

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

### St Augustine Church of England Primary School

Vicarage Lane Scaynes Hill Haywards Heath RH17 7PB

<b>Current SIAMS inspection grade</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Chichester</b>
Previous SIAS inspection grade	Satisfactory
Date of inspection	19 October 2017
Date of last inspection	8 March 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Controlled 126009
Headteacher	Caroline Tilney
Inspector's name and number	Rosemary Appleby 749

#### School context

St Augustine's CE Primary School is smaller than most primary schools with 102 on roll. The school is situated in the Lindfield Rural Parish, but attracts children from surrounding areas. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals are below the national average as is the number with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Attendance is above national average. Most pupils come from a White British heritage. Since the previous inspection there have been significant changes in the composition of both the governing body and staff.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Augustine's as a Church of England school are good

- The school's Christian values and school mission underpin the daily life of school and both are lived out and understood by the school community.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the meaning of prayer which they use to help them reflect at a personal level and have good opportunities to do this in the school day.
- Leaders are committed to the promotion of the school's Christian ethos and have some systems in place to monitor its impact.

#### Areas to improve

- Strengthen the process of self-evaluation as a church school through increased formal monitoring of all aspects of the school's Christian distinctiveness, gathering robust evidence of how the Christian character impacts on all learners.
- Develop a shared understanding of spirituality across the whole school so that opportunities to engage in high quality spiritual experiences can be identified in all areas of school life.
- Develop pupils' understanding of Christianity as a multi-cultural faith so that they develop a secure appreciation of the global nature of Christianity.

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

St Augustine CE school provides a high level of nurture and care to its school community through living out its mission statement of 'Believe in Ourselves, Reach for the Future, Anchored by God's Love'. This is evident in the inclusive and positive caring relationships across the school community and the good behaviour seen around the school. Stakeholders have a shared understanding and ownership of the school's 20 Christian values because they helped to decide which values underpin their school mission statement. These values have been linked to biblical references and emphasise that the school community is 'Anchored by God's Love'. These values are displayed in many areas around the school and are explicitly explained to parents prior to their children joining the school. Pupils are aware of the values as Christian values even though they are promoted as school values. They talk about how the value of love is related to 'loving God and knowing that God is loving you' and how they would help people because 'Jesus showed compassion to others'. The school effectively provides an inclusive environment where the needs of all pupils are met. The Christian ethos contributes to pupil achievement and the school has ensured that standards have risen and are now in line with national expectations in all key stages. Parents value the family environment where Christian values contribute to making their children 'more tolerant' and are viewed as good 'for personal development and emotional development'. They say that at home their children enthusiastically talk about prayer, worship, religious education (RE) and values. The school inspires pupils to talk about Christian beliefs both within and outside of school. An emphasis on the importance of living a life of integrity based on personal beliefs alongside a style of teaching that which encourages reflection ensures that RE has an effective impact on the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of all learners. Learning about Creation provides opportunities to discuss how Christians might write a creation charter and be God's stewards on earth. Pupils learn about Judaism, Hinduism and Islam in RE and through this work they develop compassion, empathy and respect for other cultures. They know that learning about other religions is important and teaches you not be judgmental and is linked to the values of care, respect and understanding. However, pupil's understanding of the global nature of Christianity is not yet secure. Pupils have been interviewed by the RE leader and answers illustrate that they enjoy RE and understand that RE is important because it gives 'you time to learn more about Jesus and God'. Pupils understand that giving money for charity, such as 'Children in Need' links to the values of compassion, love, care and kindness. Some members of the school community are not yet confident in articulating the school's definition of spirituality. This limits the extent to which opportunities to explore spiritual experiences are of a consistently high quality across the school. However, reflection times in each classroom and prayer spaces in the environment appropriately extend opportunities for quiet reflection. Displays and Christian artefacts around the school, such as the school symbol of an anchor with a cross at its centre, make a good contribution to SMSC. 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 good**

Collective worship is a special and distinct time in the school day when Christian values, linked to biblical references, are effectively reinforced. This ensures that the vision and values of the school remain central to the life of the school community. Pupils are actively engaged and respectful through participation in all elements of worship such as acting out Bible stories, singing, reflection time, and praying. Pupils know that worship 'helps us understand the values and how to show them'. The person of Jesus Christ is evident in collective worship. One pupil said that this is because Jesus 'is the prince of the earth' and that he had learnt that from the Bible. Pupils have opportunities to develop their understanding of the Trinity and name God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit as being important. Aspects of Anglican worship such as the structure of gather, engage, respond and send are well established. The altar cloth reflecting the colours of the church year, cross and candle reinforce Anglican tradition and pupils know that candles are lit because Jesus is the 'light of the world'. Worship is enriched through contributions from clergy and youth worker from the local parish church of St Augustine, the Lindfield United Reform church and increases learners understanding of a range of Christian traditions. Prayer has a high profile in the school. The school has developed prayer spaces, introduced two prayer boxes and the prayer gazebo outside. Pupils are confident when talking about prayer and say that they 'pray all over the school' and prayer is important 'to tell God you love and respect him'. They are proud of their 'plaster' prayers in the medical bay which are written on plasters to help sick people and their prayer tree in the library. Pupils are aware of biblical material and can talk about the messages from God in these stories. However they are less secure when relating biblical material to their own lives. The collective worship leader plans an appropriate overview of themes for collective worship and supports leaders of worship to develop these into detailed effective plans. Leaders have monitored and evaluated collective worship but, as they are not regularly carried out and are not formal, evaluation of this monitoring does not yet provide robust evidence to inform future planning and improvement. However, evaluations are becoming more detailed and the pupil Ethos Committee is starting to contribute their views. Pupils are confident when planning and leading their termly year

group worship to parents. They write the prayers, choose the music and act out bible stories which illustrate their understanding of the key elements of Anglican worship. Services at the start of term, Harvest, Easter, Christmas and end of school year at Augustine's church, effectively reinforce Anglican tradition and provide an alternative setting for worship.

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

There is a clear sense of commitment to the Christian foundation from leaders at all levels who articulate their aspirations for the school as a church school. Leadership is driven by the school's mission statement 'Believe in Ourselves, Reach for the Future, Anchored by God's Love' which is underpinned by the school's 20 values. The headteacher and RE leader work enthusiastically, in partnership, to actively promote the Christian distinctiveness of the school. The RE/collective worship leader is knowledgeable and has attended many RE courses and RE network meetings which impact positively on her ability to support staff across the school. Recent courses include 'Understanding Christianity, and 'Open the Book'. She has led staff development, carried out work scrutinies and monitored the teaching of RE to ensure that it reflects the Christian ethos of the school and can evidence that understanding about teaching Christianity has improved. She has interviewed pupils about their attitudes to collective worship and RE and used information gathered to inform her RE subject leader reports to governors. Headteacher and RE leader reports to governors ensure that they are fully informed about the progress of RE and development of Christian distinctiveness across the school. The school has partially addressed the key issues from the previous inspection. As a result, they have established and embedded prayer spaces across the school and self evaluation is shared at staff and Governors meetings. Governors are passionate and committed to the Christian ethos of the school and commence their meetings in prayer. They make visits and as part of general monitoring they identify and comment on values seen in practice. Recording of these visits is mostly informal and although they are discussed at main governors' meetings the evidence trail through minutes of these meetings is not clear. The school has a focused and appropriate plan for the future development of the school's Christian character included in the school development plan. During interviews candidates are questioned about their commitment to the school's Christian distinctiveness to ensure that the school appoints staff committed to promoting a Christian ethos. Newly appointed teachers attend diocesan training 'New to teaching in a church school' and this increases their awareness of expectations of contributing to the Christian ethos in school. Partnerships with the local church community are good, mutually enriching, and are effective in bringing a greater understanding of Anglican life. Clergy from St Augustine's lead worship and give valued pastoral support. Members of the church community listen to pupils read in school and pupils enjoy providing refreshments and singing carols to elderly members of the church and wider community. The church provides Bibles to both Foundation year and Year 6 leavers. The church community choir rehearse in the school. The school and church join together each year to celebrate St Augustine's day which strengthens the partnerships between school and church through a celebration of their joint patron. Governors have not attended diocesan training related to the current self evaluation expectations. They therefore have not developed the skills to securely monitor and evaluate the impact of the Christian ethos in a systematic and strategic way. Parents speak warmly of the school and feel 'truly blessed' to encounter a 'positive experience from start to finish'. The arrangements for RE and collective worship meet statutory requirements.