

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

<b>Eastergate Church of England Primary School</b>	
Church Lane Chichester West Sussex PO20 3UT	
<b>Current SIAMS inspection grade</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>
<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Chichester</b>
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Local authority	West Sussex
Date of inspection	15 May 2017
Date of last inspection	7 October 2011
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Controlled 125981
Headteacher	Catherine Ward
Inspector's name and number	Rosemary Appleby 749

### School context

Eastergate CE primary is smaller than the average size primary school with 136 pupils on roll. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is lower than the national average. The number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above national average as is attendance. Most pupils come from a White British heritage. The school was judged to be requiring improvement by Ofsted in 2015 and 2016. The current headteacher took up her post in January 2017. The majority of the governing body have been in post since September 2016 and three new teachers joined the school at this time.

### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Eastergate as a Church of England school are satisfactory

- Effective and enthusiastic leadership from the headteacher ensures that the Christian ethos is evolving for the benefit of all pupils and as a result outcomes and progress for all pupils is improving.
- Leaders show a readiness for improvement through accurate evaluation of areas identified for development enabling the Christian character to improve.
- The Christian character of the school is underpinned by Christian values, which results in the school community feeling that they are part of a family.
- Collective worship is effectively planned and delivered and offers learners a rich spiritual experience.

### Areas to improve

- Strengthen the process of self-evaluation as a church school through formal monitoring of all aspects of the school's Christian distinctiveness, gathering robust evidence of how the Christian character impacts on all learners.
- Ensure that the mission statement and Christian vision are coherently and explicitly linked to Christian values that enable all members of the school community to confidently articulate where these values are rooted and their impact on their daily lives.
- Ensure that pupils are more involved in collective worship through the writing and reading of personal prayers.

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

This is an improving church school where there has been a focus on driving up attainment and improving leadership across the school. Although some academic outcomes remain below floor targets, data shows an upward trend illustrating that attainment is catching up with national expectations. Eastergate school effectively provides an inclusive and caring environment where the needs of families are met. This is evident in the inclusive and positive caring relationships across the school community and the good behaviour seen around the school. This high level of nurture and care to its school community is guided by a strong Christian ethos of community, love and respect. Parents praise the school because it 'an honest school with a family feel' where pupils are being 'taught good values' and 'everyone welcomes you in'. They choose this school because of the values that are taught such as teaching pupils 'to be kind' and take responsibility for their actions within the beliefs of the Church of England. The school mission statement of 'Learn, Grow and Achieve together' drives the school and governors are steadfast that the school's Christian character is strengthened by working together within care and love. The school mission statement of 'Learn, Grow and Achieve' was written in 2016 to illustrate the ethos of the school when recruiting for a headteacher. Since her appointment the headteacher has added the word 'together' to reinforce the importance of 'community'. Stakeholders now recognise the commitment of the school to work together and with their school community to improve outcomes for all pupils and their families. The school's values of; honesty, compassion, courage, trust, humility, tolerance understanding, resilience, responsibility, forgiveness and generosity are not consistently referred to or consistently understood as Christian values. Although the school community can confidently name the schools' values, they have not been linked to the school's mission statement or Christian values and therefore do not provide a coherent picture of the school's Christian ethos. This means that the school community cannot confidently articulate the impact of Christianity on their daily lives. However, some pupils can link the value of trusting someone to trusting 'God to help you with life' and know that forgiveness is important because 'God will forgive you'. Religious education (RE) contributes to pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural (SMSC) growth. In recent interviews about RE the pupil school council stated that 'RE is nearly everything we do, it is art, it is about God' and 'we can reflect on others. We saw places of worship like mosques for Muslims and their God Allah. We do reflect because we talk about their beliefs and ask questions'. Pupils learn about religions such as Judaism, Hinduism, and Islam and through this work are developing compassion, empathy and respect and tolerance for other cultures. Learning about the ten commandments gives pupils an understanding of knowing right from wrong and they are starting to articulate how this relates to their own lives. However pupils' understanding of Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith is underdeveloped and they are not aware of the global nature of Christianity. There are opportunities for the growth of personal spirituality through prayer, reflection, Easter garden and the sensory garden. The school has accurately identified that this should be developed through agreeing a definition of spirituality that is shared and understood across the school community. Pupils understand that giving money for charity, such as raising money for Red Nose Day is important because it helps to give others a better life. They link Christian values of compassion and generosity to their fundraising. Displays around the school of values, Judaism and the Creation, The Lord's Prayer, crosses, Easter garden, a prayer wall and class reflection areas contribute to social, moral, spiritual and cultural (SMSC) education. They provide an environment which reflects the school's foundation and as a result frame reflection in a Christian context. This has a positive impact on pupils' SMSC development.

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

Collective worship is a distinct time in the school day when the school community gathers together as a family. Clergy from the parish church of St George regularly lead worship at the school and are well known and valued by the school community. Pupils know that the vicar is important because he is the leader of their local church and he helps them reflect and 'makes assembly fun'. Aspects of Anglican worship such as the structure of gather, engage, respond and send are well established. Candles and a cross create an appropriate ambience for worship. In a recent pupil survey one pupil stated that 'we light the candle to be quiet and still and this shows us that Jesus is the light of the world and He is with us'. Pupils are respectful in worship and participate actively through singing and praying. An effective example of their involvement was when all the pupils, in threes, took part in a circle dance to teach them about the Trinity which increased understanding across the school. Pupils are proud of the mosaic crosses they created when the school recently focused on Easter celebrations. They were immersed in activities which strengthened their understanding of Easter as part of the church year and Anglican tradition. Worship is enriched through contributions from the Yapton Free Church. However, pupils are not yet experiencing a sufficient variety of leaders to increase their knowledge of a range of Christian traditions or making use of a variety of settings for worship. Pupils know that worship helps them to 'reflect on God and Jesus' and 'helps you become closer to God'. The services at St George's parish church celebrating Easter, Christmas and Harvest effectively reinforce Anglican tradition and are led and planned by pupils with the incumbent. Prayer and reflection is valued at Eastergate. Pupils know that it is important to pray so that they can say thank you to God and it's 'a way to talk to God'. Pupils effectively use the prayer boxes in class reflection areas and the prayer wall in the hall where they write prayers and

place them on the wall. However, they would like more opportunities to write both these prayers and their own personal prayers for inclusion in worship. Recent changes in the format of collective worship and the revised worship programme have started to make an impact. Pupils say that now 'collective worship is a lot more religious we have lots more prayer and stories about Jesus'. Although there is evidence of biblical material being explored, and emphasis on learning about Jesus Christ, the revised programme has not yet impacted on the pupils' ability to articulate how worship and biblical material have relevance in their lives and link to the school's core Christian values. Clergy and staff plan worship together. Currently there is no formal approach to monitoring and evaluating collective worship. Although the school council are asked for their feedback on worship but this is not yet embedded or used to identify changes to worship.

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

There is a clear sense of commitment to the Christian foundation from leaders at all levels who have started to articulate their aspirations for the school as a church school. Senior staff share a vision for the school where the current school mission statement is linked to explicit Christian values and underpins the life of the school. Leadership is driven by the school's mission statement of 'Learn, Grow and Achieve together' where community and family are emphasised as being the foundations of the school. The RE leader took up leadership of the subject in January 2017 and has recently interviewed pupils about their attitudes to collective worship and RE. She has led training for staff ensuring that RE has a raised profile, an action plan and a system for monitoring has been put in place. Governors are committed to the Christian ethos of the school and support the school through visits. Information from Governor visits is beginning to be fed into the strategic planning cycle and inform discussion around the improvement plan. In recent times there has been no significant training to support staff and governors develop as leaders in a church school or in the effective monitoring of Eastergate as a church school. A lack of formal evidence gathering over time, such as monitoring and evaluating, has resulted in leaders not being secure regarding the extent of the impact of Christian distinctiveness on the school community and how this then feeds in their self-evaluation document. Governors and staff are aware of the urgent need to put measures in place to formally monitor and evaluate Christian distinctiveness across the school. However, recent support for leadership from the local authority and diocese is increasing confidence and raising awareness of the areas for improvement. When recruiting for a permanent headteacher, governors were resolute that they wanted the future headteacher to be a deeply committed Christian who would support them in strengthening the Christian character of the school. To ensure consistency amongst staff in upholding the Christian vision of the school governors seek to appoint staff who are 'comfortable with faith' and who will support the Christian ethos of the school. The headteacher has produced a focused and appropriate plan for the future development of the school's Christian character and has an accurate and realistic view of the significant improvement needed across the school. She has revised the collective worship programme, increased school displays relating to Christian distinctiveness, introduced the Easter story immersion day, and made links with a school in Kenya. She has written about her aspirations for Eastergate in the parish news and her wish to build relationships with others in the local community through their views on what makes Eastergate special. In talking to parents, clergy, governors, diocesan improvement partner and pupils it is evident that since the appointment of the new headteacher the school has become more explicitly Christian in its values, displays and communication to stakeholders. However, this work is yet to become embedded in the life of the school. Links between the parish church and the school are strong. The incumbent regularly plans and teaches classes through using 'Godly Play' encouraging pupils to reflect upon biblical material. Clergy come into school to listen to pupils read and one of the congregation is a regular volunteer gardener at the school. The school and church link together for the church summer fair and Sunday school is held regularly at the school. Parents are proud of their school and in a recent questionnaire to parents the majority of parents agreed that their child was happy, safe, well looked after and that the school was well led and managed. Arrangements for RE and collective worship meet statutory requirements.

SIAMS report May 2017 Eastergate VC CE Primary School Eastergate PO20 3UT