

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Keevil Church of England VA Primary School

Main Street, Keevil, Trowbridge, Wiltshire. BA14 6LU	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese	Salisbury
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Date of academy conversion	July 2016
Name of multi-academy trust	Acorn Education Trust
Date of inspection	12 July 2017
Date of last inspection	21 May 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	143009
Headteacher	Max Burr
Inspector's name and number	Lorraine Pugh 819

School context

Keevil is a smaller than average primary school with 107 children on roll. It is situated in a village close to the town of Trowbridge. Children are predominantly from White British backgrounds. The school's proportion of children with special educational needs is above the national average while those receiving the Pupil Premium funding are below the national average. Since the last inspection the school has joined eight other schools, as an academy member of the Acorn Educational Trust. Within the trust one of the schools is the local senior school and six of the primary schools have church school status. The headteacher has been in post for seven years. He is taking an increasing role across all schools of the academy trust, which has given the deputy head an increased responsibility for the daily management of Keevil school.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Keevil Primary as a Church of England school are good.

- The school's Christian ethos is explicit and evident in all aspects of school life, allowing children to thrive and succeed in their work and personal development.
- The religious education (RE) curriculum contributes well to children's understanding and respect of different faiths, cultures and traditions.
- The commitment of the headteacher, supported by his deputy headteacher, governors and clergy, to the development of the school's Christian character ensures it continually makes progress as a church school.

Areas to improve

- Develop a shared understanding of spirituality so all school staff are able to effectively support the children's spiritual development across the whole curriculum, including planned spiritual encounters.
- Develop the recently introduced children's Worship Leader role so they increase their involvement in the leadership, planning, evaluation and ownership of worship.
- Ensure that governors strengthen their strategic leadership capacity, so that that any future organisational changes will not adversely impact on the school's current Christian distinctiveness and effectiveness.

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

Keevil Primary school's children feel safe and secure because all members of the school community fully support and behave according to its long established Christian vision based on the parable of the Good Samaritan, 'Always treat others as you would like them to treat you'. The 'Keevil characteristics' of resilience, diligence, teamwork, learning, communication and problem solving support children's understanding of this Christian vision and they are evident in children's behaviour towards each other. Adults in the school have succeeded in creating a nurturing environment that develops children's self-discipline and self-esteem. Strong and supportive relationships demonstrate care and consideration with everybody treating each other with kindness. Academic ambition for all children, whatever their learning needs, and the school's emphasis on good attendance, impact positively on children's attitudes. Each child is viewed as unique and special and they are very well supported when difficult situations arise. This loving and safe Christian environment allows all children to succeed, contributing to them striving to be the best they can be. Learning takes place within a calm, purposeful atmosphere where children are not afraid to challenge themselves. Children with particular needs are extremely well supported by the adults in the classroom and this allows them to be fully included in learning activities. This has resulted in the majority of children achieving national age expected academic standards for attainment and progress. The Christian ethos of the school promotes the importance of families working in close partnership with the school and parents say that they feel very welcomed and supported. They have great trust in the school and say that concerns are managed swiftly and sensitively. A shared understanding of spirituality is yet to be established among school leaders and therefore opportunities to support children's spiritual development across all areas of the curriculum have not yet been identified. Children are very clear that respect and understanding must be shown to other faiths and cultures and this is evident when they describe visits from members of the local Synagogue and Mosque. Children are aware that Britain is a country where many faiths and cultures exist together and they appreciate similarities to Christianity as well as differences. Children are strongly motivated with their charity work, actively raising funds for people that have less than themselves. They say that this is what the Good Samaritan did in helping his neighbour, despite the fact that he didn't know him.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good.

Collective worship is well organised and distinctively Christian. Children are fully engaged and willing to share their views and feelings. Christian symbols, traditions and prayers are used daily with children understanding their meaning. For example, they say the lighting of the three candles together show the presence of God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit. This supports the children's understanding of the Holy Trinity in an age appropriate way. Clear links are made within worship to the school's core Christian vision and this successfully strengthens its impact on children's daily attitudes and behaviour. Children are able to talk about the Bible stories they know and how the lessons within them can impact on their lives. Children are gaining rich and varied experiences of worship styles because a wide range of visitors are involved in leading worship. For example, children say they especially enjoy participation in the Open The Book dramatizations of Bible stories, led by members of the local churches. Children are able to talk with understanding about the Christian festivals they celebrate during the year such as Harvest, Christmas and Easter. They especially enjoy services held in the church. The vicar is highly valued within the school community and he makes a valuable contribution to children's growing understanding of Christianity. He is an active member of the school's leadership team with particular responsibilities for the school's continuing Christian development. The recently established Worship Leader role for children has greatly increased their ownership of daily worship because they have a voice in its planning, leadership and evaluation. The Worship Leaders spoken to say they have many ideas, such as the provision of an outside worship space in the school grounds. An emphasis on prayer and reflection is a fundamental part of worship and this is giving children an understanding of its nature and value. However, pupils have limited opportunities for personal prayer and reflection, outside of daily worship, which is limiting their understanding of the role it can play within their lives. The school has worked very closely with the Salisbury diocese in developing its worship provision and new systems for planning and evaluation have been in place since the start of the academic year. These have increased the impact of worship and evaluation findings have been incorporated into the development plan for further development.

The effectiveness of religious education is good.

Religious education (RE) is an important subject within the school curriculum and considered a core subject alongside literacy and maths. The RE leader is also the collective worship leader and she ensures the two areas work closely together. The school's Christian vision and Keevil characteristics are integrated into RE and worship provision. Since the previous inspection the school has developed a clearer overview of RE coverage. Detailed planning is supported by the 'Discovery' RE scheme, the Wiltshire agreed RE syllabus and the more recent

'Understanding Christianity' resources. These, and associated professional development, have increased staff knowledge and confidence when teaching RE. Assessment systems help the teachers to identify children's levels of understanding and the school is adapting its systems in line with the new resources being introduced. Observations of RE lessons showed children to be articulate and engaged in their learning. When considering deeper questions older children thoughtfully discussed their thoughts with each other. For example, 'should only Christians follow Christian behaviours?' These discussions were knowledgeable, supportive and respectful with children able to refer to previous learning to support their opinions. One child stated that a bigger commitment is shown to God through difficult situations. They displayed an understanding that there can be more than one answer to a question and that those holding a different opinion to our own should be respected. The youngest children were able to recall Bible stories that showed friendship. They were encouraged to relate this to their own lives when asked to describe how somebody had shown good friendship during the previous playtime. Children are excited when learning about other religious faiths because the lessons capture their interest. They explain that each faith is very important to those who follow it and this is why respect should be shown. Children have also gained a knowledge and appreciation of different cultures existing in Britain and the wider world. The RE leader regularly observes lessons and this includes the monitoring of RE work in books. At the moment there isn't a school system for capturing evidence of RE learning that may not be included in the RE books and the school is investigating the introduction of class portfolios to address this. The RE leader ensures that new staff receive professional development regarding the teaching of RE. Observations have shown that this training has been effective in raising the quality of lessons and impact on children's learning. This intensive support is planned to continue during the next academic year. Religious education is within a period of transition due to new teaching staff, the introduction of new materials and the need for an appropriately adapted assessment system. However the school's leadership has accurately identified the key areas for development and actions to achieve them. Religious education makes a good contribution to children's moral and social development through reinforcement of the school's Christian values.

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

The skilled and ambitious leadership of the headteacher, supported by the deputy headteacher, is rapidly improving the school's work in the further development of the distinctively Christian character of the school. He has an accurate assessment of the school's position and what needs to be achieved to move it forward. The school's leadership has recognised that staff movement within a smaller school can have a greater impact on provision and measures have been taken to address this. The newly appointed staff have been made very aware of the school's commitment to its Christian ethos and high quality professional development, alongside rigorous mentoring, have been effective in raising their teaching performance. New RE materials have been carefully trialled to ensure that they will add to the quality of provision. These are now being carefully integrated into the RE curriculum. Skills gaps, as a result of staff leaving, have been thoughtfully and successfully closed. The school's leadership is aware that measures have to be taken to distribute leadership further to minimise the impact of any future staff mobility within its small school setting. Since the last inspection the school has joined eight other schools forming the Acorn Education Trust Academy. This leadership decision was carefully considered and based on the benefits to the school and its community. Collaboration between the schools has been successful in many ways, including the effective moderation of standards in order to raise academic performance and financial efficiency for key services. Before the decision to join the academy was taken the school's leadership ensured that the Christian distinctiveness of Keevil school was highly regarded with an appropriately high status. It was agreed that at least 50% of the academy's managing board consisted of foundation governors to reflect this. The headteacher of Keevil has been given a role across the Acorn Educational Trust to ensure the needs of its church schools are met. Adults in the school consistently model core Christian values and these guide the excellent behaviour of children. Improvement areas from the previous report have been effectively addressed. Participation in diocesan professional training has deepened the leadership's understanding of their role in leading a church school. This professional training, with the support and involvement of the vicar, has been a valuable contributor to the leadership's strengthened understanding of their future Christian vision and aims. Governors are effective in their monitoring and evaluation role for Christian distinctiveness and this has resulted in an improvement plan that accurately identifies the school's strengths and areas for development. The headteacher and RE leader work closely together to ensure RE provision, and its impact on the children, is closely monitored. The school's Christian messages are embedded into RE and collective worship and monitoring evidence shows that this is supporting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the children, although further development of children's spiritual growth is recognised. The school works in very close partnership with the church and this is extending the school's capacity to ensure Christian distinctiveness. Strong partnership working with the Parish Council exists and this results in benefits for the school. For example, the planned removal of some of the church pews to expand the teaching space available for visiting classes. The school meets the statutory requirements for RE and collective worship.