of the school's development.

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

The headteacher and foundation governors have been unswerving in their determination to deliver their vision for the school as a church school. It has worked because, from the start, they identified non-negotiable areas to establish the school's Christian character. One of these is an explicitly Christian vision that is demonstrated through The Hayfield Promise. Envisioning took place before the school was built. Clergy and lay in the parishes of Christ the King and St Botolph's, along with the diocese, prayed and planned so that the Christian character of the school would be at its heart. Their view that it runs all the way through the school was convincingly evidenced during this inspection. These strong partnerships have continued through the early years of development. The vision has underpinned, and the values have guided, all decision making. Acting with 'a Christian sense of integrity' as one governor put it, was crucial in handling a difficult admissions case. Their decision for one teacher to teach RE throughout the school has assisted the progress that pupils make and has ensured the subject has high profile. Statutory requirements for RE and collective worship are fully met. Governors and senior leaders have a thorough understanding of the school's performance and its distinctiveness as a church school. Every monitoring activity is carried out with a focus on how the values are being expressed, so ensuring that the values are never lost within the day to day work of the school. Clear development plans are in place for all areas of Christian distinctiveness including a focus on embedding the Christian values within the taught curriculum. Governors take the wellbeing of staff seriously and ensure that they have the support they need to fulfil their roles effectively. Their induction and training, as well as their recruitment, is carried out in such a way that they are equipped for working in this context. As a result, they are clear about their role in the school and strongly promote the values in all aspects of teaching and learning. Parents speak positively about the benefits of their children attending Hayfield Cross. They are clear in their desire that the values promoted at school spill over into home life. After a focus on Water Aid at school pupils insisted that everyone in their homes should be more careful with water because 'there are some in the world who don't have any water.' Links with the local parish churches are developing. Through inspiring worship led by local clergy and outstanding commitment from the foundation governors who come from the churches, there is much to celebrate in these links. Together they have identified ways in which this relationship should develop. One of the clergy team is to leave her role as governor and become a chaplain to the school. Hayfield Cross is well placed to continue to flourish as a Christian presence in the developing local community.

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