

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

High Ham Church of England Primary School

High Ham, Langport, Somerset, TA10 9BY

Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Bath and Wells
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local authority	Somerset
Name of multi-academy trust / federation [delete as appropriate]	N/A
Date/s of inspection	7 February 2017
Date of last inspection	31 January 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Controlled 123761
Headteacher	Jane Rosser
Inspector's name and number	Daphne Spitzer No 37

School context

High Ham Church of England Primary School is a rural village primary school on the Somerset Levels. There are 162 children on roll in 7 single year classes. The majority of children come from outside the village and immediate area. The proportion of children with special education needs and /or physical disabilities (SEND) is below the national average as is the proportion eligible to receive the pupil premium grant. The majority of children are from White British heritage families. Funds raised by the school several years ago, have provided a room within the school for the use of the local community.

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

- The outstanding relationships between children and throughout the whole school community, based on distinctive Christian values are having a significant impact on children's personal development and well-being
- The high quality of children's spiritual awareness promoted by the school's distinctive Christian character has a strong impact on the whole life of the school
- The mutually beneficial outstanding partnership between the church and school communities enables all to feel part of the extended church family and understand the value of faith

Areas to improve

- Provide greater focus for the monitoring and evaluation of the school's Christian values in order to inform strategies that enhance their impact on the daily life of the school
- Enhance the role of children in planning and leading collective worship so that they have a greater sense of ownership of this part of the school day
- Increase children's understanding of people of other faiths who live in this country by developing a programme of visits and visitors into the religious education (RE) curriculum.

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

High Ham Church of England Primary School is an inclusive, warm and welcoming Christian community. An ethos statement and set of core values, rooted in Christian teaching with God's love at its heart are integral to the whole life of the school. The school's ethos is very effective in promoting a strong sense of Christian fellowship by its emphasis on the word 'together'. This, in turn, has created a happy and secure environment where each and every child is cherished and relationships are of the highest quality. This has a very positive impact on the children's above average attendance and achievement. Children talk enthusiastically of the Christian values of friendship, trust and forgiveness linking them to the parable of the Good Samaritan and stories from the life of Jesus. Consequently, these values are having a significant impact on children's personal development and well-being. Staff share a deep understanding of spirituality which is promoted consistently across the school within the curriculum and beyond. For example, the school's distinctive Christian character is promoted strongly by the belief that 'God gives us a helping hand at school'. A spiritual garden which has recently been relocated within the school grounds, is welcomed by children who use it well as a special space to 'be quiet and calm'. Times of prayer and reflection during the day have a profound impact and are highly valued by children. They say these times clear their minds from distractions, allowing them to focus on what is important. All concerns are shared by the use of class worry boxes which children recognise as a very effective way of communicating on a confidential, personal level with their teacher. Church workshops richly enhance the school's Christian character, are very popular with parents as well as children and enable all to deepen their understanding of special times in the Christian year. The church workshops also highlight the key role played by the vicar in the life of the school community. Children talk enthusiastically about the role of religious education (RE) within the school curriculum. They say that they value the way they use their Bibles in school to enable them to make 'the right decisions' in life. Religious education promotes the school's Christian values very effectively. Younger children are able to recognise the values of friendship and trust in Jesus' relationships with his disciples. Older children can identify a variety of shared values when comparing Islam and Christianity. Children are developing a good understanding of Christianity as a global faith. Religious education contributes well to children's understanding of other faiths, but this is limited by the lack of opportunities to meet people whose faith is different. Children demonstrate high levels of respect, tolerance and acceptance of people of other faiths and a strong desire to treat all with equality and help others at a national and international level.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Worship is distinctively Christian and of central importance in the daily life of the school. Pupils and staff alike recognise and talk about the importance for them of worship in each school day. They recognise that the focus on values creates a sense of Christian fellowship. This inspires the impressive and empathetic work undertaken by the oldest pupils in their support of their chosen charities caring for the homeless, the hungry and refugees. They understand this reflects biblical teaching related to the values, demonstrating God's love in action. All members of the school community have developed a good understanding of Anglican tradition through the use of liturgical greetings, colours that represent different seasons of the Church year and worship that takes place in church. They have a good understanding of the central role of Christ in worship as well as the Trinity from the teaching of the vicar. In this way the contribution of worship to children's understanding of Anglican tradition is significant. Singing is exuberant and adds a real spiritual element to the occasion. A school hymn book has been developed for use in church services ensuring that parents feel welcomed and included. Worship is highly effective in promoting spiritual awareness. Reflection is supported well by a quote of the week which is discussed in classes. The quality of spirituality is evident in the prayers written in class prayer books as well as spontaneous prayers said aloud by children. A time of prayer in worship includes an opportunity for personal prayer which is valued by all present. As a result, the school provides very effectively for children's sense of personal spirituality. Children regularly plan and lead worship for collective worship held in church, as well as for the major Christian festivals. However, planning for these occasions is mostly carried out with the support of staff. Children's written reflections of collective worship are used by governors as part of their monitoring and evaluation process. Issues raised by children and as part of the SIAMS committee's discussions are addressed very well and have produced positive changes.

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

The school's distinctive Christian character is of the highest quality, is deeply embedded and has a significant impact on the whole school community and beyond. The school leadership's strong Christian vision 'Love God, love each other and love learning' is the driving force at the heart of the school's success and ongoing improvement as a church school. It is also reflected in the very effective way the issues for development since the last inspection have been addressed and the leadership's continuous drive to improve. The school's self-evaluation process as a church school is thorough, pro-active and integral to the whole life of the school. The contribution of governors to the life of the school is exceptional. This is reflected in the work of the SIAMS committee, composed of governors, including the vicar and school staff. They have an excellent overview of the school's distinctive character, monitoring and evaluating its impact on a wide range of issues. However, although governors do understand the impact of the schools' Christian values on the children's behaviour and achievement their strategies for monitoring this do not include directly speaking to children. Parents are very supportive of the work of the school. Their views are sought and used although this is mainly on an informal basis. The staff are a strong team who live out the school's Christian vision. For example, by providing strong support for each other both on a professional and personal level. This, in turn, creates an open, caring and positive culture which impacts on all aspects of school life. Links with the diocese are very effective. Its support and advice are regularly sought and highly valued, as are opportunities for training which have beneficial results. The school leadership provides excellent support for the new RE subject leader enabling her to establish highly effective practice. The school is very ably supported by the local vicar. She has adopted a hugely valued role acting as chaplain to staff, parents as well as children. Her role in promoting the school's Christian ethos of sharing God's love has a significant impact on uniting the school, its church and local communities. Her invitations to regular Pop-Up Café afternoons held in the community room is a good example of the school's success in creating a cohesive Christian community. Church workshops, associated with the main Christian festivals, such as Mothering Sunday and Easter, involve local parishioners as well as the school community. This strengthens the church family and has a profound impact on the spiritual life of the school. The school meets the statutory requirements for RE and collective worship

SIAMS report February 2017, High Ham C of E VC Primary School, High Ham, Somerset, TA10 9BY