

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

<b>Guestling Bradshaw Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School</b>	
Rye Road, Guestling, Hastings, East Sussex TN35 4LS	
<b>Current SIAMS inspection grade</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Chichester</b>
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local authority	East Sussex
Date of inspection	18 January 2017
Date of last inspection	23 May 2011
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary aided primary school 114551
Headteacher	Nathan Cline
Inspector's name and number	Connie Hughes 765

### School context

Guestling Bradshaw Church of England Primary School is a one form entry school with 221 pupils on roll. Approximately half of pupils come from surrounding villages with the rest living in the urban area of Hastings. Pupils are mainly White British and from a range of socio economic backgrounds. The number of pupils with special needs is slightly above the national average. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and chair of governors have been in post since September 2015. The school has a close partnership with the parishes of Fairlight, Pett, Guestling and Westfield.

### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Guestling Bradshaw Primary as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The school's Christian ethos, inclusive nurturing provision and strong collaborative community relationships enable all pupils to feel personally valued, happy and secure.
- The explicit Christian character and values of the school are embedded in pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Collective worship and religious education, inclusive of biblical teaching, Christian values and major world faiths, strongly contributes to pupils' understanding of how faith underpins a person's moral and spiritual life.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher's commitment to the school's Christian ethos, actively supported by the staff, governors and clergy, contributes significantly in sustaining the school's Church of England foundation.

### Areas to improve

- Plan differentiated writing tasks which consistently challenge, reinforce and deepen learning experiences in religious education for all pupils in Key Stage 2.
- Through the established senior leadership and Ethos Committee's monitoring and self-evaluation programme, secure explicit evidence of the effectiveness of Guestling Bradshaw as a church school on meeting the needs of all learners.

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

Guestling Bradshaw's outstanding Christian ethos permeates the life of the school, with gospel values at the heart of pupils' learning experiences. Prominent Anglican symbols, biblical learning and cross-curricular displays celebrate the impact of Christian values on pupil's personal motivation, academic achievements, spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development. The school motto, 'Where learning is a journey, not a race', significantly underpinned with Christian values, encourages pupils to 'love and pray' as they 'learn and play'. The School Council explained, 'the motto is everything we learn and do every day'.

The school's distinctly Christian mission statement is underpinned by a bi-annual cycle of twelve specific Christian values, with a focus on creativity, trust, peace, forgiveness, justice and thankfulness in this academic year. Visually illustrated by the school council, all pupils, including the youngest, understand and apply them to their daily life. They are central to the collective worship themes and incorporated into the religious education curriculum for the school year. The school's nurturing of Christian values, courtesy and good manners are abundantly evident within the school community. Parents and carers consistently emphasised and expressed their appreciation of the staff team, 'for creating a learning environment that enables children to flourish both socially and academically'.

The 2016 school data identified a dip in Key Stage 1 phonics and Year 6 attainment results. These and pupil attendance were below national standards. However, assessment outcomes across the school, verified and commended by the local authority, show good pupil progress throughout the school. Learning intervention strategies, developed in partnership with the Parents and Carers Forum, are significantly improving current pupil attainment, attendance and behaviour. The introduction of an inspiring whole school theme for the year, 'We are Learning Superheroes', incorporating biblical superheroes, and collaboratively agreed moral school rules, have significantly motivated pupils to address and achieve their learning and personal challenges. The school song, written and sung enthusiastically by the pupils, reinforces the skills a superhero learner displays, i.e. independence, engagement, enthusiasm, resilience and perseverance. Motivating class, group and individual rewards, including attendance arm bands, colourful t-shirts and proudly displayed 'Superhero of the week' photographs, celebrate pupils' success. Parents expressed, 'our children are guided to personal achievement without pressure'.

The school's Christian ethos, collective worship, religious education (RE), cross-curricular and ex-curricular provision has a major impact on pupils' SMSC development. Pupils are pro-active, practical and caring in response to the needs of a diverse local, national and global community. Through School Council representatives, pupils choose to support a breadth of charitable causes 'to which they can make a difference', including those pertinent to school families. Recent fundraising provided Harvest gifts for the 'The Seaview Project', supported the local Conquest Hospital, Cancer Research UK and Christian Aid. Cultural diversity is celebrated, for example, through their Hastings Sierra Leone Friendship school link, by exchanging media images and with a fashion show of costumes from West Africa.

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

High quality, inclusive, engaging and inspiring daily worship based on Christian values ensures pupils participation and significantly influences the Christian ethos of the school. The creative use of multimedia, drama, prayer, music and song engages the whole school community in daily worship, incorporating Christian values, Anglican liturgical responses, traditions and beliefs. An interactive and informative worship display focuses on the Christian values worship theme, including biblical references, British values and the qualities of 'biblical superheroes' contributes to pupils' SMSC development. The termly collective worship theme, along with a biblically referenced 'Thought for the week', is shared in highly informative weekly newsletters, indicative of the importance of worship in the life of the school.

Acts of worship create an atmosphere in which pupils and adults fully engage. Pupils are attentive and responsive to headteacher led school worship, as they relate the Christian value of applying 'trust' to their daily relationships with each other and God. Pupils reflected that 'God is reliable, His word is trustworthy'. Pupils' spiritual reflection is enhanced through skilled and inspiring singing, including The Lord's Prayer and clearly related worship theme songs. Through worship and religious education, pupils develop an understanding of the centrality of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit to the Christian faith. Although daily prayer is central to school worship and spiritual development, class reflection areas and daily prayers are not consistently used in all areas of the school.

The embedded partnership between the school and the two local Anglican parishes, based on distinctly Christian teaching, bring the school and community together. During traditional festivals in the church year, the whole school community come together to celebrate their Christian distinctiveness, including the whole school participating in an annual Eucharist/Communion Service. Representatives from local Methodist and Baptist churches, lead acts of worship which enable pupils to experience different Christian traditions. The outstanding leadership of the headteacher, as worship co-ordinator, provides structured planning for staff, pupils, governors and local clergy to lead and/or participate in worship. Monitoring and evaluation is effectively recorded by the senior leadership team, and the Ethos Committee. Pupils' reflections are sought and effectively shared through school worship portfolios.

### **The effectiveness of the religious education is good**

The school leadership team, including the RE subject leader, continue to drive improvement and raise attainment in line with age-related expectations. Religious Education (RE), taught through discrete teaching and cross-curricular topics, embeds the distinctive Christian character of the school. Subject leader portfolios, class RE reflection books, lesson observations and work scrutiny indicate that the majority of pupils make good progress over time. Religious education purposefully contributes to pupils' understanding of Anglican beliefs, Jesus' teaching, Christianity as a world religion, knowledge and respect for major world faiths.

Lessons include inspiring examples of significant biblical teachings, Christian values and SMSC experiences. The youngest children are enthralled and inspired by high quality discovery based activities such as learning through Godly play. They respond with enthusiasm and work both independently and co-operate creatively to represent their learning. Structured learning about different faiths and traditions enable pupils to explore, understand and respect Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith in a diverse society. Dialogue observed between teachers, adults and pupils is of a consistently high quality, particularly where pupils were applying a range of research, enquiry, reflective and debating skills. In Key Stage 2, pupils confidently talk with respect about their beliefs and those of other world faiths. Identifying similarities and differences in applying the gospel value of 'forgiveness', to Jewish and the Catholic Church traditions, Year 6 pupils extend their understanding of Christian faith and practice. Year 4 class RE reflection books include pupils' growing spiritual awareness, relating their own learning experiences and belief in the Trinity. Parents are kept informed about pupils' RE curriculum through teacher's subject plans on the school website, class newsletters, celebration assemblies and church services.

Although formal assessment and marking strategies are in place to support all pupils' engagement and progression in learning, they are not fully used in celebrating achievement or challenging pupils to improve their RE work. There was limited evidence of extended and differentiated RE writing tasks, to support, reinforce and deepen pupils' RE learning experiences. The curriculum is supported by the local authority agreed syllabus, the Christians in Schools Trust and the diocesan RE guidelines. Diocesan professional development programmes and network meetings continue to strengthen RE leadership and teacher's subject knowledge and classroom practice. To ensure RE teaching is consistently enhancing and challenging the learning of all pupils, the school, guided by an experienced subject leader, are enthusiastically undertaking the new national 'Understanding Christianity' programme. The subject leader reports to the senior leadership team and governors on curriculum content, evaluation and assessment outcomes. The governor's Ethos Committee monitor and evaluate the impact of the RE curriculum with, for example, a comprehensive account of Godly Play successfully delivered across the school.

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

The governing body's promotion of the school's distinctive Christian foundation was a significant factor in the appointment of the headteacher. With outstanding dedication, the headteacher has successfully built upon the school's strong Christian distinctiveness. Senior leaders in their behaviours and actions communicate a strong Christian faith foundation to the whole school community. Teachers and support staff are explicit in ensuring the Christian ethos permeates the daily life of the school; 'our school oozes the Christian ethos...it shines in pupils, staff and governors', explained a member of staff.

The outstanding and highly visible leadership of the chair of governors and the commitment of a highly skilled governing body reflects a strong Christian fellowship. They work in strategic partnership with senior leaders articulating the embedded vision and values of the school as a Church of England school. The governor's Ethos Committee records of monitoring and evaluation, governor visit reports of collective worship, RE and Christian values reflect a pro-active approach to church school self-evaluation and action planning which have led to improvements in provision as a church school. Future leadership of church schools is being addressed through the professional development of senior and middle level leaders.

Senior leaders and governors are actively involved in enhancing and celebrating the school's Christian distinctiveness through strong partnerships and professional development with local schools, the parishes, the wider community it serves, diocesan and education providers. Although school leaders have a clear understanding of the impact of the school's Christian ethos and values on pupils' performance, responses from the school community have not yet been collated to record explicit evidence of their effectiveness on meeting the needs of all learners.

Parents and carers questionnaire outcomes affirm the commitment of senior leaders and governors in maintaining strong and trustworthy links with stakeholders and the wider community. Eye-catching weekly parent newsletters celebrate the impact of the school's outstanding Christian ethos on pupils learning experiences and achievements. Parent and pupil voice, the strong church and extended community links reflect the strong adherence to the inclusive care, well-being and achievement of all children. The "Christian ethos, nurture and pastoral care is second to none", explained parents. The school meets the statutory requirements for religious education and collective worship.