

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

<b>Appleshaw St Peter's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School</b>	
Ragged Appleshaw Andover Hampshire SP11 9HR	
<b>Current SIAMS inspection grade</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Winchester</b>
Previous SIAS inspection grade	Good
Local authority	Hampshire
Date of inspection	17 March 2017
Date of last inspection	29 February 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Primary 116349
Headteacher	Ian Hickman
Inspector's name and number	Andrew Rickett 201

### School context

Appleshaw St Peter's is smaller than the average size primary school with 102 children on roll. They are arranged into four class groups. It is situated in a rural setting. The majority of children are of White British heritage and most come from favourable socio-economic backgrounds. The number of children with special learning needs and/or disabilities is below the national average as is the number entitled to receive the pupil premium. Attendance is broadly in line with the national average.

### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Appleshaw St Peter's CE Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding

- An explicit Christian vision brings purpose and meaning to the lives of children and adults in the school community and makes a significant contribution to their spiritual development.
- Acts of worship provide regular opportunities for children to learn about Bible stories that they relate to their own lives and experiences.
- The commitment of leaders and managers to the Christian ethos ensures that it is continually developing to meet the needs of children.

### Areas to improve

- Develop assessment of religious education (RE) so that regular tracking of children's progress identifies areas for improvement that contribute to raising standards.
- Ensure that children's progress throughout the year in RE is captured through innovative approaches to assessment.
- Develop the impact of the school's core Christian values so that reach beyond the immediate school community and contribute to sustainable support for local, national and international organisations.

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

Three core values emerged from a strategic review of the Christian distinctiveness which began in 2014 following the appointment of the current headteacher the previous year. This process involved all members of the school community and from this love, fellowship and justice became core to the promotion of the Christian ethos. This was revisited in March 2015 when a refined values statement was created in response to the need to reflect how far the school had come in developing its understanding of the three core values and how they have a shared articulation throughout the school community. Each of the core values have explicit links to Christian teaching and are closely connected to the school's rules to have respect, be caring and try your best. The impact of these values, and the extent to which children use them in their everyday lives, is what makes the Christian character outstanding. For example, children explain that they help them in their learning as they are 'more likely to pay attention if you follow values' and 'they are good because they make you listen in class much more'. Furthermore, older children in particular have a mature appreciation that the core values are linked together. They explain how justice connects with fellowship as 'you need to be fair with your friends'. An impressive feature of the children's understanding of values is that as children move through the school they acquire the language of other values to support their deepening understanding of the core three. For example, they refer to forgiveness and trust as aspects of fellowship and honesty as part of justice. When referring to love children do so in relationship to people at the centre. Values contribute to the children's appreciation of moral and social concerns and have a growing awareness that they are not always simple to resolve. They have a keen regard for values within the life of the school and give many examples of how they make a difference to school life, including their learning; children do well academically with outcomes that are at least in line with national expectations. Children are less articulate in describing how the values extend beyond the school community and help them engage with the wider world both locally and beyond. Children have good opportunities to reflect in the school day both as part of their learning and in the wider life of the school. These include time in collective worship to pray but also for children to think about issues as part of their personal and social education. Children enjoy the opportunities to share their views and listen to those of others. They eagerly respond when asked challenging questions and do so with confidence to explore faith and belief openly.

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

Acts of worship at Appleshaw St Peter's are outstanding because themes respond to the needs of the children and give them opportunities to explore Bible stories and Christian values in ways that appeal to them. This creates an approach to worship where planning is far more fluid and less prescriptive. The outcome of this is that worship messages have greater relevance to the school community but are also more exciting because the school may not necessarily know how themes are explored over each half term. Because of this, planning is more immediate. It is done weekly and has a freshness that brings a sense of a community moving forward together in its understanding of a theme. Children in the worship group, which was re-established in 2016, meet with the headteacher each half term to review worship and suggest themes for the following term. This group also makes an important contribution to regular child-led worship and its evaluation. This is particularly successful in weekly class worship in key stage two where children prepare and lead worship on a theme that they have chosen. Themes are based on values such as thankfulness, wisdom, peace and truthfulness which are explicitly linked to Bible stories. Children have an excellent appreciation that acts of worship are an important part of what makes them a church school and say that stories from the life of Jesus help them to understand the values and guide them in their own lives. The headteacher gives considerable thought to the planning of collective worship which sets the tone for the beginning of each week. The deputy headteacher links themes to Bible stories and class worship follows this up. Clergy lead weekly acts of worship and ensure that children acquire an understanding of the main celebrations in the church calendar including festivals such as Easter and Christmas which are held in the local church. Children and their parents value these occasions as important times when the whole school community comes together. Children have an excellent understanding of the purpose of prayer. Younger children explain with confidence that they pray to God by sending Him messages to say thank you for the world and the things in it. They are developing their understanding that prayers help in life and some show maturity when explaining how prayer can give courage when times are hard. Older children know that prayers are not used to test God or ask for material things. Like younger children, they say that prayers can bring hope when times are tough. Older children are beginning to use their appreciation of the nature of the Trinity to help them explain God. For example, they explain that the Holy Spirit guides people to make right choices and is patient if the wrong choice is made. Governors have been involved in monitoring acts of worship and these have informed their contribution to the overall evaluation of the school as a church school.

### **The effectiveness of religious education is good**

The majority of children make good progress in religious education (RE) to achieve standards that are at least in line with national age related expectations by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6. Improvements in the quality of teaching and learning in Years 3 and 4 from January 2017 has ensured that these children are now making good progress because expectations have been raised. This is evident from a scrutiny of children's work in RE which shows that a greater emphasis on responding to questions that challenge their understanding is producing higher quality results than when they were simply recording their learning in their books. Teaching across the school in RE is confident and teachers have a good understanding of how to effectively deliver the RE syllabus which includes helping children to acquire specific skills and concepts that supports their learning in RE very well. Children have a secure knowledge of both Christianity and other world faiths and use this to make connections in their learning. For example, older children made links between the concept of suffering in the Easter story and at other times in the life of Jesus. Religious education is taught in blocks of time and this approach to teaching and learning is contributing to the exploration of RE in more depth. Children respond well when challenged and show an eagerness to share their views and listen with appreciation to the opinions of others. Lessons are well planned to provide these opportunities so that children become active participants in their learning. Children's work is regularly assessed against the expectations of the syllabus and is becoming increasingly accurate in identifying their progress against national expectations. Assessment data has recently been gathered and is beginning to be used to track children's progress across the school but has not yet been analysed to identify how improvements can be made. Assessment follows the expectations of the delivery of the syllabus although opportunities for a more general overview of the children's progress at the end of the year across all areas studied, as well as the skills acquired, are not carried out. The headteacher currently has responsibility for RE and has undertaken some monitoring of the subject. He has identified the subject's strengths and areas to improve which include developing teacher expertise. However, the school was not clear about the implications of how introducing the new 'Understanding Christianity' resource could improve teacher knowledge.

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

The leadership of the school is outstanding because the headteacher has approached the development of the school's Christian ethos with integrity and honesty. This means that innovations have had to be directly related to improving the needs of children's learning and personal development. At times this has not followed a conventional pattern but that has made it one of the school's considerable strengths. The headteacher must take credit for much of this forward thinking which has created a Christian ethos that is the result of careful reflection so that it has meaning and purpose for all members of the school community. The fluidity of planning in collective worship is an excellent example of this approach. As an outcome of the headteacher's determination to create a purposeful Christian ethos, the school has made excellent progress since the previous inspection. A key support in this process to make the Christian ethos meaningful was the vicar who, until his recent death following a serious illness, gave his time and energy generously to ensure that the school knew the church community valued and prayed for them. The assistant vicar is currently continuing that support through leading regular acts of worship. Governors fully support the promotion of the school as a church school and have a very clear understanding of its Christian ethos and how its values contribute to the school's success. The views of children have been gathered as evidence of how they regard the core values to be lived out in the everyday life of the school and this, along with other good quality evidence, has been used to inform the leadership's self-evaluation which is accurate. Governors have been involved in evaluation through clear systems in which their views have contributed to the overall self-evaluation process. For example, through robust debates regarding the three core values and whether justice should be included. The development of the Christian ethos is an integral part of school improvement planning with its own priority. The headteacher ensures that actions taken to address these priorities are regularly reported to governors. This means that procedures to monitor and then provide opportunities for governors to challenge are an integral aspect of the self-evaluation process. Parents appreciate that the school works hard to promote the core values and say that this is done in a 'gentle' way that makes an impression on their children. They explain how the values help to nurture their children by showing them how they can be applied to their everyday lives. Parents say that their children show this nurture in the way that they look after each other regardless of how old they are. In particular, parents feel that the Christian ethos allows their children to talk about faith and prayer from a Christian perspective as well as exploring other faiths and cultures. The school meets the statutory requirements for RE and collective worship.

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