



Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

West Hoathly Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School	North Lane, West Hoathly, East Grinstead, West Sussex. RH19 4QG
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese/Methodist District	Chichester
Previous SIAMS inspection grade:	Satisfactory
Local authority	West Sussex
Date of inspection	29 September 2016
Date of last inspection	19 November 2010
School's unique reference number	126012
Headteacher	Adam Earle
Inspector's name and number	Richard Dyer 513

School context

West Hoathly CE Primary School is a small school in the centre of the village serving the local community. The majority of children are of White British heritage from the local community but several also come from further afield. Since the previous inspection the number of pupils has considerably increased and there have been significant changes to the governing body and the staff, including a new senior teacher who has close links with the local church.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of West Hoathly as a Church of England school are good

- The strong Christian vision and leadership of the senior leadership team impacts positively on the development of the school's Christian distinctiveness.
- The school's Christian values, known and understood by all stakeholders, are securely embedded and impact positively on the school's provision and outcomes for pupils.
- The close links with parents, the local church and the wider community contribute to the promotion of the school's Christian values.

Areas to improve

- To develop the governors' role in monitoring and evaluating the impact of collective worship, religious education (RE) and the school's Christian ethos on the spiritual development of the pupils.
- To raise pupils' awareness and understanding of the school's Christian distinctiveness by involving them more in the evaluation and development of collective worship and other aspects of the school's Christian character.
- To broaden pupils' understanding of how faith and culture shape people's lives by developing strong and purposeful partnerships with the church and the wider community.

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

West Hoathly is a friendly, caring school whose Christian ethos is based on its three core values of love, hope and forgiveness. These values are clearly expressed visually in displays throughout the school, in 'reflective' areas in all classrooms and the new outdoor Peace Garden. The values are successfully promoted through acts of worship, religious education (RE) and the wider curriculum, and contribute strongly to the pupils' academic achievement, personal development and well-being and social, moral, spiritual and cultural (SMSC) development. The impact of the values is evident in the high quality of relationships between members of the school community. Teachers clearly model the school's values in their interaction with the children and each other. The pupils display excellent behaviour (e.g. a disputed goal during a lunchtime football game amicably resolved without argument) and a caring ethos for each other. This is seen in the care and support between older and younger pupils at break times, in various 'buddying' arrangements, supporting a child in a wheelchair with her work, lunch and mobility around the school, and charitable projects initiated by the pupils to help causes impacting on families within the school. It can also be seen in the high level of quality provision of care and support provided by the school for all learners including vulnerable pupils by providing, for example, learning mentors which impacts positively on pupil achievement. All children are made to feel they can achieve. Good use is made of the RE curriculum themes to promote the school's values with, for example, explicit links made with the value promoted in worship and good displays including non-Christian faiths to promote pupils' respect and understanding of cultural diversity.

Pupils talk about the school's values and the links with Biblical teaching they have learnt about in RE and worship, e.g. they talk about showing love "Because Jesus loved everyone including those who hurt him", and showing understanding and respect for other people's beliefs and ideas because "Everyone is different". This impact extends out of school with parents describing how their children choose to read the Bible at bedtime and have initiated discussions on, for example, life after death. Pupils also talk warmly about the school's caring, friendly ethos with pupils who joined the school from elsewhere describing it as friendlier than their previous one. Staff, parents and governors are able to articulate the school's values and ethos, and their link to Christian teachings. Parents talk positively about the school's ethos of love, care and respect, and how strongly they are modelled by staff and promoted in the daily life of the school. One parent described the school as "Offering a foundation Christian baseline on which to build their lives" which was endorsed by another who detailed how the strong Christian ethos has been sustained by their child into adulthood.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Worship plays an important part in the life of the school. It is well planned on half termly themes that promote the school's values and Christian ethos and is led by staff, pupils and the local clergy. Many staff participate in the worship and opportunities are provided for parents to join the worship in school half termly and in church when the school celebrates key Christian festivals. Parents welcome and appreciate these opportunities. There is a clear Christian character to the worship (i.e. liturgical greeting, song, Bible reading, reflection, prayer) used effectively to create an appropriate atmosphere. Pupils articulate how stories from the Bible and the importance of Jesus link to the school's values. For example, how the school's value 'Forgiveness' links both to Christian teaching and the school's 'next day, clean slate' policy. Pupils can recount how the school's values promoted in worship impact on the 'choice' and 'consequence' of their actions in school. For example, showing love by supporting each other and various charities and forgiveness by accepting an apology and starting afresh next day.

Pupils' knowledge and understanding of the Trinity is developed in worship through stories and prayer, and highlighted throughout the school through pictures and symbols. Pupils talk confidently about the Trinity at their level of understanding. Prayer and reflection form an essential part of worship and extends into 'Reflective Areas' in all classrooms which display the school prayer and values. A range of prayers are used in worship and at key times of the day. Pupils can recite these and explain the meaning of their key parts. For example, the link between the Lord's Prayer and thanking God for food and harvest time. They know the importance of prayer as a way of

thanking God or asking for His help. One pupil described prayer as important because “God is someone to talk to when you can’t talk to anyone else”. There is also a new, as yet unfinished, outdoor reflective ‘Peace Garden’ which pupils appreciate as somewhere they can go for quiet contemplation and to talk silently to God. Involvement of the pupils in the development of this garden is planned but not yet established and therefore its impact on their understanding of how it promotes the school’s Christian distinctiveness is currently limited.

The worship is regularly evaluated by the senior leadership. Governor monitoring of worship and its impact on pupil’s spiritual development has been recently established. Children have opportunities to evaluate the worship and can give examples of their impact on changes to the worship to make it more meaningful and accessible to them, e.g. greater pupil participation by writing and leading the prayers. The development of worship forms part of an action plan to develop the school’s distinctiveness as a church school and includes greater opportunities for pupil involvement in planning, leading and evaluating worship. However, these plans have not yet been in place for a sufficient time to make a measurable impact on the improvement of collective worship.

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

Since the previous inspection the school leadership have worked strategically to address the action points identified in that inspection to develop the school’s Christian distinctiveness. This includes the significant appointment of a new senior teacher who shares the head teacher’s Christian commitment. Together they lead the school community in promoting the school’s values by modelling and developing an ethos of love, care, and respect for everyone. The impact shows in the confident way pupils understand and articulate the school’s Christian values (a development from the previous inspection) and how they apply them in their lives. The headteacher and senior teacher are supported by a governing body significantly changed since the previous inspection including the appointment of new clergy and foundation governors who are committed to school improvement. Since the previous inspection they have moved forward in developing their strategic role in monitoring and evaluating the impact of the school’s Christian ethos, RE and collective worship on the spiritual development of the pupils. Regular monitoring and evaluation of collective worship has been established but this is a relatively recent development and there is not as yet convincing evidence of its impact on school improvement.

Good self-evaluation processes involve to varying degrees the parents, governors and the pupils. Evaluations identify development needs and produce action plans clearly focused on improving distinctiveness. Work around prayer and reflection resulted in the creation of the Peace Garden, including pupil involvement in its development. This led to the implementation of monitoring and evaluation strategies involving governors and pupils. Some of these actions are becoming embedded, e.g. governor monitoring of worship, but others are still underdeveloped, e.g. greater pupil involvement in the evaluation of worship, RE and the school’s Christian distinctiveness. A robust training and development programme, some provided by the diocese, has enabled staff and governors to grow in understanding of their roles in securing the school’s distinctive Christian character. This has resulted in a strategic plan firmly focused on assessing how the school’s Christian ethos and vision have enabled pupils to flourish.

Pupils visit the church for worship at key times of the year and to support their curriculum work, and the vicar regularly visits the school to lead worship. This partnership has been strengthened since the appointment of the senior teacher. Opportunities for closer church links have been identified, e.g. shared musical activities and choirs. There are also good links with the wider community and other schools, e.g. pupils support village social and charitable events and join other schools at the diocesan leavers’ service at nearby Worth Abbey. Parents talk very positively about the school’s loving, caring ethos, its family feel and long term impact on children. One parent felt “privileged to have my child at this school”.

The school meets its statutory requirements for RE and collective worship.

SIAMS report September 2016 West Hoathly CE Primary School East Grinstead RH19 4QG