

## Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

### William Hildyard Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary and Nursery School

Godsey Lane, Market Deeping, Peterborough. PE6 8HZ

<b>Current SIAMS inspection grade</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Lincoln</b>
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Date of inspection	12 January 2017
Date of last inspection	16 November 2011
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary aided 120695
Executive Headteacher	Fiona Griffiths
Inspector's name and number	Anne Lumb 333

#### School context

This is an average sized school serving the local community of Market Deeping. In September 2015 the school federated with St George's Church of England Primary School in Stamford, becoming known as 'Aspire'. The Headteacher of William Hildyard became the Executive Headteacher of 'Aspire' with a single governing body. The majority of pupils are from a White British background with a small number who speak English as an additional language. The number of children with special educational needs or disabilities is in line with national figures. The school has close links with the local church which is located half a mile away. In December 2016, the school was deemed to require improvement by Ofsted.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of William Hildyard Primary and Nursery School as a Church of England school are good

- This is a deeply Christian learning environment in which the school's Christian values are clearly understood and lived out daily so that all members of the school community enthusiastically articulate the impact of those values on their lives.
- Religious education (RE) and collective worship are pivotal to the daily life of the school such that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is transformational.
- All school leaders exemplify the Christian values in all aspects of school life, consequently policies and decision-making are constantly underpinned by the Christian character of the school.
- Leaders have developed effective plans to address a decline in pupil outcomes, particularly in writing, and there are convincing signs of improvement.

#### Areas to improve

- Development of the RE curriculum to include the 'Understanding Christianity' resource to further enhance and deepen staff knowledge and pupil learning.
- Refresh and develop the use of Godly Play so that all new staff are confident to use this approach within the classroom.
- Review self-evaluation as a church school to demonstrate more clearly the contribution that the Christian character of the school makes to the academic achievement of pupils.

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

All members of the school community are immersed in the Christian character so that children display the school's Christian values of friendship, generosity, thankfulness, forgiveness, respect and courage at school and elsewhere automatically. Parents speak of their children reminding them to 'be thankful' and write letters of thanks for gifts received at Christmas. Explicit links are made with biblical teaching such that children display an in-depth, age-appropriate knowledge and understanding which enables them, for example, to 'give generously like the widow in the temple'. Relationships between all members of the school community are exceptional and this is constantly attributed to the 'spiritual nature of the school', with staff also commenting that 'pastoral care in the school is two-way, the children care for us as well as us caring for them'. Motivated by their Christian values, staff work closely with families and the education welfare officers to maintain attendance figures which are higher than the national average. Each child is viewed as a unique child of God and as such staff ensure that the needs of each child are being met. Parents comment that they are confident their children are making progress academically, the children's well-being is supported and they are developing 'courtesy and respect' towards others. Having experienced a dip in standards and progress in 2015, staff worked hard to put strategies in place which are showing signs of convincing improvement. However, these actions have yet to fully embed and standards remain below expectations for some pupils. Therefore, the school is not yet outstanding at meeting the academic needs of all learners. The excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all learners is achieved through thorough planning of appropriate experiences across the curriculum and is underpinned by numerous opportunities to discuss and live out the school's Christian values. Initiatives such as 'R time' and Forest School further embed Christian values as children work with each other on problem-solving and thinking skills activities within a context of good manners, politeness and respect for each other and God's wonderful world. Religious education has a central role in the curriculum. There are opportunities for children to explore and deepen their understanding of the school's Christian values and in-depth reflective thinking time plays a central role in RE lessons, allowing the children to apply their learning to everyday living. Religious education lessons make a significant contribution to the development of pupils' spiritual and moral awareness by engaging the children in outstanding learning activities which challenge their thinking within a Christian educational framework. High quality reflection areas in each classroom and excellent displays which highlight biblical texts and teachings around the school, all contribute to the children's ability to express their appreciation of the opportunities they have to engage in thinking reflectively and spiritually. Close links with several Christian schools in south India ensure that the children have an exceptional understanding of Christianity as a worldwide, multi-cultural faith; 'we know there are Christians all over the world and it's good to connect through religion'.

### **The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding**

Each school day begins with inspirational collective worship which children comment creates a 'calm atmosphere'. All members of the school community actively engage with collective worship which is relevant and explores the school's Christian values in depth thus contributing to the living out of those values each day. The basis of these values in Christian teaching and in the life of Jesus is explicitly taught during worship time, ensuring that all members of the school community are aware of and able to articulate the Christian foundation of the school. There is a collective worship council of children representing each class in the school. They plan and lead a termly special celebration worship which focusses on the school value for that term and two children each day are assigned as worship leaders to begin worship with a liturgy, 'Out of the Box', thus ensuring that collective worship is perceived as a special and sacred time. The children value these opportunities to work alongside staff to plan and deliver high quality acts of collective worship which include the presentation of certificates to children chosen by their class for demonstrating a good understanding of the term's Christian value. In addition to exploring Bible stories, appropriate liturgy is used within collective worship to foster and develop the children's understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit and, through the lighting of a candle, their understanding of Jesus as 'the light of the world.' There are many opportunities for personal spiritual development within collective worship and throughout the school day as pupils are encouraged to make use of reflection areas around the school. Prayer is an important feature of school life – formal prayers are said in collective worship at lunchtimes and children are given many opportunities to write their own prayers, resulting in great depth of understanding and reflection. Prayer provides the context in which all aspects of school life take place, from school trips to staff briefings to governor meetings, thus ensuring that all members of the school community are supported explicitly in prayer. Local clergy frequently contribute to collective worship and the children visit the church for worship during all the major Christian festivals so that they are developing an extensive understanding of local Anglican practice. Monitoring and evaluation of collective worship is rigorous and includes the collective worship council meeting regularly to suggest improvements, assess peer feedback, and then plan and carry out related activities and tasks. They have also met with their counterparts at St

George's to discuss collective worship and participate in worship together thus deepening their own understanding of the meaning and practices within collective worship.

### **The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding**

Religious education is taught as a discrete subject with links being made to the term's Christian value where appropriate. The subject has a high status within the school being exceptionally well managed and resourced. Pupils engage enthusiastically in high quality learning experiences in RE which enable them to develop their higher level thinking skills as teachers and teaching assistants use effective questioning to develop the pupils' critical thinking. The children respond positively to opportunities to enter into written and verbal dialogue with their teachers; from talking about 'wondering questions' in Foundation Stage to discussing whether the building or the people constitute 'church' in Year 6. Since marking and feedback have been linked more directly to learning objectives, pupils have developed a greater understanding of the next steps in their learning; commenting that in RE there is 'always chance to learn something new'. Through regular moderation of work at staff meetings, teachers have developed greater understanding of age-related expectations and so are able to move the children forward more effectively in their learning. The RE curriculum is based on the Lincolnshire Agreed Syllabus and the subject leader is exploring ways in which the teaching of Christianity can be enhanced by the introduction of the 'Understanding Christianity' resource. Pupils' achievement and progress in RE are currently assessed using the system of assessment recommended in the locally Agreed Syllabus. The RE subject leader meets regularly with the RE link governor along with the RE subject leader and RE link governor from St George's. This facilitates planning and development across both schools and impacts positively on the quality of the teaching and learning. The RE subject leader regularly attends diocesan training and is developing her expertise in the use of 'Understanding Christianity' so that she can provide training for the other teachers thus deepening their subject knowledge and further improving the quality of opportunities for learning in RE.

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

School leaders readily articulate with confidence and clarity an explicit Christian vision which is deeply rooted in the school's Christian foundations. Robust monitoring and evaluation by foundation governors of the school's Christian distinctiveness results in appropriate challenge of senior leaders and the RE subject manager, although not consistently in relation to academic outcomes. The development of the school's Christian character is identified as a priority within the school development plan and appears on every governing body agenda so that links are consistently made between the Christian character of the school and the well-being of the whole school community. However, links to academic outcomes are not currently made in the same way. Foundation governors speak about development of the whole child in an 'undiluted caring Christian environment' which gives children the moral and spiritual strength to deal with challenges in the wider world. Staff have extensive opportunities for continuing professional development. The federation with St George's has extended opportunities for collaborative working and sharing of expertise whilst the development by staff of a church experience for Year 3/4 children from all the local schools and the sharing of Forest School expertise has extended the school's involvement in the wider community. The staff appointment and induction process ensures that all staff effectively contribute to the ongoing development of the school's distinctive Christian ethos. Staff speak of the 'help, empathy and support' they receive from other staff which has enabled them to gain or re-gain confidence within an immersive Christian environment. Recent changes to the school's leadership structure are being embedded as staff develop their leadership skills and in particular their leadership of church schools into the future. Links with the local church are well developed resulting in a close relationship which benefits both the school and the church so that children refer to the church as 'our church'. The rector works closely with the school on many levels, contributing to collective worship in the school and providing a Lent course for Year 5/6 children in the church. This culminates in the children leading an Easter service which has enabled them to gain a deeper understanding of Holy Communion, thus fully addressing a development point from the previous inspection. All other issues for development highlighted in that report have also been met in full. There are strong partnerships with the wider diocese providing mutual benefit as the children appreciate visits to Lincoln Cathedral, staff participate in diocesan training and the Executive Headteacher offers support to other church schools across the diocese. Parents are highly supportive of the school and speak of the school's Christian ethos as a key factor in their children's progress and development. The school meets the statutory requirements for RE and collective worship. They are given a high priority and are effectively led and managed, leading to excellent practice in both areas. School leaders are working hard to address issues that require improvement in pupil outcomes but this has yet to fully embed. In all other aspects of church school life, leadership is excellent.

SIAMS report January 2017 William Hildyard Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary and Nursery School, Market Deeping. PE6 8HZ.