

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Greenford Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Chilfrome Lane, Maiden Newton, Dorchester, Dorset. DT2 0AX

Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese	Salisbury
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Local authority	Dorset
Date of inspection	8 February 2018
Date of last inspection	7 March 2013
Type of school and unique reference number	Primary 113762
Headteacher	Kim Jackaman
Inspector's name and number	Revd David Hatrey 844

School context

Greenford Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary is a smaller than average school. The majority of the children come from a White British heritage. The number of children who are entitled to pupil premium support funding and those who have special educational needs/disabilities (SEND) is at least in line with above national averages. In September 2016 a new leadership team was appointed following the retirement of the long serving headteacher.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Greenford Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School as a Church of England school are good

- Children have a growing understanding of distinctive Christian values and articulate the difference they make to their lives and attainment.
- Collective worship has a higher profile in the life of the school and recent initiatives have deepened children's understanding of Christian values and extended opportunities for children to become involved.
- Religious education (RE) is making a growing contribution to the school's Christian ethos with the experienced coordinator introducing new ideas to raise the impact of this further.

Areas to improve

- Establish an agreed understanding of spirituality and ensure opportunities for this are identified in planning enabling children to express their deepening ideas in a variety of ways.
- Enable children to plan and lead worship so they have greater responsibility in this area.
- Create a rigorous system for the monitoring and evaluation of all aspects of a church school which involve all members of the school community and which lead to on-going improvements.

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

The appointment of a new leadership team for September 2016 identified the need for a vision and values day in order to re-establish the importance of Christian values. Members of the school agreed a set of Christian values, either new or existing, which reflected their community. These are: perseverance, courage, forgiveness, tolerance, respect and friendship. The re-launch of these in September 2017 was led by 'I sing Pop' a group which explores Christian values through songs enabling children to deepen their understanding. Children talk excitedly about these songs and explain the view that Christian values are given to us by God. "These help us to be better people," was a common response. Leaders ensure values have a high profile in the daily life of the school. Children explain what these values mean and look like and give examples of where they use them. They make strong links between Christian values and their learning and achievement, and how courage and perseverance for example help them to overcome challenges and become successful learners. This has been a particular focus for the school, to enable children to take increased responsibility for their learning, developing positive attitudes and believing they can be successful. The school uses 'dojos' as part of its award system, these are recorded so they can be shared with parents and carers. Staff use these when children demonstrate Christian values, with the reasons for the award clarified so children understand how values make a difference in various contexts. Children are beginning to articulate the distinctive Christian meaning of values by making links to particular Bible stories which reflect these. Behaviour and relationships are a strength of the school, children work well collaboratively, with older children spontaneously supporting younger peers and acting as role models. Children make good links between their behaviour and Christian values and are confident to give examples where these have influenced relationships. The strategic focus of the school has been to raise progress and children's aspirations. New approaches to teaching and learning have seen more children make good and better progress and achieve their potential. This has seen attainment rise and is particularly evident in reading and mathematics. There is good provision for disadvantaged children who are generally making comparable progress with their peers. The provision for spirituality is still developing. As yet there is no agreed understanding of spirituality from which all staff work, nor are opportunities for spirituality identified in planning. Forest School opportunities provide rich moments to explore the beauty and wonder of God's creation. Children's verbal comments here show some deeper understanding of ideas. The introduction of collective worship reflection diaries this year enables children to record ideas in words, although not in other creative ways. Children's comments show this is at an early stage of development. The school's Christian character effectively promotes attitudes of respect and tolerance for those who hold different views. Work in RE supports this, developing an understanding of other world faiths and how believers express this. The school recognises that children's understanding of Christianity as a multi-cultural faith is at an early stage of development. Children have some understanding of the role of the local church in their community and the difference this makes. The RE coordinator is experienced and actively introduces new ideas, the most significant being the 'Understanding Christianity' resources. An enquiry based approach is developing to consider questions of meaning and purpose. RE makes a good contribution to extending children's understanding of Christian values and the difference they make to daily lives. Children articulate that they generally enjoy RE although they are not always able to explain why.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

The leadership team have made thoughtful changes which have raised the profile and impact of collective worship. More detailed planning for worship now focuses upon developing aspects of Christian values over the course of a half term. This enables staff and clergy to lead worship with different approaches which are appreciated by children. Contemporary songs, introduced by 'I sing Pop,' have encouraged children to respond in an active way which they readily enjoy. Leaders have responded to children's requests to make worship more visual and to have more opportunities to be involved. Worship in classes has been introduced and children are now taking greater responsibility for different aspects of this. Another new venture has seen the 'Open the Book' team lead worship which children look forward to as they participate in dramas. Children now monitor and evaluate worship using an agreed system, they recognise some of the key elements in worship and suggest how they could be improved. These are beginning to be used by the school to consider future developments. However, at present children are not able to plan and lead worship. Most children think that collective worship makes a difference for them and articulate how this has deepened their understanding of Christian values. They were not confident though to recall particular acts of worship which made them think or have helped them. The main seasons of the Christian year are celebrated either in church or school. Children make some contribution to these notably through music and readings prepared by classes. The Easter story is recalled in some detail, the children explaining the importance of this and what this means for Christians. Children are introduced to prayer at an early age and explain how this helps them to share their ideas with God. They explore different types of prayers such as asking, supported by figures such as 'Andy Ask' which helps them to remember these. The prayers of older children show some progression where they respond to

local and national events in a sensitive manner. The introduction of a prayer tree allows children to write prayers when they feel the need. Some children have found this helpful. Reflection spaces in classes have been created but these have yet to be evaluated so their impact is unclear. Worship themes draw upon biblical themes so children have a growing understanding of Jesus and His teaching. Worship often begins with a Trinitarian greeting which remind children of their importance in worship. Children are able to talk about the Trinity at an age related level. Governors attend worship which has led to conversations with the leadership, at present though there is no written record of this nor evidence to indicate that this has led to ongoing improvements.

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

The new leadership team are enthusiastic and committed to the ongoing development of aspects of a church school. This is evident in the higher profile given to Christian values and improvements in collective worship. The new vision; 'Growing together, preparing for life' is prominently displayed. Leaders articulate some biblical understanding which underpins the vision. They talk about children growing together as they develop an understanding of Jesus' teaching and particularly Christian values which show how they can live together as part of a community. All at the school are on a learning journey, learning about Jesus, ourselves and what we can achieve. The school perceives their mission as preparing children for life with the knowledge and skills they need. The provision for the well-being of all emerges from this so all are ready for life. At present children have a growing understanding of the vision, as this has only recently been introduced, but only a few older children make links between the vision and Christian values. Most children perceive the vision as relating to their attitudes to learning and being the best academically that they can be. The school's Christian character shapes their collaborative relationships with other schools in the West Dorset Schools' Collaboration. This brings mutual benefits, drawing on staff expertise and joint professional development. The school's focus on teaching and learning has been well supported by governors who are involved in reviewing children's progress and evaluating the impact of new initiatives. This however has not been fully extended to cover the work of a church school. At present, the governors and headteacher have not established an effective structure for the monitoring and evaluation of all aspects of a church school which includes all stakeholders. Whilst there have been some governor visits to monitor the school's Christian distinctiveness, there is no written record of these nor evidence to show these have led to any improvements. The school does not have an agreed plan to develop aspects of the school's Christian distinctiveness. The school is aware of this and taking action to address this. Diocesan expertise has been drawn upon to make improvements with the introduction of 'Understanding Christianity' resources being an example of this. The local church makes a valuable contribution to the life of the school. There is good support for worship, notably from the 'Open the Book' team, the celebration of Christian festivals and the joint funding of the 'I sing Pop' group. The vicar provides effective pastoral care and works well as part of the governors. Parents speak enthusiastically about the school and welcome opportunities to come in to school and participate in the parent's forum, where they feel they can share their views. The school plays a significant role in the community taking a lead in a number of events, notably at Easter. The school fulfils the statutory requirements for RE and collective worship.

SIAMS report February 2018 Greenford CE VC Primary School, Chilfrome Lane, Maiden Newton. DT2 0AX