

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Heene Church of England Primary School

Norfolk Street, Worthing, West Sussex, BN11 4BB

Current SIAMS inspection grade

Good

Diocese

Chichester

Previous SIAMS inspection grade

Outstanding

Local authority

West Sussex

Date of inspection

24 April 2018

Date of last inspection

13 November 2012

Type of school and unique reference number

Voluntary Aided 126034

Headteacher

Jo MacGovern

Inspector's name and number

Gillian Bradnam 935

School context

The school is a larger than average-sized primary school, with 404 pupils, serving central Worthing. It was formed as a primary school in 2015, with its first year 6 pupils from 2017. The school is a multi ethnic community, with many pupils of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below the national average and those with English as an additional language close to the national average. The local community suffers significant social deprivation and those eligible for Pupil Premium is above the national average. The current headteacher joined the school in 2015. There has also been a new religious education (RE) leader since the last inspection. The school has strong links with the parish church of St Matthew's, which is currently in an interregnum.

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

- The school's strong Christian values consistently inform decisions in all areas of school life.
- Pupils understand and explain that the school's distinctively Christian values have a significant impact on their daily lives.
- Pupils have diverse opportunities to develop their spirituality through collective worship, RE, times for prayer and reflection during the school day and through the stranding of philosophy and 'big questions' across the curriculum.
- Strong relationships are securely established between the school and the parish church of St Matthew's, and in addition the school has regular involvement in the local community.

Areas to improve

- Increase self-evaluation of collective worship and the Christian distinctiveness of the school, so that all groups in the school community provide more regular feedback that helps inform school developments.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to be more involved in planning and leading collective worship, to strengthen their leadership skills and deepen their understanding of worship.
- Increase pupils' awareness of the Trinity, in particular the Holy Spirit, so that they can articulate this with some degree of understanding.
- Continue to develop assessment in RE so that more detailed attainment and progress data informs planning and teaching and learning is enhanced further.

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

The school's strong Christian distinctiveness is very evident in the bright, engaging and interactive displays and reflection areas throughout the school. Since the previous inspection the school has been through significant restructuring and growth as it developed from a three-form infant school to a two-form primary school. The school has remained a very welcoming, warm and caring Christian community where all pupils feel highly valued; as a result the school is popular and oversubscribed in many year groups. In 2016 a new school vision 'learning together, loving others, guided by God' was introduced, with six core values, love, honesty, respect, fairness, growth and community. The importance that the school places on community and inclusivity was clearly demonstrated through the involvement of pupils, staff, parents and governors.

A strong Christian ethos permeates all aspects of school life, due to the strength of the school's vision and core Christian values. Pupils are happy and secure as a result of this and take responsibility for their own actions and learning. Therefore the majority of behaviour is very good, with pupils readily identifying the link to the school's value of respect and that poor behaviour is 'not being respectful.' Consequently, relationships at all levels are good because of the links with the Christian values. The attendance of the vast majority of pupils is good because children enjoy school and there is very effective follow-up when necessary to ensure the inclusivity of all pupils. Current data suggests that overall academic progress across the school is good. This is underpinned by the strong Christian ethos in which pupils learn, which raises their self-esteem. Pupil achievements, whether academic, sporting, relating to care and kindness, or linked to the school's values are celebrated with half-termly and termly certificates and badges, and parents value joining with the school to mark their children's successes.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) is strong, supported effectively by the strong Christian ethos, a broad curriculum, collective worship and RE. The recent Year 6 dance, performed at the Time to Dance event at Worthing Pavilion Theatre was a very powerful and moving example of the strength of SMSC, where pupils chose to link contemporary dance and a moral speech to the school values. Pupils are given time to reflect at different points in the school day and there are a number of places where they can reflect. The development of a prayer garden is in progress, following the completion of extensive building work. The consistent use of philosophy and deep, reflective questions is embedded in RE, across the curriculum and in collective worship. As a result the pupils' ability to raise 'big questions' about meaning, purpose and faith, is excellent. To develop the pupils' understanding of the global nature of Christianity, the school is in the process of actioning global links. Parents value the diversity of the multi ethnic school community and all in the school community identify that, due to different heritage and faith groups in the school community, pupils have a good understanding of respect for different cultures and beliefs. Pupils' are developing their sense of social responsibility and making a positive difference through involvement in local charities, cultural and community events, as well as national charities.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship is an important part of the daily life of the school and is effective in promoting the school's Christian values as well as supporting pupils' spiritual and moral development. Collective worship has helped pupils to link Christian values to Christ's teaching, although they are not always able to articulate this clearly. They are aware of the significance of the life of Jesus Christ through the Bible stories that they hear during worship and are able to talk about what it means to them, whether they have a faith or no faith. Pupils are helped consistently to apply what they are learning to their everyday lives, for example, when thinking about 'who are our neighbours' the theme was linked to the core value of community when pupils listened to the Bible story of the good Samaritan. Pupils 'know what they need to do' and 'how to apply what they have learnt,' as a result of the teaching in collective worship.

Collective worship is generally led by senior leaders or the youth worker from St Matthew's church. Pupils enjoy collective worship; they sing with enthusiasm and contribute by, for example, answering 'big questions' and through reading and writing prayers. However, they are keen to have more opportunities to plan and lead worship. The staff worship committee regularly contributes to the monitoring of collective worship and evaluating the impact it has on pupils to inform improvement. For example, as a result of feedback from pupils, 'big questions' sessions have been introduced where pupils raise questions they would like answered linked to the current theme and aspects of faith and spirituality. Monitoring of collective worship by governors supports that it links with and reinforces the school's vision and Christian values.

A positive contribution to pupils' spiritual development is made through their awareness and experience of Anglican practices and traditions, through collective worship at school and services at the parish church. The pupils also gain some understanding of the breadth Christian traditions through contributions to collective

worship by other Christian groups. Therefore, due to the range of their experiences in collective worship, pupils develop a good understanding of key Christian beliefs. Parents and carers welcome the opportunity to join with the school for half termly services. Key Christian festivals are celebrated and pupils have a mixed awareness of these. The Trinity is regularly referenced in collective worship and church services although the pupils' awareness and ability to talk about this, in particular in relation to the Holy Spirit, is not secure currently. Prayer is an important part of the daily life of the school through set prayers and pupils writing and reading prayers in collective worship and at lunchtime. Pupils value prayer as 'a time you can talk to God,' and identify that reflection and discussion gives them more time to apply the school's values to their everyday lives.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

Pupils have rich opportunities to focus on Christianity and other major world religions through the wide range of activities in RE lessons, with the school's Christian values strangled strongly throughout. Pupils analyse and reflect with confidence as they consider the beliefs of different faiths and the views of individuals. Discussions are underpinned by the school values of respect, fairness and community, with everyone's opinions and/or beliefs being valued and respected. The Bible is seen as a helpful guide to aid their learning, by pupils with faith and no faith alike. Pupil progress in all year groups is supported through incisive questioning and feedback from the staff. This reinforces key learning and encourages pupils to think more deeply and to share their ideas and thoughts with greater clarity. RE assessment is in place although recording and reporting detailed data relating to the attainment and progress of all pupil groups is to be developed. The quality of teaching and learning is good, reflected in the pupils' engagement in lessons and their progress; senior leaders monitor this through lesson observations. Good standards are maintained by moderating pupils' work in RE, with school judgements validated by staff from other schools. Networking with other schools is also providing opportunities to mutually share best practice to help inform further improvements.

Training and support for staff has remained a strong priority since the new RE leader came into post in September 2017 and she has dedicated leadership time to facilitate this effectively. As a result, staff feel confident in relation to knowledge and skills in RE. The resource Understanding Christianity is being used in all year groups now. Pupils and staff speak positively about it but it is too soon to demonstrate the extent of its impact.

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

A comprehensive and holistic strategic plan, with high aspirations for all pupils, securely underpinned by the school's Christian vision and values, was established and delivered by senior leaders and governors, as the school has developed into an all through primary school. All decisions relating to school improvement are shaped by the school's Christian character, and this ensures that pupils' SMSC development as well as their academic achievement remains a high priority in on-going developments.

Pupil outcomes in 2017 were an improvement on 2016 and current progress data shows an improving trend across all year groups. Parents value the focus on individual needs, which is a practical example of how strong Christian values inform relationships. This approach ensures that the gap between outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and their peers is narrowing steadily. Support for families and individual pupils, based on the Christian values and ethos of the school is very strong, with each child known well by the staff. This provides a platform for achievement, where pupils can achieve their God given potential, as whole people and self-reflective individuals, as well as academically. Pupil leadership has been extended this academic year, by the introduction of a head boy and head girl, with the first Year 6 year group. Candidates chose to reference the school vision and values in their applications reinforcing further the importance that pupils place on these to their everyday lives and to the school as a whole. Links with the diocese are strong, including training and support for staff and governors to aid school improvement and develop future leadership. There is a clear sense of community between the school and St Matthew's church due to established and strong relationships and a mutually beneficial partnership. The youth worker in particular is very involved with the school, through collective working, including leading 'big questions' sessions, teaching in RE and running an afterschool club from pupils. The school meets the statutory requirements for RE and collective worship.