

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Stoke by Nayland Church of England Primary School

5 School St, Stoke-by-Nayland, Suffolk. CO6 4QY

Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese	St Edmundsbury and Ipswich
Previous SIAS inspection grade	Good
Local authority	Suffolk
Name of multi-academy trust	Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich Multi-Academy Trust
Date of inspection	29 June 2017
Date of last inspection	21 June 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	144553
Headteacher	Jane Le Grice
Inspector's name and number	Graham Lancaster 713

School context

This is a smaller than average sized primary school with mixed age classes for the 79 pupils on roll. Many of the pupils come from out of the immediate catchment area and pupil mobility is high. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is similar to the national average. The percentage with additional needs (SEND) is higher than in most schools. The majority of pupils are from White British heritage. Over the past 2 years there has been high staff mobility. The parish vicar is relatively new in post. The school recently converted to academy status within the diocesan Multi Academy Trust.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Stoke by Nayland as a Church of England school are good

- A distinctively Christian ethos is firmly established. It is valued by parents, its biblical foundation is recognised by pupils and it underpins relationships throughout the school community.
- Christian values of compassion and service ensure that the school is inclusive, welcoming pupils of all abilities and striving to provide them with the best possible learning opportunities.
- The parish church and school work in a close partnership which benefits the pupils, their families and the local community.

Areas to improve

- Express the vision and Christian values of the school with greater clarity so that pupils, parents and the community have a more immediate understanding of the distinctiveness of the school.

- Improve collective worship by:
 - introducing systems to capture the impact of worship on pupils and by utilising evaluations made by pupils, parents, staff and governors.
 - ensuring that selected themes are planned and led so as to apply directly to pupils' actions, attitudes and behaviour.

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

The distinctive Christian character of the school is evident throughout the school building and on the website. Parents cite the Christian ethos as a prime reason for their choosing the school, some travelling a considerable distance to join the school. They recognise the Christian values as exemplified by staff and lived out in the strong relationships within the school community. Parents also appreciate the pastoral support provided by local clergy in times of particular need. Collective worship and effective teaching in religious education (RE) actively contribute to pupils' understanding of Christian values and the ways in which they can put them into action in their own lives. Pupils readily make links between the values and their biblical origin. One cited Noah building the ark as an example of trust in God. However, the large number of values and other attributes the school seeks to nurture in pupils leads to a lack of clarity and focus in its vision and aims.

Pupils behave well and successful strategies have been implemented to foster very positive interaction between pupils of all ages. Where a minority of pupils struggle to meet expectations, positive behaviour management strategies which draw on the Christian ethos are successfully employed. This is also the case in respect of attendance which is in line with the national average.

Pupils have a developing understanding of spirituality. Every classroom has a designated prayer space and there are also additional places or quiet reflection in shared areas. Pupils can articulate the circumstances in which they might make use of these. One pupil wrote, 'Prayer helps your day become better. It lifts stress off your chest'. However, the range of stimuli and resources available to support pupils' engagement in prayer and reflection is limited. Pupil representatives on the school council actively contribute to determining the choice of local, national and international charities the school supports. Charitable giving is clearly recognised as important in expressing the school's Christian ethos. The school has had historic links with a school in Tanzania and is forging links with a Christian community in Nepal. These serve to enrich pupils' understanding of Christianity as a world faith. There is also a well-established partnership with a school in North London which serves a multi-cultural community. Together these ensure that provision for pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good.

Despite a considerable turn-over in teaching staff in the past eighteen months, rigorous efforts to establish high expectations and secure high-quality teaching and learning have resulted in an improvement in standards overall. Pupil outcomes in Key Stage 2 were low in 2016. Accurate tracking of pupil progress to inform differentiated planning and triggering effective interventions where required have resulted in good pupil progress. This is evident in workbooks. School leaders actively demonstrate Christian values in action as they strive for the highest quality provision for vulnerable pupils and those with additional needs. One parent attributes the current success of her daughter at secondary school to the extra care and encouragement her daughter received when she encountered particular challenges during her primary school years.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is satisfactory

The importance of collective worship is recognised by the whole school community. There is a focus on one of the core Christian values each half term within a two year cycle. Pupils can give examples of how the values strengthen relationships across the school and encourage them to develop compassion, understanding and forgiveness towards others. Although themes are displayed within prayer and reflection spaces in classrooms, opportunities are not created for pupils to deepen their understanding through challenging questions and ideas. As a result the impact on pupils understanding of spirituality is limited. The large number of values and personal qualities displayed in the hall impedes pupils making a direct connection with the current focus of

worship.

Pupils enjoy worship. They sing enthusiastically, joining in spontaneously with songs that are played as they enter and leave the hall. One parent described her pleasure in hearing her daughter sing some of the worship songs to herself at home, attempting then to teach them to her. Anglican traditions such as sharing the peace and the calendar of the church year are well established. There is an emphasis on teaching from the Bible and on the person of Jesus. A pupil worship team participate in the leadership of worship including prayers. However, their role does not currently include contributing to the evaluation or planning of worship. All staff and local clergy lead worship. Pupils readily recall the monthly "Open the Book" sessions, in which a group of local Christians act out Bible stories, each time drawing in some pupils as part of the cast. Special Christian festivals are celebrated in the parish church. Pupils are involved in reading scripture, saying prayers and drama. These are well attended by parents.

Governors have begun to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of worship, but as yet there is no systematic process for capturing and responding to the evaluation of worship by all members of the school community. Church leaders were particularly helpful planning and following up the recent Pentecost week, resulting in pupils gaining a deeper understanding of the role of the Holy Spirit who, as one pupil described it, 'makes things happen'. This added significantly to their theological grasp of the Trinity.

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

Senior leaders have retained a clear focus on the Christian character of the school despite challenging circumstances. New parents to the school are made aware of the Christian ethos and newly appointed staff are supported to ensure that they actively promote the Christian values. Areas of weaker teaching have been addressed robustly with the result that standards have improved and pupil progress is more consistent throughout the school.

A more settled teaching team, albeit comprised mostly of part-time staff, has created greater opportunities for increased delegation, drawing on the strengths across the staff team. For this to be effective leaders have created excellent lines of communication and have demonstrated particular skill in motivating and empowering all members of staff. RE and collective worship are well led by the headteacher and senior teacher who ensure that both are given due prominence. The areas for development which were identified in the previous inspection have been successfully addressed. The school's self-evaluation is detailed and accurate, recognising emerging strengths, and correctly identifying priorities for improvement.

Conversion to academy status within the diocesan multi-academy trust has resulted in an increase in support and advice for school leaders. The school has embraced this change and is already forming mutually beneficial links with other schools within the trust, enabling staff to learn from best practice. Measured, complementary support from outside agencies, linked to agreed priorities for improvement, ensures that the school is making good progress towards regaining its previous good grade from OFSTED.

The reconstituted governing body includes a wide range of experience and expertise as well as incorporating new governors, including the parish vicar. The governing body is strengthening its strategic role in developing the school's Christian character. Governor visit notes provide clear evidence of critical evaluation as well as support. Newer governors are engaged in training to develop the generic skills of monitoring and evaluation which they are keen to use to actively contribute to the leadership of the school.

Members of the local Church, the wider community and parents are actively involved in school life. This includes a very well attended after-school Christian club, the leadership of which includes ex-pupils of the school.

SIAMS report (June 2017) Stoke by Nayland CE (VC) Primary School, CO6 4QY