

## Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

|   |                                      |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Bishop Tufnell Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior School</b> |                                      |
| Pennyfields, Felpham, Bognor Regis, West Sussex PO22 6BN              |                                      |
| <b>Current SIAMS inspection grade</b>                                 | <b>Good</b>                          |
| <b>Diocese</b>  | <b>Chichester</b>                    |
| Previous SIAMS inspection grade                                       | Outstanding                          |
| Local authority   | West Sussex                          |
| Date/s of inspection  | 29 November 2016                     |
| Date of last inspection   | 24 September 2010                    |
| Type of school and unique reference number                            | Voluntary aided junior school 126026 |
| Executive Headteacher   | Shane Morton                         |
| Inspector's name and number   | Connie Hughes 765                    |

### School context

Bishop Tufnell is a large three-form entry, junior school with 361 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils come from the local area and some travel from central Bognor. Pupils represent a wide range of socio economic backgrounds. The headteacher has been in post for ten years and was appointed as executive headteacher of this school and Bishop Tufnell CE VA Infant School, on the same site, from September 2015. In September 2016, heads of each school were appointed. They are working towards a federation, with an explicit Christian vision, for September 2017. The strategic roles of both governing bodies are being developed to support their future federation. The school has a close partnership with the communities of its two parish churches, St Mary's in Felpham and St Nicholas in Middleton.

### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Bishop Tufnell Junior as a Church of England school are good

- The headteacher and whole staff commitment to embedding the school's Christian ethos nurtures the well-being of the whole child, enabling them to be personally valued, happy and secure.
- Explicit Christian values underpin the beliefs, behaviours and attitudes of staff and pupils.
- Distinctly Christian teaching and prayer in collective worship strongly contribute to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The established partnership between the school, the church and the community is a significant strength in celebrating the school's Christian foundation.

### Areas to improve

- Develop the leadership role of the recently appointed religious education (RE) subject leader to secure greater consistency in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in order to accelerate pupil progress and raise standards across the school.
- Improve the effectiveness of the governing body by establishing rigorous monitoring and evaluation strategies to secure evidence of the impact of the church school ethos, collective worship and religious education on the attainment, achievement and well-being of all pupils.

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

The school's Church of England foundation is visibly explicit in all school communications, signs, symbols and displays around the school. The distinctly Christian vision statement, "Learning together to serve God, His world and His people – always our best because everyone matters!" underpins the ethos of the daily life of the school. Explicit Christian values and principles enable all pupils to become responsible and caring citizens. The staff team are unanimous in leading by example, stating 'the children are taught the importance of kindness and respect'. Pupil voice is highly valued in the school. The school council responsibly promotes and develops the school's vision and values, recognising their role 'is to change the school in a good way... respect God following His way as we live our lives'. The Spirit of Tufnell group, comprising of representative pupils from all classes, confirm the school's Christian character impacts strongly on their spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development. For example, they agreed, 'You can see the values in the things that people do and the things they say'. The indoor and outdoor school environment enables pupils to explore their spirituality through a wealth of Anglican symbols, interactive classroom reflection areas and a quiet garden. The well-established Forest School curriculum fully engages pupils in a range of social, scientific and technical skills, purposefully building their independence and self-esteem. A range of extra-curricular provision fully supports pupils' SMSC development, including a prayer group, Eco warriors, choir, street dance and chess. However, school data 2016 indicates attainment and pupil progress were below current national standards and have impacted on the school's overall success in meeting learners needs. Challenge and interventions pitched at the right level to enable all pupils to achieve well and raise standards across the school are not fully consolidated. A breadth of information through the school website, explanatory school values booklets in the school entrance and parent newsletters engage the community in the school's Christian foundation. Parents overwhelming praise their choice of a church school, 'Christian values feed into their behaviour, what is right and wrong... they are incorporated into their activities and relationships like the Forest School.'

Pupils are pro-active, practical and caring, applying Christian beliefs in response to the needs of a local, national and global society. Pupils consistently show great concern and care for the world community through regular fundraising, including for Cancer Research, Chestnut Tree House, Children in Need and Comic Relief. Cultural diversity is recognised and celebrated, including partner schools in Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka and Nepal involving teacher exchanges and practical resources support. Discrimination is not tolerated.

### **The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding**

Daily acts of worship are inclusive, inspirational and engaging, offering all pupils and staff an outstanding rich spiritual experience of the Christian faith. Pupils shared, 'We worship God every day... God is always with us... He is the light of the world'. In an environment and atmosphere conducive to an act of worship, daily collective worship is celebrated as central to school life. When worship is held in classrooms the class prayer corners are a spiritual focal point. The Spirit of Tufnell group recognise their distinctively Christian worship teaches them about Jesus' life, values and His importance to Christians around the world. Themes, currently planned by the headteacher, incorporate a strong focus on pupils' spiritual and moral development through the 'Values for Life' programme. Anglican liturgy, tradition and practice, music and singing, biblical teaching and prayer are embedded in practice. The whole school community participate in major Anglican festivals, including pupils experiencing and participating in the eucharist service. Pupils are developing their knowledge of the Trinity through worship responses and special Pentecostal services. Worship is led by the senior leaders, staff, a range of local Christian clergy and a cycle of individual classes and consistently involves pupils. Observing worship led by the local rector, pupils, staff and governors were completely focussed and actively involved in understanding the religious significance of the Christmas wreath. Through purposeful questioning, a pupil confidently linked the Christmas wreath to the crown of thorns worn by Jesus at Easter. Guided by the rector, pupils and staff understood its significance as a sign of Jesus' victory over death. Whole school singing was inspiring, particularly when a group of pupils from the school's Christian union group sang their own composition called, "Jesus you light up our life like nobody else." There is good evidence of collective worship monitoring and evaluation by the headteacher and weekly reflections from Year 6 pupils. The impact of worship on the whole school community was explained by the school council, 'we respect God...we are what God created... we are following His way... in the world He created'. Plans are in place for the village clergy to participate in collective worship planning, including developing further age appropriate understanding of theological concepts and beliefs. Church based school worship celebrations are well attended by parents and the local community. When interviewed, parents recognised how worship centred on taught and lived Christian and moral values, 'sets pupils up for the day'. A very small minority of families regularly attend local churches. Pupils experience a rich variety of prayers, including The Lord's Prayer, the Prayer of St Richard, the prayers of saints adopted by the school house teams and termly prayer focus weeks. The pupils, when questioned, reflected upon and shared the personal importance of prayer, 'you feel God is actually standing there in front of you, He is there to listen to you, He can make you feel you can do what you couldn't do before'. A well-attended monthly prayer group, held in the school, enables parents to share and spiritually reflect together.

### **The effectiveness of the religious education is satisfactory.**

Religious education (RE) is a core subject with a high profile in the school development plan. The recently appointed head of school now has responsibility for RE subject leadership. School assessment strategies identify that standards of attainment are in line with national expectations. Ensuring progress in RE is good or better for all pupils and further developing a new method of assessment are a focus for teachers' professional development. The 'Understanding Christianity' programme is being introduced to enhance and challenge pupils to deeper learning. The RE curriculum is delivered both through discrete teaching and cross-curricular themes. It contributes purposefully to pupils' understanding of biblical teaching and Christianity as a world religion, alongside other major world religions and significant SMSC experiences. Joint lesson observations with the senior leadership team and the inspector identified inspiring teaching and learning. A range of appropriate differentiated group tasks, effective use of multimedia and a range of resources were enabling pupils to develop enquiry and reflective learning skills. The majority of pupils, supported by teachers and teaching assistants, were engaged in their lessons and making satisfactory to good progress. Through biblical teaching Year 3 pupils developed their understanding of the Christian value of 'trust'. Fully engaged in group role play, they recreated Paul's complete trust in God to save him when shipwrecked. Pupils in Year 6 were stimulated to think deeply by media presentations on the Christian values and moral choices of the famous faith leader Martin Luther King and his followers in overcoming racial segregation. In Year 4 and Year 5, pupils were developing specific knowledge of major world faiths, identifying similarities and differences in traditions and festivals, including Diwali and Hanukkah. A Year 6 pupil stated, 'RE is like going on a journey around the world, learning about religions and respecting other people and their beliefs'. Following discussion with pupils, a scrutiny of pupils' work and a review of school and governor based observations and assessment processes the inspector found a lack of sufficiently focused evidence to demonstrate consistently good RE teaching and learning practice across the school. Teaching does not always provide differentiated activities pitched at the right level to support and challenge pupils with a wide range of abilities. Marking strategies do not regularly celebrate pupil success or accurately inform pupils' next steps in learning to significantly improve progress and raise standards. The senior leadership team (SLT) monitoring of its action plans, with their current focus on improving standards in RE, is not yet sufficiently embedded in practice to rigorously support or challenge all pupils' learning experiences. Although the established governors' spirituality committee monitors RE, evidence of the regularity of monitoring and its effectiveness on the curriculum provision and pupil outcomes is limited.

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

Senior leaders, staff and governors are proactive in celebrating Bishop Tufnell Junior School's distinctive church school ethos. They articulate a Christian vision for the school that encompasses a holistic approach to the well-being of the whole child in close partnership with parents and carers. 'Christian values are central to this community and family spirit, where children get regular chances to explore what it's like to be a Christian', explained staff. Foundation governors, when interviewed, identify the school ethos within the community 'as loving, caring and supportive'. Although the SLT and governors ensure school improvement planning priorities include, for example, 'deepen our school's Christian ethos' and ensuring 'continual improvement in RE standards', evidence of impact through rigorous monitoring, evaluation and reporting processes is limited. Identifying the impact of the school's Christian character on the academic achievement and personal development of the whole school community is being addressed through the strategic development of the federation's cycle of self-evaluation. In preparation for the federation, the recently established joint spirituality committee will take responsibility for leading on developing the school's Christian ethos.

Church school leadership succession planning, including the recently appointed head of school, is addressed through a comprehensive leadership professional development programme in partnership with the diocese. Staff appraisal processes allow staff to explore areas relating to the school's Christian character, RE and collective worship as part of their personal and professional development, sustaining the school's Christian character. The interviewing process for new staff includes an expectation of support for the Christian character of the school.

The school is well supported by the two village churches and parish councils, with the clergy helping to draft the school's vision statement. The executive headteacher takes a leadership role in collaboration and partnership working within the community. Well-established relationships with multi-agency teams, the diocese, parishes, deanery, local authority and partner schools improve all pupils' learning experiences, care and well-being.

Relationships with parents and carers are strong. The friends and parent's association (FAPA) support the school's Christian ethos through active participation in school, church and community events. A recent parental questionnaire acknowledges the majority of parents' support 'the school's Christian ethos and moral values taught by the school'. Parents 'know their children are safe, well-looked after and happy'. A parent stated, 'the school's Christian ethos and values keep the school, church and us all together as a family'.

Statutory requirements for religious education and collective worship are met.