

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Slinfold Church of England Primary School	
The Street Slinfold Horsham West Sussex RH13 0RR	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese	Chichester
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Local authority	West Sussex
Date of inspection	22 November 2016
Date of last inspection	4 April 2011
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Controlled 125995
Headteacher	Laura Phibbs
Inspector's name and number	Hilary Ferries 276

School context

Slinfold CE Primary School is a small, rural church school in the centre of the village which predominately serves the local community. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is much smaller than that found nationally. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is in line with the national average. The headteacher started in 2015. The school was judged by Ofsted to be good in May 2016. The priest in charge started in 2015 and has been appointed as rector of the parish.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Slinfold as a Church of England school are good

- The headteacher is committed to the school and has strengthened the Christian distinctiveness and effectiveness of the school through the successful implementation of the Christian vision.
- Relationships in school and between school and community are very positive and based on Christian values.
- Strong links with the local church and its rector strengthen the school as a Christian community.
- High quality worship engages pupils and gives good opportunities for spiritual development.

Areas to improve

- Embed the role of 'Christian ambassadors' to strengthen pupil voice and drive forward the improvement of the school as a church school.
- Enable pupils to have more involvement in the planning and leadership of worship to enable them to play a more active part.

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

The school's Christian vision, 'Caring, Learning Achieving ... Guided by God' drives all that the school does. It is displayed in all the classrooms and the hall (an area for development identified in the previous inspection) and used as a point of reference by pupils and teachers alike. One pupil said: 'it shows you kindness and then you can do the same. I use the vision to help me be caring and kind'. Outcomes in the school are strong and the refocus of the Christian vision has helped pupils in their learning. The school is committed to achievement for all pupils and Ofsted recognised this when they judged the school as good earlier this year. The vision is underpinned by 18 Christian values, which are explored in worship and in the curriculum on a three-year cycle. Pupils are quick to relate values such as friendship to their behaviour. Each value is introduced by a piece of homework, which pupils say supports the theme and parents say make them aware of the focus.

There are many opportunities for spiritual, moral social and cultural development. Each classroom has a reflective area used to display recent work and a prayer box where pupils' own prayers are offered up in worship. The Christian ambassadors, two pupils from years two to six are keen to support and develop the school as a church school. A good example of this is their design of reflection area outside the school and they are keen to do more. 'Forest School' gives pupils the opportunity to explore God's natural world. Behaviour at the school is excellent. Pupils say that they use the vision and the values to help them know how to behave. They say that they usually get on well, but when there is a problem they know how to deal with it and that there is someone they can go to. One pupil said, 'The values help us not to have arguments and when we do, to sort them out quickly'.

There is a strong sense of a school as a family which is encouraged through the Christian vision and values such as friendship. Older pupils lead playtime games and enjoy supporting the younger pupils. Parents say that this is also evident in the village where children play together and help each other. Events such as the party to celebrate the Queens' birthday and the display of poppies for Remembrance bring the community together. Pupils support both local projects such as the Horsham foodbank and those further afield, such as Children in Need and a link is being developed with a school building project in Tanzania. Pupils are aware of the diversity within the UK and beyond, as the school leadership has introduced themes to see how different communities live which strengthens pupils' understanding of diversity. The school celebrates Black History Month and has visited places of worship from a range of different faiths to help them appreciate the multicultural nature of modern Britain. Religious education (RE) makes a good contribution to the Christian character of the school. Pupils are positive about the subject and could talk about their learning in the different topics they have been studying. Visits to places of worship support their learning

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship is important to the school. Pupils say that they 'like coming together to worship'. Worship is well planned, taking a Christian value for each half term, which is explored in a range of engaging ways. Pupils could talk about the previous theme, respect and reverence and the current theme of friendship. One pupil said, 'it helps you learn about other people's lives and not just think about your own and this helps you when you grow up'. They also enjoy 'Songs of Praise' on a Tuesday as 'the songs are explained in a really new way'. The songs are linked to the theme, promoting worship through music and song. The leadership has addressed the issue raised in the previous inspection to 'introduce a more frequent formal procedure for pupil's evaluation of worship' and pupils regularly contribute to evaluation. Their comments are taken seriously and addressed by the worship coordinator. In the recent meetings with governors they said they would like to take a greater role in acting and taking part in worship and this is now part of the school plans. Links are made between worship and life and how pupils apply the worship theme to their own lives. There is a strong biblical content and one pupil said 'it helps me know what happened in the Bible and be better because of that'. There are frequent references to Jesus and his teachings in worship. There has not been an exploration of the Trinity in whole school worship, but the class teachers are working with year four and five pupils on this, as part of the RE curriculum.

There are opportunities for prayer in the school day. In addition to prayer within collective worship, the school community says prayers at lunchtime and pupils put prayers into prayer boxes in the classrooms which are read out in class worship or taken to whole school collective worship. The Christian ambassadors sometimes lead prayer and they are keen to do more to support the development of prayer in the school. There are strong links with the parish church. The rector comes in regularly to lead worship and pupils and parents are very positive about her support.

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

The headteacher has led the school to an improved judgement of good from Ofsted. She and her team have high expectations of the pupils who feel that the staff team care about them and their learning. This has been underpinned by the development of a clear Christian vision which was created with pupils to give them a voice. As a result, the vision is known and articulated by all. Pupils relate the vision to their learning and to the high quality of care that they receive. The committed and enthusiastic staff support the vision and there is a sense of a whole staff team working well together. Relationships in school and between school and community are excellent. Parents interviewed spoke positively of the partnership between school and home and how everyone works together for the best outcomes for pupils. They talked of the Christian values 'dripping through all areas of school life.

Links with the parish church are very strong. The rector, who is on the governing body, has developed very positive relationships with the community. The introduction of 'Friday drop in' at the church attracts parents who say it is a good way for new families to engage and for families in the village to share what is going on. The church also runs 'Messy Church' and families from the school attend, which develops links further. There are special events such as the making of clay poppies for Remembrance Sunday, strengthening this further. The school community worships in the church several times during the year, such as harvest and Christingle and these are well attended.

The headteacher has led the self-evaluation of the school as a church school and knows the school well. Governors have been involved in discussion and are aware of the strengths and areas for further improvement through their monitoring. The governors and school leadership team have addressed the areas for improvement from the previous inspection and set the direction for the future through the priorities identified in the school development plan. This links all the priorities of the school together and shows the school is clear about where it wants to go and how it will get there. Governors are actively involved with monitoring and evaluating the school as a church school and they come into school regularly to carry out activities such as pupil conferencing and monitor the areas of improvement.

Religious Education is an important part of the curriculum. The headteacher and governors have supported class teachers to teach RE, following a time when it was taught throughout the school by one teacher and there is a programme of development planned to improve the quality of teaching further. There have been several staff changes in the school and the headteacher and governors have successfully maintained the Christian ethos through the recent appointments.

The arrangements for religious education and collective worship meet statutory requirements.

SIAMS report November 2016 Slinfold CE Primary School, Horsham RH13 0RR