

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Leasingham St Andrew`s Church of England Primary School

Lincoln Road, Leasingham, Sleaford, Lincolnshire, NG34 8JS

Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Lincoln
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Date of inspection	29 June 2017
Date of last inspection	29 May 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Primary VC I20528
Headteacher	David Hodgson
Inspector`s name and number	Yvonne Shaw 245

School context

This is a slightly smaller than average sized school with 204 children on roll, few of whom speak English as an additional language. The vast majority are of White British heritage. A well below average proportion of children are supported by the pupil premium throughout the school. The proportion of children who have special educational needs and/or disability is also well below average. Attendance is generally high although the proportion of children who are persistently absent is close to the national figure. The school had a successful short Ofsted inspection in March 2017.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Leasingham St Andrew`s Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The determined focus by the headteacher, senior leaders and governors on clearly defined and fully embedded Christian values ensures that the school`s Mission `for the children` is a tangible reality.
- The shared belief that all are `children of God` enables exemplary relationships within the school and its community so that all flourish socially, morally, spiritually and emotionally. Love grows here.
- Children`s spiritual development and understanding of the value of prayer is continually deepened through carefully planned, inspirational acts of worship.
- Full engagement with the local community, particularly with the local church, exemplifies the inclusive nature of the school where all are welcomed and valued.
- The centrality of religious education (RE) and collective worship in the life of the school is assured because of the strong, purposeful and committed leadership of these areas.

Areas to improve

- Further develop children`s understanding of Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith so that they are more fully aware of and understand the diverse nature of the faith.
- Expand the work done within RE to teach children about God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit (the Trinity) to acts of worship, so that children`s knowledge and understanding of this aspect of Christian faith is further deepened.

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

A deeply shared Christian ethos permeates all aspects of school life. The school's Christian values of endurance, trust, compassion, forgiveness, hope and friendship have a major impact on the spiritual and moral development of those within the school. Additionally, because they are inextricably linked to the school's motto 'for the children', children thrive socially and academically. The Christian ethos reaches out and encompasses all so that the whole school community is able to talk about the school's Christian values with understanding and confidence. Staff, governors and parents recognise and hold in high regard, the positive impact the Christian ethos has on children's well-being, attitudes and behaviour.

Children's behaviour is exemplary and they are enabled to grow to be thoughtful, courteous, caring and confident people through the daily embodiment of the school's values. Children's deep knowledge and understanding of how these values impact on their own and others' lives supports them in the service of others. This can be seen in the many and varied charities they support on a local, national and global scale. The school highly prizes the legacy of past members of the school and proudly display their gifts, for example, banners and creative woodwork. Another example of this is the school hymn which children sing with great pride. Adults and children alike refer to the school hymn as the embodiment of their school through 'every step we take together, hand in hand'. Christian values are displayed in many imaginative ways around the school and are constantly referred to ensuring their centrality to the school day. This is an inclusive school where all feel welcome, cared for and valued. Parents are greatly appreciative of the many ways in which the school reaches out to them and supports them and their families when needed. Children are keen to come to school and this is reflected in good attendance figures.

Prayer is a major feature of school life. There are collections of their prayers available in books such as 'lunchtime prayers' and 'end of day' prayers in each of the classrooms prayer area. These prayer books are utilised as a stimulus for a creative prayer time at some point each day which extends and embeds children's understanding of the importance of prayer. The careful guidance given to children on how to pray is ensuring their spiritual awareness is deepened and strengthened. This is reflected on the prayer tree at the front of the hall where children display their own prayers. Some of these show great empathy for the needs of others when praying for difficult issues, such as the recent terrorist incidents.

Through its distinctive character, the school is enabling children to make good or better progress both personally and academically. Children's attitudes to learning are excellent and it is clear that they trust their teachers to teach them well. In turn they are learning well. Progress by the end of Key Stage 2 is at least in line with national averages. Standards in RE are in line with other subjects as a consequence of it being at the heart of the curriculum. It is well led, consistently taught and children say that they enjoy this subject. Learning in RE is highly effective in enabling children to reason for themselves. This is because the subject is based on learning Christianity in depth and introducing children to a wide variety of other world faiths. Leaders make great effort to ensure that children are learning well about the rich cultural diversity of the world they are growing up in.

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

Acts of worship are inspirational, transformational, engaging and inclusive. Worship is central to the daily life of the school and sets the tone for the day. It is clear through children's responses in questionnaires that they feel this time of the day is important to them, exemplified in one child's response 'the day just wouldn't be the day without it'. Worship time is consistent throughout the week so that wherever it is held, it is held at the same time. The variety of settings for worship enables children to appreciate the differences in styles of worship although they tend to say that they prefer whole school worship because 'we feel like a real family'.

Children show that they enjoy choral worship through the high quality of their singing. The quality of singing and choice of song is uplifting and this aspect further enhances the deep sense of spirituality within the worship. Children say that they enjoy singing in worship, particularly their school hymn because 'we are reminded about how we need to live our lives'. The monthly church service is welcomed by children, parents and members of the community. Children are developing their leadership of worship in these services through preparation, planning and presenting in church. Children, staff, governors and visitors speak of their enjoyment and fulfilment through this worship. The headteacher and leadership make the centrality of worship and its importance in the life of the community very clear, emphasising how it offers a special time for everyone concerned.

Acts of worship are very well planned and ensure that there are wide opportunities for children's spiritual development. There is a clear focus on the centrality of the Bible in worship which is enabling children understand the relevance of this to Christians. They also have a deep understanding of the person of Jesus Christ and His impact on humanity. As yet, children's understanding of the multi-cultural and diversity of the Christian faith globally is underdeveloped. Themes promote distinctive Christian values very effectively and link them where possible with

the church year and key Christian festivals. Regular evaluation by both adults and children is beginning to bring about further improvement to the high quality acts of worship. Children benefit from a variety of people leading acts of worship including staff, local clergy and individuals from a range of religious faith.

Children are being introduced to the rich traditions of the Anglican church through elements which are clearly evident such as the use of an altar, Bible, cross, candle and responses. At the start of worship, Christ is welcomed into the space through the symbolism of the lit candle. Although some children are developing a good understanding of the Trinity from learning in RE, practice in worship does not yet include a symbol or reference to the Trinity. Children talk about collective worship with enthusiasm, reflecting carefully upon the messages that they hear. They show a growing depth and maturity in the way in which they can apply the school's values to their own and others' lives.

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

The inspirational leadership and quiet steadfast determination of the headteacher empowers others to always be their very best. With his staff and governors, he has created a Christian ethos which enables individuals to flourish through encouraging creativity and welcoming views and ideas. There is a palpable sense of teamwork in the school which encompasses all groups of the school community. This ensures that the living embodiment of 'for the children' and the distinctively Christian values by which the school thrives, are living realities. Leaders revisit the school's values at strategic points in the long term evaluation cycle. This maintains their centrality and appropriateness. Additionally it ensures that the impact of the school's values best meets the academic and personal needs of all children. The full commitment of staff and governors keeps school mission firmly rooted in Christian values.

The quality of relationships in the school is outstanding. Parents talk about the way the school includes everybody, cherishing each and every child. Governors speak of how the vision drives the school to engage with and support all families. The leadership of the school maintains a focus on ensuring all round high standards, including academic, and therefore the majority of children make at least expected progress in their learning. The headteacher, senior leaders and foundation governors ensure that the Christian distinctiveness of the school is an integral part of their self-evaluation. This is not yet fully aligned to the church school inspection framework. Governors know the school well, often visiting and joining in activities as part of their monitoring and evaluation role. The school works effectively with a group of schools for peer review to develop secular aspects of its work. This has not yet been developed with a group of church schools to review Christian distinctiveness and effectiveness.

Religious education and collective worship are very well led. The leader is relentless in her drive to ensure that her areas of responsibility are the very best they can be. Her monitoring and evaluation activities are thorough and these activities have enabled her to develop a sharply focused action plan for development in both RE and collective worship. She is ensuring that church school distinctiveness is organic and therefore continues to grow. Because there is such a strong focus on ensuring the centrality of the school's Christian values and mission, staff are being well prepared for the future leadership of church schools. Regular staff training, support from experienced leaders and the Diocese, is taking place to ensure that the necessary knowledge and skills required to lead a church school are being developed.

The school's relationship with the community is extremely strong. Parents and members of the community say that they particularly look forward to the monthly church services. Indeed, this is becoming such a community event that the school is involved in serving coffee and cakes beforehand to further enhance the community spirit. The partnership with the church is also strong. Children's work is regularly displayed in the church and the clergy say that local parishioners look forward to 'seeing what the children are doing'. Parents appreciate the fact that children feel as happy to be in the church environment as they are in their school.

RE and collective worship meet statutory requirements.

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