

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

### Coughton Church of England Primary School

Coughton Lane Coughton Alcester Warwickshire B49 5HN

<b>Current SIAMS inspection grade</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Coventry</b>
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Local authority	Warwickshire
Date of inspection	6 <sup>th</sup> March 2018
Date of last inspection	March 2013
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Controlled Primary 123530
Executive Headteacher/ Head of School	Adam Walsh / Katie Langley
Inspector's name and number	Reverend Alison M. Morris 759

#### School context

This is a smaller than average rural primary school located in the village of Coughton. There are 161 pupils on roll aged from 4-11 years. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils eligible for free meals is below the national average. The school has a strong reputation in the local community. It has close links with St. Peter's Church and the Alcester Minster of parishes. Coughton is a popular and oversubscribed school which is about to join the Arden Forest Multi Academy Trust. There is a head of school and an executive headteacher who currently works across four schools.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Coughton as a Church of England school are outstanding

- Inspirational and stable leadership by school leaders, motivated by their own personal faith, creates and sustains a distinctively Christian school that is inclusive and meets the needs of all pupils.
- Staff promote and model values which exemplify the school's Christian distinctiveness, create harmonious relationships and enhance the learning of all pupils.
- The rich, vibrant Christian character of the school ensures positive attitudes to worship and prayer, enjoyment in learning and academic success for pupils.

#### Areas to improve

- Through further development of the pupil voice, engage pupils in the process of developing biblical literacy through the integration of the Understanding Christianity.
- Foster more partnerships and strategies which will allow pupils to encounter different faiths and cultures to deepen their understanding of our multi-faith and multi-cultural world.

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

This is an outstanding school which is distinctively Christian in all that it does. It is overtly Anglican in Christian character and ethos which is immediately apparent and permeates every aspect of school life. Explicit Christian values, such as love and forgiveness are shared in an innovative way through the use of value boards, newsletters and reflection books. These values are underpinned with reference to biblical texts and set the expectation for how all should live. This is clearly understood and practised by all who belong to this family oriented community. All pupils are supported to reach their potential through teaching and learning which aims to engage and enthuse all pupils. Pupils make good progress and their attainment is above national average in academic work.

High quality pastoral care is cleverly structured and well-resourced to support all pupils to thrive in this Christian nurturing ethos. Effective intervention programmes such as 'play therapy' and 'forest school' plus excellent special educational needs and/or disability (SEND) provision have a direct, life changing impact on pupils, particularly those with deep seated needs. Nurturing programmes, for example Growth Mind Set, help pupils to develop resilience to overcome challenges within a supportive climate. High expectations and excellent attitudes to learning are modelled through harmonious staff relationships. These are attributed to the Christian character and the values of the school which totally support a commitment to meeting the holistic needs of the pupils. All pupils are treated with dignity, valued and nurtured as unique children of God. Achievement is celebrated and pupils are inspired to believe in themselves within this Christian atmosphere.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development is outstanding because the school's Christian character adds an extra dimension to curriculum planning. SMSC development is nourished and challenged by core Christian values which have a high priority in the school development plan. The Warwickshire RE syllabus is integrated with the Understanding Christianity resource to provide an effective, bespoke scheme which fosters a deep respect for Christian values and beliefs, as belief matters in this school. This well-structured scheme makes a very significant contribution to pupils' SMSC development. It ensures that pupils have a secure knowledge of biblical teaching and religious language to strengthen their discussions. Imaginative activities such as Schools for Peace and visits to a Shree Krishna temple allow pupils to celebrate diversity. Links with a school in Bosnia also inform and enhance pupils' understanding of global issues.

Standards of behaviour are exemplary due to clear guidelines and expectations which are embedded with Christian values. For example, 'the golden ticket' scheme and the RESPECT code promote a clear understanding of right and wrong. Pupils have a very good sense of morality, self-belief and self-esteem. They are self-aware and communicate well. This is enhanced through leadership positions such as those as school council members and behaviour buddies. These involve pupils in taking responsibility and contributing to decision making. Pupils participate in the mission of the wider community through fundraising as seen through Operation Christmas Child. Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning, they are well motivated and keen to attend school and so absence is minimal. An exciting and engaging curriculum is delivered through outstanding teaching, plus rich learning experiences. For example, a visit to The Houses of Parliament and the musical POP UK project impacts positively upon both attitudes and attendance.

Interactive RE displays and Bible stories, prayer tables and artefacts in the foyer and hall visually express the Anglican tradition and Christian distinctiveness. Classrooms have Christian symbols and worship tables which, when used, make a very significant contribution to pupils' spiritual development. Vibrant, rich and creative stimuli both inside and outside of school such as the willow cross develop outstanding levels of spirituality. A stable atmosphere is promoting a learning environment which enables all pupils to flourish and to develop into self-assured young people.

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

Worship is inclusive, spiritual, affirming and accessible with a strong focus on the person of Jesus and the Christian belief in God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It evokes a sense of spiritual gathering which makes an outstanding impact on and contribution to the experience of all pupils and staff. It is very important in the formation of the school's Christian character and is a main element of its Christian distinctiveness.

Worship also makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual development through reinforcing Christian values. Through the moral messages, pupils relate their learning to their own behaviour and life fostering responsibility and respect. Clever use of inclusive language and atmosphere encourages a sacred space for all pupils to listen, reflect and respond appropriately so that they are spiritually nourished in an atmosphere of peace. Pupils experience awe and wonder and develop their ability to reflect and pray through the use of artefacts such as lighted candles and other religious symbols. A careful combination of prayer, silence and music stimulates pupils' attention. As a result, pupils are reverent and sing enthusiastically. Older pupils speak positively about worship and its impact upon their lives. Pupils' attitudes to worship are exemplary because it provides meaningful experiences rooted in Christian beliefs and festivals which are significant to the pupils' needs, ages, development and interests.

Worship is well planned on a 'termly' basis following a two year cycle which uses a variety of approaches that allows

worship to be accessible to pupils. Through a range of resources including the Values for Life and supplementary biblical material, a clear and consistent structure is promoted to pupils so that Christian beliefs, teaching and Anglican traditions are introduced and understood. Pupils do lead some worship through drama and prayers. However, the school has identified the on-going development of the 'worship warriors' for further pupil involvement in planning, leading and evaluation. Reflective activities for pupils which take place in worship and the classroom enrich and enhance their spiritual development. Their reflections are well recorded in the worship reflection books which are consistently monitored by senior leaders and governors.

Prayer and reflection are a very important part of school life. Appropriate use by pupils of reflection areas and prayer boards around the school demonstrates their understanding of the purpose of prayer and reflection in their own lives. It raises the profile of reflection and prayer beyond collective worship. Key Christian festivals such as Easter, Harvest and Christmas are always celebrated in St. Peter's Church which reinforces the link and familiarises pupils with some Anglican traditions and practice. Additional elements, such as the 'Open the Book' experience, visitors from other denominations and specific topic days such as 'Pentecost' broaden pupils' understanding of worship. Close links with the church through the lay minister and foundation governors ensure that Christian distinctiveness has a high profile.

Evaluating the impact of collective worship on pupils to inform future planning is now clearly in place through pupil voice and reflection journals which are shared with the governing body. Pupils' feedback is effectively articulated through these journals which are part of a monitoring schedule so that staff and governors have a clear indication of how to improve upon the quality of worship. The school correctly identifies that monitoring and evaluation needs to be further embedded by all stakeholders so that the quality of worship offered remains engaging and relevant to the pupils' lives.

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

Purposeful and decisive leadership by the head of school and the executive headteacher has contributed significantly to the successes enjoyed by the school. A strong commitment to Christian distinctiveness is held by the leadership team which strongly influences their leadership style and their management decisions. This has a positive impact upon the way that the school promotes the vision and the way Christian values are being understood by the local community.

Governors continually work to develop a clear and consistent shared Christian vision which is based on explicit distinctive Christian values. They are aware of the need for more clarity. Coughton has a strong identity as a church school because Christ's teaching is at the heart of everything they do. This results in a caring ethos which encourages growth and inspiration for all pupils.

Governors and staff are very committed through policy and practice to the embodiment of Christian distinctiveness. Both chair and foundation governors act as critical friends who are supportive of the strategic drive to improve academic progress and pupils' wellbeing, and to embed further the Christian distinctiveness. Self-evaluation is insightful, as skilled knowledgeable governors know exactly where priorities lie and monitor factors that sustain the Christian character of the school, resource allocation and impact on school improvement. Purposeful and effective systems for monitoring and evaluating data on pupil achievement as well as the Christian character work well. All staff and governors have a very honest and challenging view of any future developmental needs of this church school. Clearly foundation governors impact positively upon the decision making and strategic planning to this school. Issues identified in the previous inspection have been, and are being addressed.

Effective leadership has contributed significantly to the success of the school through identified professional development, succession planning and care for the wellbeing of all staff. Governors and staff take up training for leadership through diocesan training courses. At present the close link between the church and school is sustained and nurtured through the substantial work of a lay person who visits regularly to work with pupils and staff.

Statutory requirements for both RE and collective worship are met. Both areas are well led which enthuses through to the staff and pupils. Strong leadership and support by the leadership team ensures a high priority for RE which has led to highly effective practice. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of the wider world, diversity and difference is deepening. RE also makes good curricular links with personal, health and social education (PHSE).

Highly successful and stable partnerships which exist between the school and the community are mutually beneficial to all. For example, pupils' sing at Coughton Court Winter festival which demonstrates the value of service as pupils show their willingness to give back to the community. Equally, several partnerships in the community help to support the schools' Christian vision through events to raise money for those in the school community. Parents appreciate and welcome the distinctive Christian values and ethos which create an atmosphere where visitors are welcomed and valued. Progress and enrichment are fostered through extra-curricular activities, such as the art base and music tuition which contribute to substantial personal development. This enables all pupils to flourish spiritually, socially and academically in a very happy and successful church school.