

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Seabrook Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Seabrook Road, Hythe, Kent, CT21 5RL	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Outstanding
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local authority	Kent
Name of federation	
Date of inspection	31 January 2017
Date of last inspection	15 September 2011
Type of school and unique reference number	VC 118678
Executive Headteacher	Liz Carter
Inspector's name and number	Susan Thompson 714

School context

Seabrook primary school is a voluntary controlled church school of 108 pupils. The school entered a soft federation in January 2017 with neighbouring St Martin's church primary school. The headteacher became executive headteacher of both schools. This has resulted in a re-structuring of the senior leadership team to create two head of school positions. A new incumbent started in the parish in April 2016 and her parish includes four church schools. The number of pupil premium pupils is in line with the national average. The number of pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language has dropped below the national average.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Seabrook Primary as a Church of England school are outstanding

- All members of the school community can articulate the Christian teachings which are the foundation of the values.
- Church school developments are central to the whole school improvement plan demonstrating their importance to school leaders.
- The pupils' spiritual, moral and social development (SMSC) is a core feature of school life as exemplified in the priority given to reflection areas around school.
- Pupils are active participants in leading and planning collective worship resulting in the time being valued by all stakeholders.

Areas to improve

- Forge links between a greater variety of biblical stories to further the pupils' understanding of the values as celebrated through the Values Passports. These are used to identify when children have shown certain values in their conduct.

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

All members of the school community can articulate the biblical roots of the values: peace, forgiveness, respect, love, hope and perseverance. Pupils make links between charitable giving, Christian values and the parable of the Good Samaritan. One child explained this by saying, 'Jesus is key to our values'. Pupils celebrate when others show a value by nominating them for a peace poppy, a feather of forgiveness or a respect ribbon. Staff and pupils see them as positive; a teacher said that they encourage the pupils 'to think of others and not just themselves.' The parents and staff note the impact of the values on life inside and outside of school. The new Values Passports are a tool to show how the children demonstrate the values inside and outside of school.

Pupils speak highly of and take great pride in the reflection areas around the school; they support pupils' spiritual development well. These were actively used by the pupils during the inspection. Many had resources to touch to support reflection and prayer books evidence use of these areas. In order to promote cultural development, pupils in Foundation Stage learn about a range of stories and festivals throughout the year. Pupils said 'you should be kind to everyone whatever their religion' and recognised that 'you don't have to be a Christian to follow Christian values.'

The vision is also demonstrated by the standards of achievement and attendance across the school which are broadly at or above national expectations across a wide range of indicators. Religious education (RE) is treated as a core subject at Seabrook and evaluated using the church school framework. Learning in RE and in English books evidenced work of comparable quality. The school supports all pupils very effectively because the school is clear that everybody matters to God. A number of pupils have been well supported to stay in school, avoid exclusion and develop a love of learning against the odds.

Relationships with the parent body are strong as reflected in the parent voice and survey results. Families have been supported by school staff in times of difficulty. A parent said 'everyone is welcomed and accepted, the Christian values have a wonderful impact on everyone associated with the school'. Staff agree it is the most caring environment they have ever worked in, this results in staff who are extremely committed to the pupils and the school.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship is very well planned by two lead staff members. Pupils are active participants in leading and planning collective worship. Each class leads a collective worship each term, linking to the focus value. All pupils are given the opportunity to respond thoughtfully to the message of collective worship. During the inspection, on leaving collective worship, pupils walked through a sand tray symbolising forgiveness and a fresh start. They enjoy the time of coming together and can articulate how it makes a difference to their lives, for instance in learning to forgive themselves and others. The 'Lighting the Candle' group includes pupils from a cross-section of the school population. They make suggestions about collective worship and are actively involved in planning and leading collective worship. Pupils are clear on the meaning of the Trinity; they can name each part of the Trinity and explain the basic concept. This understanding is supported by the regular reference to the Trinity in collective worship, a liturgical response when lighting the three candles on the focal table and through prayers. Pupils understand the structure of the liturgical year, linking this readily to the colours of each season, as reflected in the focal table cloth. They can talk with understanding about the different periods, for instance, 'epiphany remembers the magi visiting Jesus.'

Awareness of Christianity as a global faith is developed through collective worship and across the school. Pupils sing songs that originate in different countries and say the Lord's Prayer in French. A range of different people leads collective worship; these include representatives from local churches including South Kent Community Church. This variety is valued by the pupils and helps them understand diversity within Christianity. Provision is enhanced further by strong links with the local parish, the incumbent leads worship for the pupils monthly in the parish hall or in the school hall because visiting the church requires a shuttle service in a mini bus.

Governors monitor collective worship regularly, this is recorded formally three times a year. Everyone who leads collective worship is observed. The outcome of recent monitoring gave rise to a different seating pattern for the pupils in the hall. This has enabled the pupils to see more clearly and gives a greater sense of community as the oldest pupils can easily support their buddies during this time. Pupils are given opportunities to feedback their views either through school council or at any time, which was observed during the inspection. This means they know they are listened to and their ideas used to improve the school.

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

Governors are committed to the vision that 'Everybody Matters' and include all the pupils and staff within this vision. This was echoed by a parent, 'the school is committed to the development of the whole child, they do this by inclusion, with love, their Christianity shines through in all they do.' Governors monitor the work of the school effectively making thoughtful comments in feedback. Christian distinctiveness is a standing item on the governing board agendas and is referenced within each headteacher report to governors. This ensures that all governors are informed of the developments and involved in strategic planning of the school as a church school. School leaders have ensured that areas for improvement suggested in the diocesan monitoring visit in May 2016 have been addressed. One such area was the introduction of the 'Understanding Christianity' materials; these are impacting positively on the quality of RE provision. New leadership of RE is being supported by the headteacher to ensure that the subject retains a high profile in the school and training is provided to develop teachers' skills.

Staff report that there is a strong team which is mutually supportive. Flexible working patterns have been used to enable staff to build their confidence and accommodate domestic arrangements. This ensures that the school retains skilled staff committed to the school's vision. Pupils have a wide range of leadership roles within the school that impacts on the school community: anti-bullying officers, school council representatives, friendship ambassadors and buddies. This gives to pupils a stake in how the values impact on school life. Both the headteacher and chair of governors are involved in working collaboratively with other schools in the federation and prior to this with other schools in the area. They are motivated out of a desire to provide a high quality education to all children in the area, this springs from 'Everybody Matters'. This gives greater opportunities for collaborative working and staff development to further enhance provision at Seabrook.

Seabrook school has links with a number of Christian groups in the community including, Urban Saints who run a Christian afterschool club for pupils. This means children have the opportunity to explore different Christian denominations represented in the community. The school has supported the South Kent Community church in raising money to build a school overseas. This together with other activities help the children see the needs of others and respond with compassion.

Seabrook school fulfils the statutory requirements for collective worship and RE.

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