



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

St George's Church of England Primary School

Kesteven Road
Stamford
Lincolnshire
PE9 1SX

Previous SIAMS Grade: Good

Current Inspection Grade: Outstanding

Diocese: Lincoln

Local authority: Lincolnshire

Date of inspection: 27 January 2016

Date of last inspection: February 2011

School's unique reference number: 120607

Executive Headteacher: Fiona Griffiths

Inspector's name and number: John Gibbs 818

School context

The school is smaller than average having 185 children on roll. The number of pupils in receipt of pupil premium and the percentage of ethnic minority children is below average. Almost all pupils come from White British and Eastern European backgrounds. The proportion of children with special educational needs and disabilities is below the national average. The school is served by St George's Church which is over a mile from the school. The school entered into a hard federation with another church aided primary school in September 2015 under a single governing body and executive headteacher.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St George's as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The Christian ethos of this school is well established and exceptional. A nurturing Christian environment incorporates high quality teaching and learning experiences which enable pupils to make very good progress and achieve well.
- Pupils' behaviour is excellent and the school's Christian ethos has a significant impact on their spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development.
- Pupils understand the importance of caring for others and give of their best at all times. Relationships between all members of the school community are impressively linked to the Christian values of the school.

Areas to improve

- Formulate a strategic plan for developing church school leaders in order to enhance succession planning.
- Enable school worship council members to meet regularly with their counterparts at their sister school in order to develop their evaluation strategies more effectively.

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

This is an extremely happy and caring school where Christian values such as friendship, generosity and respect permeate the whole of the school day. These values are seen to impact positively on the experiences of all the pupils. This together with effective teaching and learning experiences results in improving standards of achievement in all areas of the curriculum. Current data shows that standards are in line with national averages and that the progress of pupils is continuing to improve. The senior leadership team provides very effective Christian leadership and pupils are very well supported within an extremely positive environment. Pupils speak positively about the friendly nature of the school and also the varied activities undertaken during the school day. As one pupil said, 'The staff are always there for you and children help each other all the time.' The high level of attendance and lack of exclusions are the result of the positive encouragement and high behaviour expectations. Pupils and adults speak openly of the difference made by the school's Christian values. The school makes good use of its environment to celebrate its Christian foundation and to nurture the SMSC development of pupils. Pupils are proud of their forest school and they have named it the 'Walk of Wonders' in celebration of God's wonderful world. Visits and visitors broaden the range of understanding of diversity offered to the pupils. Pupils readily identify the school's values with those seen in Biblical teaching and the life of Jesus. These underpin the school's clear behaviour policy. As a result pupils are able to describe the way that Christian values such as friendship and respect affect their decisions at school and outside the school day. There is regular input from the incumbent, the bishop's visitor and other members of the church community which impacts effectively on the pupils' knowledge of Christianity. The relationships between all members of the school community are very good. This is because they are based on the school's values which ensure that respect, friendship and generosity are always high on the agenda. Parents speak highly of the care and concern shown for each child and for the whole school community. They value the influence of Christian values on school life and recognise that 'being a church school makes this school very special.' Pupils are motivated to support and fundraise for a wide range of charities at a local, national and global level. One child commented that, 'It is important to help other people who do not have as much as we have and this makes me feel good inside.'

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

The daily act of distinctively Christian worship is central to the life of this school. It is an uplifting occasion recognised as a time for reflection, prayer and celebration. This results in collective worship of a high quality which develops the children's personal spirituality to a high level. Worship celebrates the school's Christian values in an inspirational manner. It is recognised and understood by pupils to be a time to come together to think about Jesus and celebrate God's wonderful world. Bible stories are used frequently and the children are able to speak about the impact it has with perception and obvious enjoyment. Collective worship is led by various personnel including staff, members of local clergy, the bishop's visitor and other outside speakers and also the children themselves. It is well planned and regular evaluation by the senior leaders and governors ensures high quality of delivery. Consequently the impact of worship is extremely high. Pupils show a highly developed knowledge of the concept of The Trinity with thoughtful comments on God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. One pupil said that, 'The Holy Spirit is like having God inside you.' Pupils are enthusiastic and positive about the wide variety of collective worship experiences provided by the school. They express their appreciation and excitement at their involvement in planning and delivering worship themselves. Members of the school worship council are positively involved in worship at all levels and speak with excitement of meeting children from their sister school. There is a strong relationship between the school and the local church. This is echoed by parents who welcome the opportunity to participate in acts of worship both at the school and also at the parish church of St George. Inclusion is ensured through the selection of a very effective and broad set of themes that link with an emphasis on Christian values, current affairs and also religious education (RE). The church's year underpins the programme enabling good provision for developing understanding of Anglican

tradition and practice. Pupils' attitude to prayer is respectful and very positive. There are many occasions for prayer and reflection on a daily basis which the children value.

The effectiveness of religious education is good

School leaders place RE highly amongst their curricular priorities and the subject receives an appropriate amount of time within the curriculum and a generous budget allocation. Policy documentation is clear and effective and the result of effective strategic subject leadership. The subject leader shows a high level of subject expertise and knowledge of current developments in RE. There is a strong vision for further improvement in the subject. Resource provision is very good. The subject programme maintains an appropriate balance between Christianity and other world faiths and lesson planning is well documented. The subject underpins the school's Christian values effectively and makes a significant contribution to the children's SMSC development. Children report that they 'really like' RE. Several said it was their favourite subject, 'It makes you think about all sorts of things and learn about lots of different religions', said one pupil. As a result the level of engagement in the best lessons is very high and the impact of the subject is good. The use of visitors from Christianity and other faiths enhances the teaching and learning. Additionally the well-established programme of visits to places of worship, both Christian and other faiths, enables the Agreed Syllabus followed within the school to be brought to life. Planning clearly indicates how assessment is used in order to target further learning. Individual formal summative assessment is in place albeit at an embryonic stage. Overall, pupils make good progress and achieve at least in line with national expectations and in some cases above. Parents commented about their children's enthusiasm for the subject and the positive impact RE teaching had upon them. High quality displays of RE work in classrooms and school corridors showcase pupils' achievements and celebrate and enhance the teaching of the subject. The children display a very high knowledge of many of the key aspects of Christianity and the Bible as well as other major world faiths.

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

The effectiveness of the senior leadership team and governors in developing the school's Christian ethos is exceptional. They articulate with confidence and clarity a well developed vision for the school which is rooted in distinctive Christian values. This has been shared extensively with the whole school community and is clearly expressed in documentation including comprehensive action plans for both RE and collective worship. This Christian vision has a major impact on the improving standards of achievement in the school. There is a highly effective programme of staff development though as of yet there is no strategic plan for preparing staff as future leaders of church schools. The quality of the partnership between the school, the local community and diocese is excellent. Self-evaluation is realistic and of very good quality which makes the school's approach to improving standards robust. RE and collective worship meet statutory requirements and are well led and managed, leading to excellent practice in both areas. The executive headteacher and senior teachers, supported by a number of other committed members of staff, foundation governors and clergy model active Christian leadership. This has a positive impact on the well-being of the whole school community. Parents and pupils feel that their views are sought and valued by school leaders. Team spirit in the school is extremely high and members of staff are positive about relationships within the school. Parents see the school's Christian ethos as a key reason for choosing the school. They acknowledge the way that links between the school and the parish church are helping pupils to see the church as a welcoming place. This in turn develops their understanding of Christian worship and practice. The issues for development highlighted in the last inspection have been met in full.

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