

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Crockerton Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School	
Crockerton, Warminster, Wiltshire BA1 8AB	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese	Salisbury
Previous SIAS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local authority	Wiltshire
Date of inspection	13 June 2017
Date of last inspection	21 June 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Primary 126318
Headteacher	Carol Clough
Inspector's name and number	Marcia Headon 761

School context

Crockerton is a much smaller than average village primary school with 98 pupils on roll, aged 4 -11. The majority of pupils come from outside the school's catchment area as a result of parental choice. Nearly all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged or have special educational needs/disabilities is below the national average. Within the last twelve months the governing body has ceased its federation with Heytesbury School. There have been considerable staff changes in the past four years and all members of the teaching staff have been appointed since 2013.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Crockerton as a Church of England school are good

- Clearly understood and shared Christian values direct the work of the school and have a positive impact on the lives of pupils.
- Acts of worship are joyous occasions which encourage pupils to reflect and help their spiritual growth.
- Strong links with the local church and the community provide opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of what it means to be a Christian.

Areas to improve

- Develop a shared definition of spirituality which enables the school to map opportunities for spiritual development across the curriculum.
- Develop the use of questioning in religious education (RE) to enable pupils to extend their thinking and explore concepts in greater depth.
- Develop a more systematic process that enables governors to evaluate the church-school distinctiveness with greater clarity so that it helps strategic planning for the future.

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

The thorough review of the school's mission statement and Christian values which has been undertaken recently has ensured that nine core Christian school values are at the heart of the school's development. They are prominently displayed in the 'vision vessel' mural which pupils have created, but are far less prominent on the school website. Pupils easily explain how the values affect them. They consider friendship and respect to be crucial to their school life. This is well illustrated by pupils going the extra mile to help a new pupil who was finding settling to school very difficult. They understand that forgiveness is an essential value which Jesus promoted. Older pupils explain how values are linked to Bible stories but younger pupils find this much more difficult. Behaviour in the school is excellent and pupils say this is because they trust one another, discuss matters when they have differences and respect each other. They celebrate one another's successes in sports and other competitions. Relationships in the school are harmonious and based on mutual trust and respect. Pupils' strong attitudes to learning are influenced by the values of perseverance and having the courage to try new things. They all talk of the family feel to the school and that if they 'misbehaved' they would be letting the school down. Attendance in the school is well above national averages and this shows pupils' enjoyment of all school has to offer. Achievement is at broadly good overall. The number of children working at age related expectations varies across year groups and subjects but a significantly smaller percentage of children than national are working above expectations. However, pupils are given extra support where it is needed for example those with special educational needs/disabilities are given additional help. Pupils' spiritual development is encouraged by giving them opportunities to reflect in collective worship, RE and across the curriculum. However, there is no agreed definition of spirituality to enable staff to check systematically opportunities are not being missed. Pupils' moral, social and cultural development is influenced by the values. Pupils understand right from wrong and 'Restorative Justice' is widely used by staff. The pupils are generous in helping those less fortunate and have raised considerable sums of money for charities both in the United Kingdom and overseas. While pupils display understanding of different cultures through their work in RE, they show less understanding of Christianity as a multi-cultural, worldwide religion.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship is an important part of the school day for everyone. Pupils regard it as a time when they come together to talk to God or to think about God. Worship impacts on their daily lives as pupils of all ages give instances where, because of a Bible story they had heard, they acted differently. Staff also feel strengthened by worship speaking of it as a time when they reflect and think how they live out the theme which is being explored. Worship is carefully planned by the headteacher and centred on the values of the school, each one of which is considered for a half a term. The theme of the week is explored either in greater depth or from a different perspective each day. This reinforces the messages which are being given and develops thinking. Older pupils explain very clearly how values stem from Christian beliefs and discuss that Jesus respected even those who persecuted Him. They explain that Jesus said 'everyone was an individual and we might not all like the same things or act in the same way but we needed to listen to different opinions'. The headteacher and deputy lead most worship with the local vicar leading collective worship on one day a week. She follows the theme being considered. Leaders from other Anglican churches occasionally lead worship and this means pupils experience different traditions. During the term each class has a celebration act of worship to which parents are invited. These events include Bible readings and prayers. Acts of worship in school are made special by the lighting of candles, the use of a table with a cross, its opening with a special Christian greeting to which pupils respond, the singing of songs and the placing of coloured paper reliefs over the windows representing events in the life of Jesus. Pupils are highly respectful, listen attentively, respond when asked questions or asked to participate and sing very joyously. Prayer is an important part of school life and pupils' prayers are used in acts of worship and before they end of the school day. Grace is said at lunchtime. Older pupils explain the purpose of prayer to a Christian in a very mature way. They describe different types of prayer for different occasions and that God does not always answer prayers although He hears them. They also explain that prayers may be answered in different and sometimes unexpected ways. The pupils value the Peace Garden as a place where they can go and be quiet and pray if needs be. One pupil likened it to the garden of Gethsemane, saying that as Jesus went there often with his disciples to talk, so the pupils could do the same. Years 5/6 are involved with the planning of collective acts of worship and take leading parts when a scene is to be acted out, although they do not routinely lead worship. At Harvest, Christmas and on Mothering Sunday the school holds a service in the local parish church. Worship is evaluated by pupils who are asked the simple question 'what did I learn from this act of worship?' As a result of the evaluation the headteacher changed the format of worship to allow more time for reflection. Governors also evaluate worship which provides a useful check on its effectiveness.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

Standards in religious education are good and in line with outcomes for literacy. Pupils generally make good progress in developing their knowledge and understanding because of the enthusiastic teaching and variety of activities which they undertake. The quality of teaching is good, although sometimes tasks are not always well enough matched to pupils' abilities. At times questioning is not deep enough and consequently pupils' skills of interpretation and evaluation are less well developed. The curriculum is well planned and attention is paid to the teaching of other major world religions as well as Christianity. Visitors from other faiths such as Judaism help pupils to deepen their understanding and pupils enjoyed plaiting challah bread in dough and then eating a real challah loaf as used in celebrations. 'Big questions' which encourage pupils to explore ideas are central to the subject. In a Year 1/2 class pupils were considering whether celebrating Diwali at home and in the community would bring a feeling of belonging to a Hindu child. They were learning about the story of Rama and Sita and the teacher was drawing out from this the theme of good and evil. Pupils enthusiastically joined in acting out different parts of the story and hence deepening their understanding. In a Year 5/6 class pupils considered how Christians show their faith and commitment. They investigated the lives of different people such as John Newton and Zacchaeus and talked confidently about how and in what ways they were inspired by people and they then transferred this thinking to the person they were studying. Pupils are given good feedback on their written work. Assessment is thorough, and progress tracked carefully. However, assessment in RE does not currently use the same recording system as assessment in other subjects which makes comparisons difficult. The school is well aware of this. Currently little moderation of work has taken place. Teaching in RE is well linked to the values of the school and makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The RE leader is highly enthusiastic. She has a good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses in RE, and is aware of the need for the school to consider how to include concepts from the Understanding Christianity project in the RE curriculum. She attends regular training and network meetings at the Diocese. Plans exist for the further development of RE and for more teachers to become more involved with the teaching of RE.

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

The headteacher has continued to promote the church-school distinctiveness at Crockerton and has a very clearly understood vision for the school as an inclusive part of the community. The God given uniqueness of every child is central to her beliefs. She is highly compassionate, knows each pupil well and seeks to ensure that the school meets their academic needs and pastoral well-being. Under her guidance the mission statement has been revisited and revised and the values refreshed. These are well understood by all as a result of extensive consultation and are highly influential in the life of the school. The headteacher is an excellent role model for the values. She, with an established governor, has also revisited the spiritual, moral, social and cultural planning in the curriculum to ensure these elements are strong. The school has been in a period of transition as the governing body made the decision to cease the federation with Heytesbury school, when that school became an academy. As a result, their progress in evaluating church-school distinctiveness has slowed. Governors are very committed to the school but because of the recent changes and the high turnover of governors, with almost half being new, they have placed less focus on their self-evaluation of the school. They are now beginning to remedy this and have just sought the views of parents on the effectiveness of Crockerton as a church school. Succession planning for the staffing at the school is well in hand and the school has prepared staff for the future leadership of church schools well. The school development plan for 2017 contains elements to develop the church-school distinctiveness although these are currently not given sufficient prominence. Links with the local community and church are well-developed. The local church provides helpers to assist in the Easter experience, which had a significant impact upon pupils' understanding and the walk with the donkey through Crockerton shows the strength of the links with the local community. The local vicar is a regular visitor to school and provides strong support. Links with the Diocese are good. Governors have attended training with the Diocese and the school leavers attend the service at Salisbury Cathedral. Parents are very supportive of the school. The school meets statutory requirements for RE and collective worship.

SIAMS report June 2017 Crockerton Primary School Crockerton Wiltshire BA12 8AB