

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Peter's Anglican / Methodist VC Primary School

Bank Road, Pilning, Bristol BS35 4JG

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| Current SIAMS inspection grade | Good |
| Diocese / Methodist District | Bristol / Bristol |
| Previous SIAMS inspection grade | Good |
| Local authority | South Gloucestershire |
| Name of multi-academy trust / federation [delete as appropriate] | N/A |
| Date/s of inspection | 9 March 2017 |
| Date of last inspection | January 2012 |
| Type of school and unique reference number | Voluntary controlled 132937 |
| Headteacher | Paul Overton |
| Inspector's name and number | Lyn Field 151 |

School context

St Peter's is a single form entry primary school with 207 pupils on roll and has been oversubscribed for the last two years. It draws children from Pilning and Severn Beach as well as surrounding villages and the outskirts of Bristol. The vast majority of pupils are White British. The proportions with special educational needs or who are disadvantaged is broadly in line with national. St Peter's Church is a single ecumenical partnership between the Anglican and Methodist Churches where the Anglican vicar is also licenced as a Methodist. The vicar and the headteacher are both retiring this academic year.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Peter's as a Church of England / Methodist school are good

- The strong and consistent leadership of the headteacher has enabled the school to move forward as a church school.
- Pupils have a mature understanding of Christian values and apply them to their lives in the way they work collaboratively and support each other.
- School documents talk of 'the teaching of Jesus and love and respect for your neighbour' and this is fundamental to the school's exceptional care of individual pupils and their families.
- The vicar and RE leader play a vital role in developing the Christian character of the school.

Areas to improve

- Keep collective worship constantly under review to ensure that important new developments such as pupil leadership are sustained and developed whilst maintaining the essential components of worship on a daily basis.
- Provide the new leadership team with induction and training into the leadership of a church school in liaison with the Diocese and the Methodist Church.

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

The exceptional level of attention that the school pays to the wellbeing of pupils is rooted in its Christian character. The very complex needs that some pupils bring to their learning arise from underlying levels of deprivation in the community, emotional difficulties and early life experiences that are not revealed in any statistics. The school invests heavily in specialist training for staff so that techniques such as sand tray therapy can be employed. The way that support is tailored to each individual child is completely in line with the principles of the teaching of Jesus and pupils flourish. This extends to families and is at the heart of how the school tackles issues around behaviour and attendance. Pupils feel safe and confident in school so behaviour is usually excellent and attendance has improved on the previous year to be above average. Attainment is broadly in line with schools nationally by the end of Key Stage 2 and the progress of disadvantaged pupils is enhanced by the school's nurture and intervention work.

Christian values are now deeply embedded and shape every aspect of school life. Pupils know the biblical source of each value and refer to this in reflecting on their own personal conduct and the generous care they show for each other. Collaboration and co-operation are the hallmarks of how pupils approach their learning because the strategies that teachers use consistently promote this way of working. Consequently, an outstanding work ethic exudes from every classroom. Pupils take huge pride in their work that is evident in the very high quality of presentation.

The Christian value for each term is given a very high profile and, as it is explored over time and in ever increasing depth, pupils absorb it into their lives. They respond to challenging moral and ethical questions in relation to this term's value of 'Justice' with a maturity that is impressive for their age. Many discussions begin in worship or RE and are followed up by staff in other lessons. Consequently, pupils make use of religious language to express their ideas. Striking displays in the public areas of the school as well as reflection areas in classrooms convey the essence of RE. This subject clearly prompts pupils to be open-minded and respect the views of others. The school makes every effort to meet the needs of individual families from different religious traditions. This translates into the very positive understanding that pupils have of how religious beliefs affect social as well as spiritual aspects of people's lives. RE, therefore, makes a significant contribution to the Christian character of the school and to how pupils perceive diversity amongst religions and within Christianity. This undoubtedly contributes to pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Training at the start of the year has brought greater cohesion to how teachers systematically plan and monitor this across the curriculum. Cultural awareness was flagged up as a weaker area and has been addressed through workshops for pupils on avoiding stereotyping. Relationships in the school are exemplary. They benefit from the way adults model Christian values and the insight these values give pupils into empathising with the different needs of those around them.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Pupils gain a clear spiritual and moral framework for their lives from collective worship. Faith is not imposed on them and worship is very inclusive whilst making the Christian elements explicit. The lighting of candles to represent God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit is a regular part of every assembly. Biblical teaching is frequently used to deepen pupils' understanding of Christian values and themes regularly explore their relevance to everyday life. Consequently, pupils have a good knowledge of Bible stories and a secure understanding for their age of key Christian festivals and the place that Jesus Christ plays in Christian teaching.

St Peter's church in Pilning does not separate its Anglican and Methodist traditions because it operates as a single ecumenical church. The school follows the same pattern. Consequently, neither pupils nor the community focus on the distinguishing features of the two traditions, although pupils know about John Wesley from a special day led by the Methodist New Room Team.

The prayer life of the school is well established because of the time the vicar devotes to supporting the school. She has an excellent rapport with pupils, who say: 'Rev Ann makes us a church school.' Every act of worship includes prayer that invites pupils to join in if they wish and the majority choose to do so. This inclusive approach is appreciated. Pupils and adults request prayers from the vicar, although pupils are not certain where they can offer prayers they have written themselves.

The recent introduction of pupil worship leaders is proving to be a very popular initiative. Although it is still at an early stage, it has quickly engaged pupils' interest because of the clear structure developed by the worship co-ordinator. Large numbers are volunteering and a typical comment was: 'Helping to lead has really helped me with what religious things mean'. Many pupils are accomplished in acting out scenarios, managing each element of worship and presenting to a large audience. The whole school listens with rapt attention anticipating that challenging questions will follow. They use the time for reflection well because the vicar has developed this as

part of the school's spiritual life. Teachers build on it back in classrooms so the key messages of worship flow through into the rest of the day and are revisited in circle and reflection time. The focus on new initiatives and ensuring they work successfully can mean that attention to existing practice sometimes slips and pupils regret the temporary loss of music in worship. They have an increasing voice in how worship changes. The quality of their responses shows that they have a good understanding of the purpose and value of worship.

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

The headteacher's unwavering commitment to 'doing the right thing for the child' is an approach that embraces the Christian character of the school. Under his strong leadership, a unified team has developed that shares a common mindset, cares deeply and brings the Christian ethos to bear on its work whatever the faith standpoint of its individual members. The school's documentation talks of 'The values of the teaching of Jesus and love and respect for your neighbour being fundamental to all aspects of our school.' It informs decisions about the deployment of staff and adopting new programmes that will benefit all pupils but particularly those who are vulnerable. The impact of this is particularly seen in the way the school is able to reach out to families and nurture their children. Training undertaken by staff is effective because time is given to implement specialist techniques and refine their skills. The high profile of the creative arts has continued because it is now being led by the school's own staff and is evident in the creative approach to the teaching of RE.

The school's development as a church school receives a good level of attention in the allocation of staff responsibilities, governor committee time and opportunities for professional development. It is widely recognised and appreciated by pupils and parents that the RE leader and the vicar are at the forefront of leading the school's Christian activities. Their passion and enthusiasm give a hugely positive vibe to collective worship and RE.

The local church has an important influence in the school through the vicar and foundation governors. The pace of development as a church school has increased over the last two years. The current development plan reflects this and sets out a demanding set of actions across the breadth of the curriculum that includes the introduction of a new RE syllabus. Governors are extremely supportive and those who represent the two church denominations have a regular presence in order to stay closely in touch with the views of pupils and staff. Their monitoring focuses on the impact of the school's work and discussions with the leader for RE and worship inform decisions about the next steps. However, strategic planning does not always take enough account of how an initiative in one area will have implications for another and how priorities might be set to ensure the load is manageable.

The RE leader regularly makes use of diocesan training and with the retirement of the headteacher and the vicar, governors are aware of the importance of training in Christian leadership for the new senior leaders. There have already been discussions with the Diocese about the actions needed to sustain what has been achieved in the school's Christian character.