



## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

### Warminster Sambourne CE VC Primary School

**Previous SIAS grade: satisfactory**

**Current SIAMS grade: good**

**Diocese: Salisbury**

Local authority: Wiltshire

Dates of inspection: 19 October 2015

Date of last inspection: 15 December 2010

School's unique reference number: 126374

Headteacher: Catherine Chalk

Inspector's name and number: Marcia Headon 761

#### School context

Sambourne, with 137 pupils on roll, is much smaller than the average-size primary school. Almost all pupils come from White British backgrounds. The proportion of children with special educational needs or physical disabilities is broadly average but the proportion of children with an education, health and care plan (plans for children who have more complex needs) is higher than the national average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for additional funding known as the pupil premium is below average. Approximately ten percent of children have a parent in the armed forces. The school has recently completed an extensive building and refurbishment programme.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Sambourne Primary school as a Church are good

- The exceptionally close links with the local church support the work of the school and help it to maintain its Christian distinctiveness.
- The emphasis upon the spiritual development of pupils permeates the whole curriculum.
- The commitment and support of the foundation governors has a profound effect upon the Christian ethos of the school.

#### Areas to improve

- Provide more opportunities for the pupils to experience and respond to a wider variety of Christian traditions in worship.
- Ensure that the pupils understand that the values of the school have their roots in Biblical stories
- Involve the pupils in the monitoring and evaluation of collective worship.

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

Pupils know the values of the school exceptionally well and it is evident that these values of courage, perseverance, friendship, creativity and truthfulness influence pupils' actions. For example, pupils say that perseverance is very important to them when they find a piece of work challenging and that they value friendships knowing that they can get help from another child. Behaviour is good and the children say this is a result of them thinking about the school values. Relationships within the school are very strong, with staff showing mutual respect to one another and to the children. However, what is less clear to some children are the links between the five values and Jesus' teaching. Some who had focussed upon creating a banner about courage can explain that the story of the Good Samaritan teaches about the importance of courage but they cannot explain how the other school values have their roots in Biblical teaching. Likewise, although pupils' class charters show the rules the children follow they are not well linked to the Christian ethos of the school. Currently, neither the school's policies nor the school's mission statement make any reference to its Christian foundation or the school's values. The school meets the needs of learners well and is very inclusive. The staff make good use of assessment to set targets and as a result pupils' achievement is good and their progress compares positively with national expectations. In 2014 the gap between those pupils in receipt of pupil premium and other pupils narrowed. Although it widened in 2015, the school's own information shows that disadvantaged pupils achieved well when their starting points are considered. Because the school believes strongly that children need to be made very aware of how God's love for them is expressed they provide good care and support to all pupils and their families, especially when they are in difficulty. They provide exceptional help for any child who is in personal difficulty, talking to them about matters of faith as well as providing pastoral support. Overall, the spiritual development of pupils is good and this is fostered through teaching in Religious Education (RE) as well as across the whole curriculum. Pupils develop their understanding of what it means to be human or the wonders of creation through the wide variety of opportunities given to them. They express this in colourful displays of art and in responses to poetry such as 'In Flanders Field' or by their singing. The pupils show tolerance to others of different faiths and the current Wednesday collective worship led by the headteacher is skilfully demonstrating links between British values and Christian thinking. However, pupils show less knowledge of the different traditions within the Christian church. The moral and social development of pupils is good. Through collective worship and RE they have learnt the importance of helping others less fortunate and the recent harvest festival produce was given to support the local foodbank. Pupils also support charities such as Save the Children, Trussell Trust and the Shoebox appeal. RE is carefully planned and the use of key questions is very effective in making pupils think. In a Key Stage 1 lesson seen pupils were writing a letter as from God reflecting what he wanted humans to do for his creation. Outcomes in RE are similar to those in other core subjects.

### **The impact of collective worship on the school community is good**

Collective worship has improved since the previous inspection. It continues to be an important time when the pupils and staff come together to reflect, pray and give thanks to God. It plays a significant role in developing spirituality through the questions which are posed and the themes which are directly related to the children's experiences. Worship is carefully planned by the deputy headteacher with the local church, using the Values for Life scheme and linked to the Christian calendar. Members from the local church lead worship weekly and extend the theme the school is following. All acts of worship have a strong Christian focus and use Bible stories which the pupils clearly enjoy. Music and singing also play an important part in collective worship and are enjoyed by the whole school. Older pupils are now more actively involved in planning and leading collective worship in school and the Year 6 group responsible for this are beginning to include the younger pupils in this. For example, pupils from different year groups have been involved in a dramatic representation of the crossing of the Red Sea which was linked to the value of trust. The younger year groups were able to make links

between this and the school's values of courage and perseverance. However, while the collective worship engages and encourages pupils to think, in the school hall there is relatively little atmosphere and no focal point for children to consider. Nor is there any use of a formal Christian greeting or wider use of a variety of Christian liturgy. Older pupils have some understanding of the Holy Spirit which is developed in the Pentecost Service but the younger children have little knowledge of this. The school uses the local church extensively, especially for services at important festivals such as Harvest, Christmas, Pentecost and Easter. These are well attended by parents, carers and wider families. Pupils play a leading role in these services and the parents speak appreciatively of the singing by Year R in the recent harvest festival which was described as being very moving. The welcome service for new parents at the beginning of the year, emphasizes the importance which the school places upon worship. Prayer plays a significant role in the life of the pupils. One pupil described it as a vital way to communicate with God. The school prayer is well known by all the pupils and one said prayer was so important to her that she wanted to write a prayer which her family could use regularly based upon the ideas in the school prayer. Each classroom has a spiritual book in which pupils are encouraged to write prayers and these together with a prayer tree are used in the school. Collective worship and its impact are now much more closely monitored and evaluated by the senior team and Foundation Governors. Their suggestions are acted upon by the school. However, currently there is little routine evaluation completed by pupils or other staff.

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

The headteacher has continued to share her vision of what it means to be a church school. She articulates this strongly as she wishes the school to be a place where children are accepted and embraced as part of God's family. The school improvement plans for both 2014 and 2015 contain specific sections related to the distinctiveness of the church school and the Foundation Governors have reviewed and evaluated the plan regularly. They have a good understanding of the areas which still require development. The headteacher is a good role model; she listens to the views of her staff but also ensures they understand why any actions are to be introduced. The current Deputy Headteacher has worked closely with her and with the Diocese and Foundation Governors to move the school forward. Although the school is aware of the need to develop the future leadership of church schools more widely until recently it has not had the capacity to do this. The Foundation Governors have worked tirelessly for the school, are very supportive of it and are highly motivated for the benefit of the children. They are assiduous in monitoring and evaluating both RE and collective worship and following up on any suggested actions. They have addressed the points from the previous inspection. They take their role very seriously and have attended relevant training courses. They are about to conduct a skills audit to ensure they have the necessary attributes. Links with the local church are exceptionally strong and have grown since the previous inspection. The pupils see the church as an adjunct to the school as it provides not only the venue for services, but many curricular opportunities and personnel who help in the school. For example in the summer term the church ran a prayer week and the pupils participated fully in this, thus enhancing their understanding of prayer. Displays from this were shared between the church and the school. The church newsletter informs the congregation of events in the school and many pupils come to the church for other extra-curricular activities. The school has good links with the Diocesan Board of Education and has received good support from them. Parents like the school's welcoming atmosphere and the principles which it teaches their children. They consider the firm values and Christian ethos of the school support the pupils very strongly.

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