

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Uffington Church of England Primary School

School Lane Uffington Stamford Lincolnshire PE9 4SU

Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Lincoln
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Date of inspection	24 May 2018
Date of last inspection	22 May 2013
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Controlled 120541
Headteacher	Helen Simms
Inspector's name and number	Fiona Griffiths 705

School context

Uffington is smaller than the average size primary school with 87 children on roll. The pupil intake for the past two years has been significantly lower than previous years. Children come from the local community and surrounding villages and are mainly of White British heritage. The number of children with special educational needs or disabilities is well below the national average as is the number entitled to receive the pupil premium. Attendance is above national averages. The school has close links with the local church and community. The school is part of a Peer Review Partnership.

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

- The vision and drive of the headteacher, effectively supported by staff and governors, has embedded strong Christian values that are lived out in all aspects of school life.
- An inclusive Christian environment underpins excellent relationships and positive teaching and learning experiences which develops the whole child.
- High quality acts of worship make a significant impact on the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The strong sense of community means that children and their families are well supported and nurtured.

Areas to improve

- Enhance the skills and abilities of leaders to more effectively evaluate the impact of initiatives as they are implemented.
- Develop staff expertise in delivering the new religious education (RE) syllabus so that they provide opportunities that are more challenging for children to deepen their understanding of Christianity.

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

Uffington's Christian character is outstanding because a core set of six values make a significant difference to the way that children describe relationships and their place in the world. The school ensures that there is an explicit underpinning to these values through Bible teaching. When talking about the value of friendship and the story of 'The Good Samaritan', one child commented 'Jesus never left anyone out and He wouldn't want us to'. These values reflect the nurturing and inclusive learning environment which creates excellent relationships where children are proud to belong. A parent commented, 'everyone is valued here and people put others first'. The six distinct values of trust, friendship, thankfulness, compassion, justice and forgiveness make an exceptional impact on the lives of the children and the school community. Children are able to reflect on the lives of other people, including those from different cultures and traditions through their learning in religious education (RE). Children understand the need to be tolerant of others regardless of their faith background and links have been established with a Mosque, a Hindu Mandir and a Sikh Gurdwara. Religious education makes an excellent contribution to the Christian character of the school. Together with collective worship it helps children to deepen their understanding of the Christian story. Children explore questions in relation to the creation story and share their understanding of God. The Christian character of the school makes an outstanding contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of the children and ensures that spirituality is central to the broad and balanced curriculum. Its provision is enhanced by visitors from other Christian denominations and other faiths. Children in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 attend an 'Open the Book' session each week that is led by members of the local church. Since the previous inspection, dedicated cultural diversity days with Indian and local Chinese communities have deepened learners understanding and respect for the lives and heritage of others. This understanding is exemplified through the local charitable events, close to the heart of the school. All members of the school community value the giving of cards and flowers at Harvest time, taken by the children to the elderly and those living on their own in the village. Members of staff act as good role models and children of all ages demonstrate excellent behaviour towards each other and adults in school. Exclusion is rare and seen only as a last resort. This is due to the well embedded core values which impact strongly on day to day actions in and around the school. Children respond positively to being challenged as they connect belonging to an encouragement to do their best with support for each other. Learning is a meaningful experience because it relates to the children's lives. Children say that they enjoy school and readily identify work from across the curriculum of which they are proud. Attendance is above the national average. Parents speak passionately of the way in which school staff respond to their child's needs and how they are regularly consulted on the school's future developments. Families from a wide area actively choose the school for their children because of its strong Christian ethos and its good reputation for nurturing all learners and supporting their individual needs. Displays along school corridors and in classrooms reflect the Christian nature of the school. A 'something to make you think' display encourages children to raise questions at a deeper level. The use of an outside classroom for worship and a garden used for reflection, allows children greater opportunities to explore their own spirituality in greater depth.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Acts of worship are an integral part of the school's support for the emotional and spiritual wellbeing of all children. Each occasion is held in high regard and the reverent atmosphere for reflection and prayer is an aid to spiritual growth. Worship is central to the life of the school and well supported in its delivery by staff and visitors, it is engaging and motivational. Adult led worship has a thorough structure which places the Church calendar and school values firmly at the centre of themes rooted in Bible stories. Children remember acts of worship because carefully delivered messages are easily accessible and consequently have relevance to their lives. Acts of worship are distinctively Christian and fully inclusive and at the same time interactive and fun. Children talked enthusiastically about planning and delivering worship with a partner and how through their choice of songs and prayers they can more readily reflect on the teachings of Jesus. They are confident to voice their understanding and thoughts on how the Bible explains a Christian way of life. Children gain a sense of occasion through carefully chosen music, lighting of candle and the use of Anglican liturgy. Children of all ages demonstrate high levels of participation confidently offering contributions and increasingly making connections between Christian values and biblical teaching. Singing is enjoyed as an integral part of daily worship and does much to enrich the experiences of all those present. Older children are developing their understanding about God as Father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit and have a strong sense of 'God is with us'. Children can give a simple explanation of the 'Holy Trinity' from worship times and their learning in RE and how it is fundamental to the teachings of the church. Children are reflective and relish the opportunities to discuss the messages they hear in collective worship. The Bible has a prominent place within worship and children regularly use Bibles within their classroom settings. Children are presented with a Bible when they join the school and refer to them each week during 'Open the book' sessions. Year 6 children wait with eager anticipation to receive 'a more grown-up Bible' as they leave the school. Prayer is used well throughout the school day and children write prayers with enthusiasm. They show a great understanding of the purpose of prayer as talking

and listening to God. Children study the Lord's Prayer and recite it during worship. The school regularly uses the parish church as a place for worship in order to enhance the overall spirituality of the occasion. Parents regard the celebration of festivals such as Harvest, Easter and Christmas at the local church as part of the life of the school's spirituality.

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

The leadership team and governors are extremely effective in the development of the school's Christian ethos which has continued to thrive since the school's previous inspection. School leaders consistently and confidently articulate a vision for the school which is rooted in distinctively Christian values and which make a significant impact on the lives of learners and the school as a whole. The Christian vision impacts positively on standards of achievement and the wellbeing of the community. This is clearly demonstrated in the outstanding level of care shown to children and their families through the high quality pastoral care. One parent encapsulated this by saying 'there is a brilliant Christian ethos and upbringing for our children in this school'. The emphasis on Christian values is a key reason for many parents choosing the school. One member of staff commented 'children are good at reflecting upon the teachings of Jesus and this is lived out in the way they behave'. A well-developed partnership between the school, the community and the diocese results in a high awareness of local, national and global issues. The headteacher, supported by governors, model active Christian leadership. This has an extremely positive impact on placing the school at the heart of the local community. The headteacher has worked tirelessly to ensure that strong and sustained links are maintained between the school and the church. The role of the church school is seen as a mission in the community and is invitational to all. Parents have become members of the church through this mission. Procedures to monitor and evaluate the overall impact of the Christian ethos on all aspects of school life are in place. This gives senior leaders a clear grasp of what needs to be done to continue developing the distinctive Christian ethos. They ensure that areas for development are carefully identified and that issues from the previous inspection have been fully addressed. Governors, for example, monitor RE and worship to identify further areas for improvement. They understand the need to develop their skills and abilities in to more effectively evaluate new initiatives to the school. Self-evaluation is realistic and shows a good capacity to continue to improve as a church school. The school has benefited from clear advice from the diocese and are ensuring steps are put in place for the introduction of the new RE syllabus. Members of staff show great passion for their duties and the focus on raising standards. A creatively planned curriculum enables children to learn about Christianity and other faiths through educational visits and cultural days in school. During the inspection an RE session with the younger children focussed on the events of Shabbat and the blessing which takes place when sharing in the two loaves. This was a fully inclusive session where all participated and experienced another form of prayer. Children were able to offer their suggestions as to why God should be thanked at this special time with family and friends. This was a highly successful session. The RE leader, with the support of a foundation governor, have a growing understanding of developments in RE and will ensure the subject moves forward. These developments have yet to be shared with staff and therefore further training opportunities are required to provide more challenging opportunities for children to deepen their understanding of Christianity. Governors take seriously their role in appointing senior leaders who support the church school ethos. Children, parents and staff all comment on the enjoyment and enthusiasm that is brought to worship. Parents say 'religious instruction oozes from the school' and it benefits the everyday lives of their children. The school meets the statutory requirements for RE and collective worship.

SIAMS report May 2018 Uffington CE Primary School Uffington Stamford Lincolnshire PE9 4SU