



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Trinity St Stephen's Church of England Voluntary Aided First School

Vansittart Road
Windsor
SL4 5DF

Previous SIAMS grade: Satisfactory

Current inspection grade: Good

Diocese: Oxford

Local authority: Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

Dates of inspection: 17 May 2016

Date of last inspection: 18 September 2011

School's unique reference number: 110023

Headteacher: Louise Lovegrove

Inspector's name and number: Lynne Thorogood (799)

School context

The school is a one-form entry First School with 143 pupils on roll. It serves an area near the centre of the town of Windsor. The majority of pupils come from a white British heritage, but a small proportion are from other ethnic or cultural backgrounds. The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs is lower than in most schools and the number eligible for the pupil premium grant is below average. Since the last inspection there has been a change of Head Teacher.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Trinity St Stephen's as a Church of England school are good

- Very positive, supportive relationships with the church, local clergy and local community have a significant impact on the school's Christian character and on pupils' personal development.
- The school has a strong 'Christian family' ethos and excellent links with parents. Everyone is valued as a child of God and enabled to achieve their personal potential.
- The outstanding provision for collective worship and the focus on prayer make a great impact upon the children's spiritual development and the spiritual journey of the whole school community.
- The highly committed leadership provided by the head teacher and governors consistently promote and develop the school's Christian character.

Areas to improve

- Develop links and partnerships with schools nationally and globally to further develop children's understanding of diversity.
- Embed high standards of RE teaching and learning in all classes so that all children progress consistently across the school.

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

The work of the school is underpinned by explicit Christian values. Christian symbols and displays in the school reflect the fact that this is an environment in which Christian values are promoted. The school's Christian foundation is high-profile on the website. The Christian character of the school is clearly defined and makes a significant impact on the personal development and academic needs of the children. For instance, in line with its Christian commitment to 'the whole child', the school provides for the individual needs of all the children with appropriate challenge and support, including carefully targeted intervention activities. As a result, children progress well and the level of attainment is steadily improving. Teachers, living out the school's Christian values, are good role models for children. Following their example, children are often observed looking after each other without being prompted. They make a positive contribution to the wider community, showing care and respect for others through charity fundraising. Parents, including those of other faiths, are overwhelmingly positive about the school's Christian distinctiveness. They appreciate the work done by the family link worker in supporting the pastoral needs of families as well as children, for instance after a bereavement. Parents strongly support both church-based services and events held in school, including worship and fundraising. One parent is impressed that her child comes home and re-tells bible stories after hearing them in assembly. In this Christian context, children's efforts and achievements are acknowledged and celebrated. In consequence, their attendance, behaviour and attitude to learning are good. Prayer is an important aspect of school life, not only in collective worship, but at various times during the school day. Children speak naturally about being able to say their own prayers in class and of using the 'quiet garden' if they want to reflect. Children's good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development arises from the whole school ethos and the commitment to Christian service shown by all members of staff. As a result, there is a high level of understanding of what it means to be part of a church school. Through their religious education children show a developing understanding and respect for other faith communities.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship is a core part of the life of the school, and brings the whole community together at key points in the church calendar. It is firmly rooted in Christian values and Biblical teachings. Together with the head teacher, the rector is involved in the planning of worship and plays a key role, leading worship weekly either in school or at church. He brings theological yet accessible teaching and elements of the Anglican tradition to the children, staff and parents. He is without doubt a significant strength in the faith life of the school. His pastoral role is valued by all members of the school family, including staff who attend clergy-led staff prayers. Children enjoy planning and participating in their class worship services, are confident in leading worship and enjoy the variety of provision, which often includes activities and stories. In response to the recommendation in the last SIAS report, provision has been developed and shaped in response to evaluation by all members of the school's community and now includes more interaction and pupil-led elements. Worship focuses regularly on the school's Christian values and links them with their Biblical sources. On the day of the inspection, a Year 1 class assembly was well attended by parents, and the school values were illustrated through the lives of famous people, showing their relevance to real life situations. A pupil commented, 'Worship is a great time of the day- it is good to share a feeling of everybody being together.' In worship, the atmosphere is warm and inclusive and all children, whether Christian or not, are given encouragement to pray or reflect. All children know the Lord's prayer and the school prayer, and enjoy writing their own prayers for use in collective worship. Prayer is a key part of school life and makes an important contribution to spiritual development. Most older pupils have an understanding of the Holy Trinity at an age-appropriate level, describing Father Son and Holy Spirit as like three sides of a triangle. Parents can attend worship at least once a month in church and many do. They feel most welcomed and think that the school's Christian values are effectively promoted through worship. Church is well used by school and children see it as an extension of their environment- indeed in the words of the rector, school and church are "a blended community"

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

Children are very positive about RE. They enjoy and are inspired by their lessons. A Key Stage 2 pupil explained, "RE is a really important subject because it helps you to understand about God and how to live your life." Lessons are well-planned for all abilities, using a new "discovery" approach which poses "big questions" which fully engage learners. The curriculum offers a good balance between 'learning about' and 'learning from' religion. By the time they leave the school, many children's achievement and progression in RE exceed that in other core subjects and are above expectations. In the younger classes attainment is satisfactory, and matches national expectations. Older children produce work of a very high standard and can discuss and debate issues with developing insight. This is reflected in their work books and thought-provoking displays, and is a result of high quality teaching in the Key Stage 2 classes. This outstanding teaching ensures that pupils are able to demonstrate a high level of spiritual maturity and knowledge. Older pupils apply their learning to possible scenarios in their own lives. They are actively encouraged and supported in this reflection. Children are keen to discuss their feelings and experiences in RE, and this has a positive impact on their spiritual, moral and social development. In all classes, pupils make at least expected progress for their age and stage, and are thoughtful and reflective learners. Their knowledge of the Bible and stories Jesus told is good. Through the study of other faiths pupils gain an understanding of how others worship God. They say, "It is important to know about how other religions live and worship. You don't want to upset anyone because you don't understand what they do." Under the knowledgeable guidance of the new co-ordinator, the monitoring and evaluation of RE has developed well, in line with recommendations in the last SIAS inspection report. Work sampling and levelling provide a clear picture of the impact of RE and the standards achieved. At the moment trends over time are less easy to monitor, and evaluating the attainment of different groups of pupils is under developed. Children are not regularly involved in assessing their own work. The school recognises that continuing to develop the assessment system will lead to further improvement.

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

Since her appointment, the head teacher has worked tirelessly to improve standards and develop the Christian vision of the school. She is well supported by dedicated staff and governors, so that the Christian values which underpin the school's continued improvement are successfully translated into all areas of school life. Self-evaluation is rigorous and effective because staff and governors all have a good understanding of church school distinctiveness. Christian values and principles are the major drivers when prioritising development and spending. For instance, when considering plans regarding potential future collaborations, other schools' Christian ethos was a major consideration. Recent changes to the committee structure of the governing body have supported the continued development of the Christian vision, as the influential 'ethos committee' feeds into decision making across all governors' groups and ratifies all policies. The governors play a key role in school, and all make regular visits. They have a good understanding of the school's performance data because they have undertaken appropriate training courses. This leads to informed and supportive yet challenging contributions to the school's academic development. Work with other local schools and in-service training both from the diocese and by the local authority prepare staff well for current and future leadership roles, including leadership of worship and RE. There are many links with the local community. These include local senior schools, St George's Chapel and large institutions such as St Mary's University. A parent said, "School is at the heart of the community and church." However, the school has recognised that more links with national and global communities would further enrich children's understanding of diversity.

SIAMS report May 2016 Trinity St Stephen's Church of England V.A. First School SL4 5DF