

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Mayfield Church of England Primary School	
Mayfield Church of England Primary School, Fletching Street, Mayfield, TN20 6TA	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese	Chichester
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Local authority	East Sussex
Name federation	The Aspire Federation
Date/s of inspection	4 May 2017
Date of last inspection	15 November 2011
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Controlled 114512
Executive headteacher	Sarah Curtis
Head of school	Jo Warren
Inspector's name	Jan Meyer
Quality assurance	Lyn Field 151

School context

This smaller than average-sized primary school serves the area around the parish of St Dunstan, Mayfield. In September 2016 the school federated with Five Ashes School to form the Aspire Federation. Governance has recently undergone many changes due to a single governing body being formed at the time of the federation. The headteacher joined the school in January 2013 and is now the executive headteacher of the federation. The % of pupils for whom the school receives extra funding due to social disadvantage and those with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) are well below the national average. The majority of pupils are White British.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Mayfield Church of England Primary School as a Church of England school are good

- Christian values at Mayfield Church of England Primary School are clearly defined and effectively promoted so as to make a significant impact on the personal development of all pupils.
- The strong leadership team have established a firm Christian foundation which leads to a positive and happy atmosphere and supports pupils in their learning well.
- The expertise of the religious education (RE) leader has driven forward improvements in the RE curriculum.
- The worship programme and RE play an important role in school life.
- The strong and supportive links with the parish church and other local churches express well both the church's and the school's Christian mission of service to the community.

Areas to improve

- Establish regular monitoring and evaluation by the governing body of how the school's Christian vision impacts on the school and the wider community.
- Develop self-evaluation by all members of the school community further, so it that leads directly to strategies for improvement for collective worship and the Christian character of the school.
- Develop a whole school curriculum which is underpinned by the school's Christian vision.

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

The school's core Christian values are clearly linked with Christian teaching and biblical references. These values are well known and articulated by all members of the school community, they underpin the Christian character of the school. The school vision, which has recently been revisited and displayed around the school, is not as well known and has consequently not had sufficient impact on the school's Christian character. The school environment, the displays and reflection areas deepen the understanding of the school's Christian values extremely well. Based on its Christian foundation the school is a happy, caring place, 'there is a wonderful spirit in this school that makes my day' stated one governor. The Christian values are clearly shown in the strong and supportive relationships within the school and in the good behaviour which contributes to a calm learning environment. Peer mediators and peer sports leaders support behaviour well at lunchtime. The impact of Christian values, such as courage, can be seen in the good progress pupils make from their various starting points, consequently, the school is above the national floor target for achievement and above the national average for attendance.

Recent training undertaken by all teachers has strengthened their knowledge and understanding of Christianity and as a result, RE supports the school's Christian foundation extremely well. RE and other planned activities successfully provide a range of opportunities for pupils to explore the importance of religious belief and practice in the world today. Pupils say that they enjoy RE lessons. Teachers plan some excellent cross-curricular links between RE and the rest of the curriculum which deepens pupils' understanding and learning. The whole school RE curriculum plan now provides a good balance between teaching that focuses on Christianity and that which addresses other world faiths such as Judaism and Hinduism. As a result, pupils are developing an understanding and respect for difference and diversity in God's world.

The school does not have a clear definition of spirituality that is explicitly Christian to support curriculum planning. However, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) is well catered for in other ways and pupils respond well to the opportunities provided. The worship programme and RE contribute well to SMSC development.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Worship is systematically planned around the school's Christian values. The head of school, supported by the executive headteacher, takes the lead as worship co-ordinator. In this she works closely with the RE subject leader, who is a member of the senior leadership team, the children and families worker from the church and local clergy. The first act of worship each term is led by the pupils and is held in the church. Parents are warmly welcomed. Through worship and RE, following recent staff training, pupils now develop an age-appropriate knowledge of the life and the teaching of Jesus, his importance to Christians and of the Christian belief in God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. They make effective links between biblical teaching and the school's Christian values and consider how these might relate to their own actions. Pupils and staff engage well in worship and recognise its importance in exploring school values and considering the impact of these on life in and outside of school. This is evident in the support that the school has given, through a local charity, to support a child through her schooling in Africa. In worship pupils are respectful, good at listening and eager to respond. Pupils have a positive attitude to worship, one Year 5 pupil said that 'assembly is a calm time when I can sit and reflect about things that have happened', this sentiment was reinforced by many others. The parish priest, the family and children's support worker and other local clergy are regular visitors and are fully involved in planning and contributing to the worship programme. Worship is taken by a range of leaders and is based on the 'Values for Life' programme. However, monitoring and evaluating the impact and consistency of the quality of worship is only just beginning. Pupils are familiar with aspects of traditional Anglican worship practices such as opening worship with the call and response 'Peace be with you' 'and also with you' and a lit candle representing Jesus as the light of the world. Important Christian festivals are marked by worship in the local parish church which are well attended by parents and members of the local community. Each year, Year 6 leavers produce a beautiful altar cloth, in the colours of the church seasons, for the table which is the focal point for worship.

Prayer and reflection are key features of worship. Pupils know the school prayer well. Formal prayers before lunch and at the end of school frame the day in some classes. A reflection area in each classroom is refreshed termly and themed alongside the Christian value being focussed on at that time. The school has recently revitalised their outdoor prayer and reflection area, which is now peaceful and welcoming, however the use of these reflection areas is not yet embedded. The classroom reflection books and prayer wall in the hall show that prayer opportunities are taken by many pupils who recognise prayer and reflection as being supportive of them in

their daily lives. Pupils' prayers are read in worship and are taken from the prayer and reflection book produced by one class each term based on the term's value. The importance of prayer and reflection are enhanced by the 'prayer space' weeks, which the school holds every two years. These bring all members of the school and volunteers from the local community together and have a lasting impact on pupils, parents and staff.

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

The strong focus on agreed Christian values is driving forward many aspects of the school's life and work. The executive headteacher, well supported by her senior leaders has refreshed the school's Christian ethos by a clear focus on its Christian values, despite this, the original school vision, which has recently been redrafted by the executive headteacher and a group of pupils to make its meaning clearer to pupils, has not impacted on the Christian character of the school. Progress in addressing the issues from the previous inspection speeded up since the executive headteacher joined the school but not all have been embedded. Pupils and their families, as well as staff, feel well supported by the school. Senior leaders are determined that pupils and staff will continue to flourish and the school reflects the mission statement 'Nurturing relationships, inspiring excellence, achieving potential'. The leadership team are developing the staff well for working within the church school sector through on-going professional development opportunities.

Governors challenge and support the school, however, regular monitoring of its Christian distinctiveness by governors has not taken place and consequently the Christian vision is not explicit in the everyday life of the school community and in the decisions about overall curriculum planning. Senior leaders have written a school development plan which has clear strategies in place to support continued improvement. The school has secured very good leadership for both RE and collective worship which is leading to improved practice in both areas. RE and worship are appropriately resourced and supported, and meet statutory requirements.

The school works very effectively with parents to help them support their child's academic learning and personal development. Parents are fully involved in learning about and understanding each termly value through information in the newsletter, the value homework project and the launch worship which takes place in the church. A strong and mutually supportive partnership between the school and the church exists, with regular visits from the vicar and the families support worker and the schools visits to the church, showing clear expressions of their shared mission of service to the community. Parents report that pupils and parents feel a strong connection with the local parish church. The school greatly benefits from and willingly contributes to the strong community support in Mayfield. There is a very effective working partnership with the partner school in the Aspire federation, sharing many aspects of school management and teaching and learning including continuing professional development for staff. The school has an outward looking character which is reflected in the extremely good links with other local schools, one of which, Mayfield, provides many opportunities for pupils including working with students from across the world who have different cultures from their own. The school draws well on support, advice and training from the diocese, the impact of which can clearly be seen in the strategically planned emphasis on Christian values and the deeper knowledge and confidence of staff in teaching about Christianity.

SIAMS report May 2017 Mayfield Church of England Primary School, Fletching Street, Mayfield, TN20 6TA