

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

<b>Nutley Church of England Primary School</b>	
High Street, Uckfield, East Sussex. TN22 3NW	
<b>Current SIAMS inspection grade</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Chichester</b>
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Local authority	East Sussex
Date of inspection	15 March 2018
Date of last inspection	25 May 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Controlled 114517
Headteacher	Elizabeth Peasgood
Inspector's name and number	Connie Hughes 765

### School context

Nutley Church of England Primary School is a small village school. There are currently 92 pupils on roll distributed into a separate foundation stage class and three mixed age classes. Approximately 50% of pupils are from outside the immediate catchment area. The majority of pupils are White British from relatively advantaged socio-economic backgrounds. There were significant leadership and staff changes in 2015-16. A substantive headteacher was appointed in September 2016. The school has a close partnership with the clergy and parish church of St James the Less, Nutley.

### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Nutley as a Church of England school are outstanding

- Explicit Christian values understood and applied by all pupils, staff and governors.
- Inspirational collective worship and high quality religious education (RE), inclusive of biblical teaching, major world faiths and national and global events ensure pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The passionate commitment of the headteacher, actively supported by all staff and governors is a significant strength in the continuing development and celebration of the school's Christian faith foundation.
- The school's Christian ethos, inclusive nurturing provision and strong collaborative community relationships enable all pupils to feel personally valued, happy and secure.

### Areas to improve

- Put in place a professional development programme to secure the expertise of the full governing body in explicit monitoring and evaluation of the school's Christian ethos to secure evidence of the impact of the school's Christian distinctiveness on the development of the whole child.
- Develop a broader range of collective worship leaders from other Christian denominations to enable pupils to experience and develop an understanding of different worship practices.

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

Inspiring displays of pupils' high-quality learning experiences and inclusive nurturing provision exemplifies the Christian ethos that underpins the daily life of the school. Fulfilling Jesus' vision in John 10:10, "I have come so they may have life and have it to the full", is central to the school's vision of providing pupils with lifelong learning experiences. "The school is stronger in our Christian faith ... it is deeper than words... everyone is living it, children, staff and parents," explained a member of staff.

Pupils deep understanding and application of the school's chosen gospel values of thankfulness, compassion, perseverance, kindness, forgiveness and trust, applied alongside British values is outstanding. They impact on pupils' exemplary behaviour, attendance, safe-keeping, personal development and academic achievement. The curriculum is broad, balanced, rich and stimulating, engaging pupils in a range of activities that promote high levels of academic, personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development. An inspiring portfolio of photographs on the website, parent newsletters, interactive classroom reflection areas and vibrant corridor displays reflect and celebrate the breadth of SMSC learning that all pupils experience. Pupils' attainment is at or above levels expected for their age, with all pupils, including the most vulnerable, achieving success in their learning. The established Forest School curriculum, successfully led by a volunteer parent governor, fully engages pupils in a range of social, scientific and technical skills, purposefully building their independence and self-esteem.

Explicit Christian values, "are at the heart of everything we do at the school", is the spirited response of the whole school community. Pupils consistently show great concern and care for the world community, reflecting the clear relationship between belief and personal and social behaviour. Pupils receive a range of rewards for their achievements and behaviour, including recognition of 'Random Act of Kindness' in family attended celebration worship. Through pupil voice and charitable giving they demonstrate exceptional personal responsibility, independence and an outstanding willingness to support others. For example, a Key Stage 1 and 2 faith council, a school council, playground leaders and learning ambassadors contribute to the strong Christian ethos of the school. In response to the Church of England's Lent Plastic challenge the school's Eco-councillors, through competitions and projects, are raising awareness of environmental concerns, preparing all pupils to become responsible citizens. The school's link with Kabubbu in Uganda extends pupil's understanding of Christianity as a global faith and their fundraising for the feeding programme recognises "it is important to support those in need of food and money, those who have less than us".

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

Daily acts of worship are inclusive, inspirational and engaging, offering all pupils, staff and visitors an outstandingly rich spiritual experience of the school's Christian faith foundation. The recommendations of the previous church school inspection have been embedded in daily collective worship practice. The headteacher has established a structure for consistent recording and evaluation of worship involving all stakeholders. All staff attend acts of worship, strengthening and supporting the school's Christian ethos and Christian festivals and celebration assemblies are well attended by families, friends and the community. Year 6 pupils respectfully participate in the annual village Remembrance Service held at the airman's grave. Parent responses to the importance of CW in the daily life of the school are extremely positive; "the pupils are guided spiritually and they are able to practice their faith at a very young age".

The headteacher, as worship leader, and the Vicar of St James the Less Church, plan themes rooted in their chosen Christian values and beliefs. Observing whole school worship all pupils were fully engaged in responding to the Christian value of kindness when asking for help with their peers and in their prayer relationship with God (Luke 11 v 5). The worship environment, reflective atmosphere and chosen Christian values strongly influence and contribute to pupils' deep knowledge and understanding of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ in relation to their own daily lives. The use of liturgical responses, The Lord's Prayer, Christian symbols, the school creed, drama, music and prayers reflecting Anglican tradition are embedded in worship and classroom routines. The vicar, supported by the RE leader, has significantly guided pupils in developing their understanding of the Trinity and this is reflected in creative art displays.

Pupil voice has significantly impacted on whole school and class daily worship resulting in a rich spiritual experience of the Christian faith. The pupil-initiated faith council plays a central role in organising, leading and participating in daily worship; "we want to bring everyone closer to God and hear what God has to say to us". When worship is held in classrooms, the reflection areas provide a spiritual focus for all pupils to deepen their understanding and application of the school's chosen gospel values, class and personal prayers. Peers and parents comment that "the faith council spread and model the school's Christian values".

Prayer, developed through experiencing international, local, school and class prayers, encourages pupils to listen, reflect, contribute and interact with God in relation to their own lives and experiences. Although pupils' understanding of the importance of prayer through worship, more structured learning experiences are planned. For example, in line with the Church of England's 'Year of Prayer', to create an outdoor prayer space, extending pupils'

personal use of prayer and spiritual experiences. Formal worship monitoring carried out by the senior leaders, foundation governors and pupils recognises their many strengths whilst identifying areas for development, such as inviting other church leaders to enrich pupils' experience of different Christian worship traditions.

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

The headteacher's determination and success in enhancing and consolidating the school's Christian distinctiveness within the whole school community is outstanding. Christian values and the school's faith foundation are modelled by the senior leadership team, staff and governors so the Christian ethos permeates all aspects of school life. When asked to explain the importance of belonging to a Christian school a child confidently shared, "we are close to God everyday... He is always there to help you". The chair and vice chair of governors have a strong presence in the school, leading with integrity, expertise and a breadth of skills. Consistently good to outstanding progress is being achieved with whole school priorities, including high quality provision for collective worship and religious education. Effective monitoring by school leadership drives school development. Senior leaders and foundation governor's on-going procedures to gather and record evidence of the school's Christian distinctiveness provide tangible evidence of impact. The staff and governor's Ethos committee has been recently re-established to consolidate the monitoring and self-evaluation of the school's faith foundation. Whole governing body participation in diocesan leadership professional development would enable all governors to contribute more fully to church school distinctiveness self-evaluation.

The RE subject leader's passion for the 'Understanding Christianity' programme which has been cascaded to staff and governors, is being successfully implemented across the school. The RE subject leader's vision and well-informed expertise has raised the profile, ambition and performance of pupils across the school. Curriculum guidance, structure and inspiring resources are making a significant contribution to pupils' full engagement and enjoyment of RE, whilst developing in them a deeper understanding of the key concepts of the Christian faith and the school's church foundation. Motivating, interactive, enquiry and reflective learning experience enable pupils to engage and make sense of biblical texts, purposefully developing their knowledge of the connections between key Christian beliefs and traditions, global faiths and cultures. The school were proud finalists in the Chichester diocese 'Year of the Bible' 2017 art competition with pupils stunning artwork reflecting their deep understanding of old and new testament biblical teaching, including Jesus ministry (Matthew 4 v14).

The school has established strong and substantive links with the LA, Chichester diocese education team, the Uckfield Town School Alliance and the Wealden schools' partnership which enhance teacher's skills and pupil expectations. Engagement in enriching learning experiences, and extra-curricular sports provision enables pupils to develop their skills and confidence in a wider school society.

Parents and carers affirm the commitment of senior leaders and governors in maintaining the school's Christian distinctiveness; they are confident Christian values "feed into everything their children do... and are integral to everyday family life." The school website, prospectus parish and parental newsletters purposefully endorse the school's strong Christian ethos. These include termly gospel values worship themes, school performances, nursery links, choir events at church and in local care homes. Year 6 pupils actively contribute to the diocesan annual Leavers Service. St James the Less Church outreach activities, together with the Advent and Easter after school clubs led by inspirational clergy are fully supported by parents and pupils. The parent teacher association plays an active role in school activities and fundraising events. Statutory requirements for religious education and collective worship are met.

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