



Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Self-Evaluation January 2016

Name of school: St George's Church of England Primary School

SCHOOL CONTEXT

- St. George's is a Voluntary Aided school and since September 2015 has been federated with William Hildyard Church of England Primary and Nursery School in Market Deeping, now known as 'Aspire'.
- We are a highly successful Christian school.
- There is a warm, inviting environment where every individual is valued and expected to achieve their very best.
- Staff model excellent relationships and teamwork.
- There is a vibrant learning atmosphere where adults and children are open and willing to take risks and try new ideas to make learning as enjoyable and exciting as it can be.
- The school is the heart of its community, the site houses school and a private Nursery.
- The children we serve are at the centre of everything we do at St. George's. We use assessment of pupil attainment and interests to help plan for the most appropriate and relevant curriculum activities.
- As a team, we work collaboratively and share expertise, so that the pupils benefit from a broad range of strategies, teaching styles and imaginative ideas.
- The children benefit from a high level of staffing, which is effectively deployed to optimise pupil learning and inclusion and equality of opportunity.
- We have very strong links with St. George's Church and are building a positive relationship with Christchurch which is within our community. The strong Christian character of the school extends into all aspects of school life. It is visible in the curriculum and its delivery, as well as in our whole school daily acts of collective worship, but moreover within the values which underpin our ethos and daily atmosphere within the school.
- There are currently 185 children on roll. There are 24 children taking F.S.M (13% of the children in school) however we have 41 disadvantaged pupils (22% of the children in school). All groups are closely tracked for progress and provision is adapted as required.
- 20 children are on the SEN register - SEND is below or in line with national figures. All SEND children are closely tracked for progress and provision is adapted as required. A provision map details the provision and impact for these children.
- 12 children have English as an Additional Language.
- In 2015 pupils in our Foundation Stage achieved significantly more than the LA or National. Pupils in Key Stage 1 achieved exceptionally well in all areas. There was a drop in results at the end of Key Stage 2, however this was a cohort of high special needs and a significant number of children who joined the school in Years 5 & 6 from schools who were requiring improvement.
- The school has a very happy, caring and supportive atmosphere and children enjoy coming to school. (94% from pupil questionnaire). Both parents and the local community are supportive of "their" school and contribute greatly to the positive ethos and the school's success. Nearly all parents agree that school is a happy and welcoming place to be. (98%) Most pupils benefit from this strong home-school partnership which supports a positive attitude to learning by developing a greater understanding of the child within the home environment and the learning taking place in school.
- The Governors take an active part in school life. They visit both formally and informally, reporting back to Governing Body. Formal visits are scheduled in line with the monitoring of the SDP. (Governor Monitoring Calendar) All Governors are committed to improving standards and quality of education in school. Children's progress, in relation to their targets, is analysed by Governors. The annual School Improvement Plan tackles key priorities, includes appropriate targets, actions and lines of accountability. It is monitored closely by Governors.
- Attendance – A very small minority of children taking unauthorised holidays of 10 days or less. Currently our attendance figure is 96.7%.
- The behaviour of the children in school is good. There are no significant behaviour incidents to report during the last three years as behaviour is managed using an effective system.

THE VISION AND VALUES OF THE SCHOOL

Believe and Achieve

At St George's Church of England Primary School Christian values are at the core of everything we do. We use these values to be the very best we can be and achieve our potential in an environment where we feel valued, cared for and secure; an environment that believes in us and we believe in it.

We have high aspirations for our children and we encourage them to aim high whilst fostering respect and care for all. We teach, support and encourage all of our children to achieve their dreams and successes by celebrating individuality together, offering engaging and varied learning opportunities but above all, enjoying all that we do together where we value everyone in our school and wider communities. By providing an environment in which members of our community are happy, safe, comfortable, motivated and valued; learning will flourish and we will achieve what we all believe we can do!

SUMMARY of the distinctiveness and effectiveness of our school as a church school.

Our school is an outstanding church school with a positive and caring Christian character therefore children feel secure and enjoy their schooling. Staff and governors have a clear vision to raise the profile of the school as distinctively Church of England. Our strategies, with the focus on every child's learning, help each pupil to succeed. All staff are fully engaged with the Christian nature of the school. Recent initiatives have clarified, articulated and further strengthened the schools Christian vision. Systems of care and guidance for children, parents and staff are well established and demonstrate the Christian principles by which the school works. It is a welcoming organisation and valuable contributions are made by all members of our school community who work closely together. The warmth of the school is exceptional. A recent visitor said "It was a real pleasure to be in your school. The support from parents on our concert day is amazing – there is such a great atmosphere of support and community!"

Ambitious leaders and governors have achieved significant change in a short period of time, creating a distinctive context through values-led worship, a nurturing, reflective environment and a broad curriculum.

CORE QUESTION I

How well does the school, through its distinctive Christian character, meet the needs of all learners?

SCHOOL SELF EVALUATION: Outstanding

School evidence based on pupil outcomes:

Our strong Christian ethos permeates all aspects of school life and encourages responsible behaviour and respect for others, in the context of Christian belief and practice. Our Christian values are at the core of everything we do. We use these values to be the very best we can be and achieve our potential in an environment where we feel valued, cared for and secure; an environment that believes in us and we believe in it. Our ethos is regarded as a significant aid to raising performance in learning and promotes high levels of attainment through self-belief, respect and trust.

We focus each term on a different Christian value (Friendship, Generosity, Thankfulness, Forgiveness, Respect and Courage). Each value is introduced at the beginning of each term and each class explores the value. Home school values are shared with parents during each term. Information is also shared with parents via the school's website where the Collective Worship Council has their own page. We have a Celebration Worship at the end of each term and children from different classes share their work. Collective Worship Council has their own reflection display board which children from across the school are invited to add their ideas and feelings. Each class has their own reflection walls and our values are prominently displayed in communal areas. We have a cross displayed in our library which has been made from CDs on which all children in school have recorded the importance of their Church school to themselves.

We are having banners made to celebrate our values and these will be displayed within the front entrance of the school. Biblical readings and quotes are central to our daily worship and each class says prayers before lunch and at home time.

We have close links with St. George's Church and the rector or a member of their team visits weekly to lead Collective Worship. St. George's church invites children from school to attend a variety of activities and events. Year Four attend the Stamford Churches together festival and Year 6 take part in the annual church schools festival at Lincoln cathedral. Year 5 and 6 lead the Easter service after studying and exploring the Easter story with the rector. We hold our Harvest festival, Christmas service and Easter service at St. George's Church and our carol concert at Christ Church. Parents are warmly invited to attend these events and are highly attended.

We have become a forest school and every child will take part in these sessions during the Spring and Summer Terms. For the school's 200th Birthday celebration the children planted 420 trees. A living hedge has been placed around the forest school area and a custom made hut has been installed for the children to use during their Forest School sessions.

Achievement of all learners is good or better due to our ethos and also as a result of tailored support to individuals and groups of learners. Early identification of children needing in addition to first quality teaching results in good progress for SEN D, GT and Disadvantaged children. Bishop Christopher's visitor leads worship every half term and shares his letter with the children.

Our Christian Ethos impacts on policy making which ensures that everyone involved with the school is aware of its distinctive aims, works together for each other's common good and is secure in the knowledge that shared values transcend into all areas of the curriculum.

Teaching is good or better in RE and pupils' attitudes are outstanding. RE is given high importance in the curriculum and allows learners to apply our school values and develop this through in-depth reflective thinking time.

Our thematic curriculum based on the needs of our learners innovates learning in a unique way for the pupils. It enables all learners to achieve well in all subjects according to their starting points and capabilities but also it allows pupils to have a distinctive voice in the planning of the curriculum.

The school has a clear policy of how to deal with incidents of bullying or racist behavior which is well known to everyone involved with the school. There have been no incidents of the above within the last four years. Pupils respect each other's thoughts and feelings and have well developed strategies for dealing with conflict/resolution – results in very few disputes between children and a shared understanding of the feelings of others. Each class takes part in 'Our Time' activities weekly and teachers have attended 'Godly Play' training and appropriate resources are now on order.

Learners' SMSC is a strong feature of the school and permeates through all aspects of school life. Christian aims and values are taught explicitly and implicitly in all that we do at school and our curriculum is underpinned by these principles. This means that everyone, including visitors, are secure in the knowledge that these common values are upheld and are fundamental to the day to day running of the school. Our curriculum actively promotes positive attitudes to cultural diversity; this is an area which we continue to develop to ensure a breadth of experience across school. Pupils have a profound sense of right and wrong; this minimizes the occasions in which teachers have to intervene in order to solve minor disputes.

We currently have no children in school from other faith backgrounds but through our curriculum and CW, pupils develop a rounded understanding of other religions and respect the beliefs that these hold.

We are a voluntary aided school and the majority of our governors are Foundation governors.

Key Strengths

- Behavior of learners is a strength of the school as it is good or better in all aspects of daily life and beyond into the wider community. The Christian values are linked to our positive school rules which allow all members of the community to live these values in their everyday relationships within school and the wider community. 'We are like a stick of rock; our values run right through the middle of us and everything we do!'
- Recent visit from SIAMs Inspector (Spring 2012) stated 'Christian principles are now more securely underpinning and guiding the strategic and day to day life of the establishment. There is a very clear Christian ethos developing in which all are valued and respected. Staff find this affirming. This has been brought about through strong personal conviction, an enabling atmosphere and a determined drive for excellence.'
- Recent surveys show that children and parents highly value the school as a nurturing and caring extended family. This strong inclusive ethos enables all children to develop as individuals and make excellent progress.

CORE QUESTION 2

What is the impact of collective worship on the school community?

SCHOOL SELF EVALUATION: Outstanding

School evidence based on pupil outcomes:

Worship is highly regarded throughout the school and is valued as an important part of daily life for every child. Worship is well-planned for and a wide range of resources help to ensure that they become very spiritual occasions and that Collective Worship filters out into classroom life. Pupils have plenty of opportunities to contribute their thoughts and lead prayers – we have a prayer book which is added to regularly. Pupils are now given the opportunity to contribute, through reflection areas in classrooms. Pupils can use the reflections areas if they wish to share their thoughts or prayers with God or with other pupils. The impact of worship is evaluated by the Pupils, Parents, Collective Worship Council, church team and by the Governors.

Learners have outstanding attitudes towards Collective Worship. They listen extremely well and contribute their thoughts at all ages willingly and thoughtfully. Our Christian values are an important part of collective worship.

Singing is becoming a strong feature of the school and pupils enjoy worship through this medium each week.

The school has excellent community links and invites people to share in acts of worship and Christian celebrations. Pupils contribute to festivals and celebrations at Church or in school and appreciate participating in acts of worship such as Harvest festival, Carol Singing, Easter Service and St George's Day. Each class leads worship termly which parents are invited to attend. Collective Worship Council plan, and led worship regularly and introduce worship weekly.

All staff at the school participate in worship and all teachers have opportunities to lead and plan for worship which they do so willingly on a weekly basis. Staff attendance conveys to pupils the importance that we give to CW as a school community. The RE and collective worship manager along with St. George's rector produces a collective worship rota which fits in with the church calendar and the term's Christian value. We have our own special 'altar' in Collective Worship. Our special box is opened to introduce the Trinity represented by a Bible, cross and candle. The children have special words which they join in saying as the items are removed from the box. We light the candle to remind us that Jesus is the 'Light of the world'. We say the Lord's Prayer or our own prayers from our prayer book with prayers contributed from each class. Each class has their own reflection area. Prayers are said throughout the school day and the children join in with others at church festivals, and when members of the church lead worship. Parents attend class led worships, Harvest Festival, Christmas, carol, Easter and leaving services. Visitors and governors attended our 200 year anniversary celebration worship. Children sing, say prayers and poems, sketches or show their work. Bible stories are at the heart of our collective worship. Feedback from children, parents, and staff is asked for regularly to find out how the worship has influenced and made them feel in order to make improvements. Collective worship takes place in classrooms, hall, playground, Forest schools and church.

At Harvest time we donate food to Stamford food Bank and our School Council organises our charitable work with school e.g. Children in Need cake sale.

The personal value of worship from all learners is openly discussed and forms an important part of the RE curriculum where learners discuss how worship is carried out and the importance given to it within different world religions as well as Christianity. Pupils are encouraged to think carefully about issues through their worship, and to understand that life and choices we make can at times be complex. Pupils have 'mature attitudes' on leaving school and we believe this has been achieved by encouraging children to challenge and question their thought and opinions.

Key Strengths

- Collective Worship is seen as important part of school life and all pupils are completely respectful of it. Children can talk about worship and give examples of those which have particular enjoyment or spiritually moved them.
- Staff seek to make Collective Worship interesting and varied as well as support children in spiritual enlightenment. Children are encouraged to be thankful through the act of grace before lunch each day.
- Prayer is an important feature of the school. Pupils play an important part in deciding what prayers should be said as they write prayers to be shared in Collective Worship as well as in classrooms to then bring to CW.
- We now have greater opportunities for worshipping at St. George's Church and Christchurch. Parents are now invited into school for Class Worships.
- All Governors including Foundation Governors play an active role in supporting the Christian status of the school. They ensure all policies reflect our highly regarded school ethos.

CORE QUESTION 3

How effective is Religious Education?

SCHOOL SELF EVALUATION: Good

School evidence based on pupil outcomes:

Pupils progress well from their starting points in RE and all groups of learners make significant strides in their spiritual and moral understanding.

Most pupils exceed age related expectations when assessed using the levels in the Lincolnshire Agreed Syllabus– this is similar to achievement in other subject areas. Assessments are used to inform planning, teaching and learning. Teachers level their children’s work using ‘I can ...’ statements.

Teaching is good or better throughout school in RE. RE is taught as a discrete subject and is given a high profile within school and home. Our home school values are shared with parents . Lessons are well planned and resourced to engage pupils and make learning purposeful and relevant. The children’s’ books show progression in their learning. Teachers develop talk through good questioning and ‘I wonder...’ statements.

The curriculum meets the requirements of the Lincolnshire Agreed Syllabus for RE. Where possible RE is taught thematically across school. Hands on practical resources are used in the classrooms to develop and enrich the children’s teaching and learning, understanding and enjoyment.

ICT is used throughout the school. Material on the web, including text, video, graphics, sound and animation is used where appropriate to enhance teaching and learning and develop pupils’ critical evaluation skills.

The thematic approach is used where possible to combine subjects and imaginative playful RE is taught across the school. Pupils take part in meaningful activities combining their thinking skills with their understanding of the Christian community.

Teachers make use of the pupils themselves as an RE resource and engage children in their learning. Pupils are encouraged to share and engage in dialogue with others about their own experiences of life. Familiar stories are made fresh and children are encouraged to ask their own questions which they can then investigate. Children are given the opportunities to reflect on worship in their own time.

Year 5 and 6 pupils explore the Easter Story with our local rector using drama and role-play to retell the story and explore its meaning.

RE visits and visitors are organised across the school. Children in Key Stage 2 are visiting a Mosque and a Temple to support their understanding of other major world faiths. Our children visit Christ Church and St. George’s church in Stamford and Lincoln Cathedral.

RE is managed by the subject manager, school leaders and governors. RE is monitored across the school by learning walks, book and planning scrutinies and lesson observations.

Key Strengths

- Pupils’ attitudes to learning are outstanding in their RE lessons.
- Pupils contribute confidently in lessons and know that their beliefs, thoughts and opinions are valued.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and have good support systems for when further knowledge is needed. Pupil engagement is high and contributes to the raising of standards within school as teachers are passionate about their teaching and this is clear to the children.
- Pupils have a well-developed understanding of the world in which they live based on respect for each other and a mutual understanding for mankind.
- An action plan which links closely with whole school priorities is in place and is monitored effectively by key personnel.

CORE QUESTION 4

How effective are the leadership and management of the school as a church school?

SCHOOL SELF EVALUATION: Outstanding

School evidence based on pupil outcomes:

The school’s vision has changed to embrace our foundations – we believe and we can achieve to be the best that we can be. Our vision is two-fold – self-belief and Christian belief. This has enabled children to talk openly and honestly while forming their own faith in an exploratory and thoughtful way.

Our Christian values underpin everything we do. Our school is a Christian school where spirituality is integral to the whole school and this can be seen in the comments children make in their class RE good work books.

Community links are a strong feature of the school and the schools’ contributions are regularly evaluated by stakeholders. Governors care deeply about the ethos of the school and support the head in ensuring that Christian values underpin all aspects of school life. Governors offer outstanding support to the school and value/promote our church school status. They are fully aware of their responsibilities and offer excellent challenge to the headteacher.

Pupils in school benefit from regular CW from our rector and Bishop’s Visitor. The rector plays a significant part in all church services and supports us in events such as the Easter Service. Children are invited to events at held at St. George’s church and Christ church including the Light Festival and Teenzone – a youth service. St. George’s church runs Generate – a church club held weekly in school. The church donate Bibles for Reception children when they start school and also when they leave in year six. When appointed, we ensure that staff are committed to promoting the ethos of the school in all aspects of everyday life. We have been very successful at appointing people who enhance our aims and values.

All governors play a vital role in school self-evaluation. They evaluate all aspects of school development and provide a good level of

challenge to the school. Church school distinctiveness is always on the agenda of full body governor meetings and a prayer is said at the start and finish of each meeting. All our governors have read the document 'Valuing all God's children'.

The school's priorities include priorities which are based on matters relating to being a church school. This takes a prominent place in Governor meetings where this priority is regularly reported on.

Feedback is taken from parents, teachers and the children in order to make improvements.

The subject leader meets regularly with the subject leader from our federated school William Hildyard Church of England Primary and Nursery. Subject managers monitor RE and feedback to staff with successes and areas to develop further. The subject manager from each school meets with the rectors from each parish each term. All four meet together termly. Subject managers are linked with a governor and update them regularly with reports sharing what has taken place, the impact and the next steps.

Key Strengths

- Federation with William Hildyard Church of England Primary and Nursery School which is an outstanding Church School.
- Within the past 18 months the number of services held at St. George's Church have increased from 1 to 3 to cover all main Christian events (5 coaches needed for each visit). New links have been formed with Christchurch where Year 5 and 6 hold a Christmas Carol Service.
- Reverend Brent, ex-officio governor, is chair of the Diocesan Board of Education.
- Mrs C Bish, Chair of Governors is an NLG.
- Executive Headteacher's performance management is related to our church school status. This is rigorously monitored and challenged by school Governors to measure sustained impact.
- School self-evaluation ensures that our church school distinctiveness and effectiveness are closely monitored. This is reported to Governors termly at Full Governing Board meetings and to the Standards and Personnel Committee meetings. Governors challenge progress towards our priorities including a distinctive 'church school' priority. They also ensure that all areas/policies reflect our Christian ethos.
- Reverend Martyn Taylor, our local vicar, regularly supports school in planning of Christian events to engage and spiritually inspire our children. He works closely with Year 5 and 6 pupils during Lent and assists them in presenting the Easter Service.
- The RE and CW subject manager attends regular RE cluster meetings and training. Cluster meetings have been held at St. George's. CPD is subsequently shared with all teaching staff to develop teaching and learning in school. RE manager shares ideas of what good practice looks like and each class has their own class book with examples of good work.
- Collective Worship and RE subject manager meets regularly with RE and CW subject manager from our federated school each term to monitor, develop and lead the subject throughout the school and to build up links between the school.
- School governors attend training with the headteacher, Chair of Governors and incumbents attending Diocesan Heads and Chairs conferences. All governors have read the National Society's report 'Valuing all God's children'.

Improvements since the last inspection

- All assessments for learning strategies ensure an equal focus on learning from and learning about religion. Each class complete a termly assessment sheet which shows this.
- Children now study Islam in Years 5 & 6, Hinduism in Years 3 & 4, Judaism and Christianity across the school.
- Governors at their last full governing board meeting reviewed the school's vision and aims as part of the Aspire Federation. These are based on Christian principles. These are on the school development plan.
- Worship Leaders now lead worship. They wear a Worship Leader's stole and Year 5 and 6 reflect on what the worship has meant to them. Children now lead Class Worships for parents. Children participate in the planning of all major Christian Services. In 2015 the children led a 'Christingle' for the first time in school. The Collective Worship Council has led the end of term Values worship.

Areas for future Development

- Areas for future developments can be found on the RE and CW Action Plan.