

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Dunston St Peter's Church of England Primary School

Back Lane
Dunston
Lincoln
LN4 2EH

Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Lincoln
Previous SIAS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Name of federation	The Spires Federation
Date of inspection	3 July 2017
Date of last inspection	11 July 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Controlled 120520
Headteacher	Graham Boyall
Inspector's name and number	Garth Hicks 901

School context

The school serves the village of Dunston and the surrounding rural area. It is much smaller than the average size primary school, with 91 pupils on roll. The school is part of a successful federation with a local church school and a community school. There are very few pupils who come from ethnic minority backgrounds. The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives additional support funding, called pupil premium, is below the national average and the proportion of pupils identified as requiring support for special educational needs is in line with the national average. The headteacher has been in post for 14 years.

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

- Relationships at all levels of the school community are firmly embedded in the school's Christian ethos and the high standard of behaviour in the school reflects the school's Christian values.
- High quality and well planned acts of collective worship deepen pupils' spiritual development and personal faith journey.
- The commitment and passion of the headteacher in promoting the Christian ethos has galvanised the school community towards a common goal of high aspirations.

Areas to improve

- Ensure that contributions from the wider school community, including expertise from local churches, strengthen monitoring and evaluation as a church school to support governors in identifying challenging areas for continuing improvement.
- Enhance the Christian ethos through the provision for religious education (RE) by integrating the 'Understanding Christianity' teaching materials into the current scheme of work, ensuring it links to the locally agreed RE syllabus.

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

The impact of the school's distinctive Christian ethos is outstanding because senior leaders ensure that the Christian vision is firmly rooted in a set of three core values of friendship, respect and honesty. These values are underpinned by Christian teaching and make a significant difference to the life of the school. Children describe ways in which they 'use the Christian values and show them to each other', for example by respecting others and themselves when mistakes occur. Everyone confidently articulates how the success of the school is firmly grounded on these shared Christian values. This success is reflected in the overwhelming majority of pupils making good or better academic progress and many attaining beyond national expectations. Parents and children are clear that they know what the core values of the school are and explain the impact that the values have on children both at school and at home. This understanding contributes to the positive school environment in which children show exemplary behaviour, are happy and feel safe and confident to share their views and opinions. Children also attribute this to embracing the school's Christian values and using them to help resolve any issues. This contributes to children's attendance which is above the national average.

Christian values are firmly established in the children's learning and are clearly identified in curriculum planning and around school, giving opportunities for teachers to explore them as an integral part of their lessons. This enables children to think deeply and reflect on what others say. The values, displays and reflection areas around school provide many opportunities where children further develop their knowledge and understanding of their own spirituality.

The Christian character is particularly evident in the high quality of relationships across the whole school, where everyone is cared for and valued as an individual, as 'every pupil is unique in the sight of God' and where 'everybody knows everybody and looks after everybody.' This is the result of the impact of Christian values being embraced by the whole school community which contributes to the school as one 'big happy family'.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development is given a high priority through a wide variety of carefully planned experiences through subjects including the arts, religious education and collective worship, that all make a significant contribution to shaping the distinctive Christian character of the school. Children recognise the importance of religious education in their lives and understand that it helps them to show an appreciation for others. Lessons make links to the school's core values enabling pupils to reflect on the similarities between major faiths and explore 'big questions'. They know that the world has great diversity and that this should be respected. This in turn, impacts on the way that they treat others within the school community.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship is inspirational and inclusive. It is central to the daily life of the school and is valued by everyone, which is reflected in the extent to which messages heard in worship make a difference to the children's lives both in school and beyond. The impact of collective worship on the school community is strong, with children saying that they particularly enjoy 'Messy Church' worship, where members of the local churches lead interactive worship. This enables those present to think more deeply about different Bible stories and how they impact on their own lives and therefore deepen their own spirituality. Children say that they enjoy worship in its varying formats and have regular opportunities to say what they think and feel about God. They also clearly articulate how Bible stories link to the school values, for example how the story of the Good Samaritan shows the values of friendship and respect and how this is lived out in the life of the school. Staff and parents say that they too value this aspect of the school's life. The importance of worship to parents is reflected in high attendance at church services, as parents feel that they are welcome and included. Children value the opportunity to plan and deliver worship. Children are regularly asked about their views of collective worship. This is acted on by school leaders and informs future planning for collective worship, ensuring that worship is purposeful and meaningful to those present. As a consequence, the impact of collective worship is continually growing, encouraging children to 'think deeper' and develop greater links within their daily lives. Children know a variety of prayers and frequently contribute their own spontaneous prayers to school worship and to the prayer boxes in their classrooms. Children understand that prayer provides an opportunity to talk to God and say that they enjoy writing prayers. Reflection is an important part of their prayer time and has helped develop children's understanding of personal prayer as a key part of their own spiritual journey.

Collective worship is well planned and based firmly on Christian values and Bible teaching. Children retell Bible

stories which help them to understand the significance of the school's Christian values. For example, they talk about the story of Zacchaeus and the importance of his respect for Jesus. Children use their understanding of values to help them interpret Bible stories so that they have relevance to their own lives. This has a significant impact on their attitudes and behaviour. One example taken from a recent collective worship was that 'if we don't forgive, God won't forgive us'. Children come to worship quietly and reverently, with appropriate music, enabling a worshipful atmosphere to be created, enhancing the opportunities for spiritual development. The use of songs is valued by children with an excellent choir enhancing the singing. Through the use of responses and the lighting of three candles during worship, children demonstrate a growing understanding of the complexities of the Trinity. One child explaining this as 'God the Father – when you pray He listens to you, Jesus is His Son who came from heaven in human form to teach people about God and the Holy Spirit was sent by Jesus to help and guide people'.

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

Through his outstanding leadership, the headteacher ensures that the school community is committed to a common goal of high aspiration, rooted in a clear Christian vision. This supports the school in making a significant difference to the families that it works with and enables all children to develop and thrive in a positive Christian atmosphere. As one parent put it, 'all children feel welcome and part of a family, regardless of who they are or what they are like. Children look after each other.' Children, parents, staff and governors clearly articulate the Christian vision and values, illustrating how they impact on the lives of the whole school community, both at school and at home. This is particularly evident in the way that children behave towards each other. The whole school community support and value the Christian ethos which underpins all aspects of its work and how it contributes towards successful outcomes for their children.

The headteacher and governors ensure that effective leadership is being fully strengthened across all schools in the federation. Dedicated and active governors play a full part in shaping the Christian vision, including addressing the areas for development from the previous inspection. School leaders and governors work closely together to enable children to make progress and experience success both academically and personally. Leaders ensure that the whole curriculum is infused with the school's distinctive Christian values. This enables the needs of every child to be met regardless of background or ability, and that every child is supported to reach their full potential. Monitoring of the school's work is regular and rigorous and leaders know the school well and accurately identify areas of strength and areas for improvement. The school is not making full use of the expertise available from within local churches to support them in strengthening the impact of the school's Christian character.

Leaders constantly drive for excellence through the Christian vision. For example, highly effective leadership of religious education (RE) makes an impact on its attainment with many children achieving above expectations. Collective worship is systematically planned and evaluation is regular and clear. Children contribute to the evaluation of worship which supports their development as leaders within the school. This makes a valuable contribution to the school's ongoing self-evaluation and gives children excellent opportunities for spiritual development. Both RE and worship have a very high priority in the school.

Links with local churches are strong. Clergy and members of local churches make a valuable contribution to the life of the school through their commitment and support of worship and RE lessons. However, the school does not always fully utilise the expertise available from the churches to support their drive for continuous improvement. The use of the church for key festivals in the Christian calendar is a good example of links between the two communities. These events are supported well by parents and therefore ensure a positive relationship between the school, the church and the local community.

The school benefits from support from the diocese which enables leaders to continue developing the school as a church school. Professional development of staff and governors keeps them up to date with latest developments in the teaching and assessment of RE, such as the 'Understanding Christianity' teaching materials. They have yet to be fully integrated into the school's RE curriculum.

The school meets the statutory requirements for RE and collective worship.