

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Stutton Church of England VC Primary School

Holbrook Road, Ipswich, Suffolk IP9 2RY	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese	St Edmundsbury & Ipswich
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Local authority	Suffolk
Date of inspection	6 June 2017
Date of last inspection	28 September 2011
Type of school and unique reference number	124743
Headteacher	Anne Clarke
Inspector's name and number	Jean Johnson 608

School context

Stutton CEVC School is a significantly smaller than average primary school with nineteen pupils on roll. The school has experienced a number of leadership and staff changes during the past year. The current interim headteacher, who had been a previous head of the school, has been in post since March 2017. The school was judged by Ofsted to require improvement in December 2015. The school is situated at some distance from the local parish church.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Stutton CEVC Primary as a Church of England school are good

- The strong emphasis on Christian values, which are understood and embraced by all stakeholders, underpins the good behaviour, attitudes and relationships within the school.
- Collective worship effectively exemplifies and reinforces key aspects of the school's Christian ethos and values.
- Interactive displays with pupils' responses throughout the school reinforce the school's Christian ethos and values.
- Consistent support from the local church community, incumbent and chaplain provides continuity through a time of change.
- Successive leaders have enhanced and developed the school's Christian distinctiveness.

Areas to improve

- Staff and governors to have appropriate training and support to enable them to continue to develop and embed the school's Christian distinctiveness.
- Pupils to take regular responsibility for the planning of collective worship to increase their ownership and involvement.

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

The impact of the school's strong, explicit focus on Christian values, for example respect and compassion, is clearly illustrated in the good behaviour and attitudes evident in the school. Pupils talk about how they look after each other and all play well together. They explain how they think about the result of their actions from the other person's view point by asking themselves "How would I feel if.....?" They reflect on Jesus' teaching to treat others as they would want to be treated by responding to statements such as "If we didn't know anybody, we'd like

someone to” Parents give examples of how children care for others and enjoy celebrating each other’s successes. They say that the focus on Christian values has made children think about how they treat each other and reminds them of what Jesus would want them to do. Displays throughout the school remind pupils of the school’s core values. Pupils contribute their own thoughts to these displays, showing their practical understanding of what each value means to them and ‘Wow Walls’ celebrate examples of behaviours linked to the values. The inclusive, family ethos of the school together with a renewed focus on quality first teaching, accurate assessment and individualised learning, ensures that pupils are valued and nurtured as individuals. Issues related to attendance are dealt with sensitively and effectively leading to continued improvements in attendance figures. As a result, pupils are generally making at least expected progress with attainment for most pupils on track to be at or above expected levels by the end of the year.

Pupils raise funds for charities, for example Comic Relief and their activities are recorded and celebrated in the village magazine. They say that it is important to help other people to have a happy life. Younger pupils learn to respect God’s creation through their weekly ‘Forest Thursday’ activities. Other enrichment activities, including sports tournaments with other schools, enable pupils to develop their individual interests and talents as well as contributing to their social development. Christian values are explored in different contexts in religious education, developing pupils’ understanding and supporting the Christian character of the school. Pupils also learn about other faiths and cultures when, for example, they compare creation stories from different religions. Parents say that their children come home and talk about what they have learnt. A series of enrichment days and visits has been started to give pupils first hand experiences of difference and diversity.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship plays an important part in the school day, exemplifying and reinforcing key aspects of the school’s Christian ethos and values. All teachers plan, lead and attend collective worship using the Values For Life materials as the basis of their planning as well as celebrating major festivals in the Christian year. They gather pupils’ views and discuss the impact of worship. As a result, key messages are consistently reinforced throughout the school day and have a positive impact on behaviour and attitudes. The local incumbent regularly leads worship and also joins with members of the church community to present Open the Book. Pupils say that he tells them stories from the Bible which help them to learn about God and Jesus and how they would want them to behave in the context of the school’s Christian values. They enjoy taking part in Open the Book and are developing their Biblical literacy as a result. On the day of the inspection, early years and Key Stage 1 pupils confidently acted out the story of Noah’s Ark and Key Stage 2 pupils were able to explain how the schools’ Christian values were illustrated in the story. Pupils’ individual achievements, both academic and in relation to the school’s values, are celebrated in a weekly Celebration Collective Worship. Parents attend this worship and appreciate the inclusive feel that it has and the positive reinforcement that it gives their children. Services to mark festivals in the church’s year, for example Easter, take place in the parish church. This enables pupils to gain an understanding of local Anglican traditions and practice. Parents attend these services and see them as reinforcing the status of the school as a church school in the community.

The pupil worship team takes responsibility for some aspects of worship including the welcome, leading prayers and the giving out of ‘reflection stones’. Pupils say that holding these stones helps them to focus their thoughts during worship. Pupils have a sound understanding of the purpose of prayer and reflection and talk about praying to God for help when they or others need it, as well as thanking God for the good things that happen. They write their own prayers for use in the school day. They are making increasing use of the recently established ‘Tranquillity Pod’ for personal reflection, something that was created as a result of findings in a pupil perception survey. They say that this gives them a place to sit and think quietly about what is going on in their lives, and talk to God when they need to. Pupils have a developing understanding of God as Father and Son, but are unsure about the Holy Spirit.

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

The well-established partnership between the school and local church community has ensured that foundation governors, including the incumbent, have provided continuity, and played an important role in supporting the Christian character of the school during a period of instability and changing leadership. Leaders, including governors, have a clear vision for the school as a church school in which pupils receive a high-quality education and develop a lifelong love of learning within an environment underpinned by explicit Christian values. Governors have supported the school’s focus on Christian values by carrying out focused monitoring of impact. They have provided evidence of pupils’ understanding of the values and how this has contributed to pupils’ good behaviour and attitudes to learning. Parents appreciate the school’s family ethos and also talk about how their children’s behaviour has been influenced by the emphasis on Christian values in action, for example respect. Accurate self-evaluation, which has included collecting pupils’ views of, for example collective worship and RE, has identified appropriate areas for improvement

and, as a result, successive leaders have worked with new staff to develop and embed the school's Christian ethos. A chaplain from Christian Youth Ministries has supported the school throughout the year, giving pastoral support to both adults and children.

The school is used as a venue for monthly 'Worship For All' informal Sunday worship which families from the school and elsewhere attend. The church is used as a resource for the teaching of RE and pupils talk about how the stained glass window illustrated parts of the Easter story.

Staff have visited other church schools as part of their professional development to explore good practice in relation to issues for development related to Christian distinctiveness. As a result, they are, for example, introducing a more enquiry based approach to the teaching of RE which is enabling pupils to discuss and reflect on their learning. Plans are in place to provide further support for the RE and collective worship leader through school to school support to ensure that good practice is firmly embedded.

Governors have worked with representatives of the diocese to help to plan for the future of the school. They are supported by the community and local church in their drive to maintain and revitalise the school as a church school serving its local community. They have not attended recent training to support them in their role of developing the school's Christian distinctiveness.

SIAMS report June 2107 Stutton CEVC Primary, IP9 2RY