



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Fairhaven Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Previous SIAMS grade: Outstanding

Diocese: Norwich

Local authority: Norfolk

Dates of inspection: 27 November 2014

Date of last inspection: 9 December 2009

School's unique reference number: 121150

Headteacher: Janice Dix

Inspector's name and number: Jean Johnson 608

School context

This smaller than average primary school draws its pupils from South Walsham and neighbouring villages. The school is situated close to the church. Most of the 109 pupils on roll are of White British heritage. The permanent head teacher recently returned to the school after a significant period of compassionate leave in the last academic year.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Fairhaven CE VC Primary as a Church of England school are good

- The strong Christian ethos of the school supports all learners, promotes good relationships and behaviour and ensures that learners make good progress.
- Effective partnerships with the local church community and the involvement of the local vicar strengthen the Christian character of the school.
- Foundation governors have a clear vision for the school as a church school and actively promote its Christian distinctiveness.
- Collective worship is central to the life of the school and has a positive impact on pupils' behaviour and attitudes.

Areas to improve

- Ensure that the quality of teaching and learning in RE is consistent throughout the school and that pupils make at least expected progress during their time at the school.
- Provide prompts and opportunities for pupils to reflect on the distinctively Christian values of the school.

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

The school's Christian ethos is clearly evident in the good relationships and attitudes to work present in the school. It is rooted in the school's mission statement, "Each person has their own special gift from God," which is displayed throughout the school. Pupils respect and celebrate each other's talents and say that everyone is good at different things. Parents say that the school's Christian character encourages their children to be considerate towards others

and that those pupils with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) are well supported. As a result, pupils feel valued and secure and most make good or better progress with more vulnerable pupils making at least the same progress as their peers.

The school's core Christian values of respect, forgiveness and tolerance underpin class 'rules'. Pupils have ownership of these rules because they discuss and agree them at the start of each school year. As a result, pupils care for each other and behaviour is good. This is celebrated and reinforced by displays in classrooms.

The Christian ethos of the school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) through a range of activities. Pupils and parents talk about how the school supports their partner school in Malawi as well as other charity fund raising that pupils are involved in. Parents say that their children learn about other faiths as well as Christianity in religious education (RE), and that this is an inclusive school. Pupils demonstrate their concern for the environment and are working towards gaining the gold Eco Award.

Symbols and displays throughout the school reinforce its status and mission as a church school. There is a designated quiet bench in the playground; however there are currently no quiet spaces within the school for pupils to use for reflection and contemplation.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship is an integral part of the school day. It is valued as a time when all members of the school community come together to affirm the Christian ethos of the school. All teaching staff lead worship and pupils appreciate the variety of worship leaders they experience. They talk about the vicar leading worship as well as going to church for special celebrations in the church's year. The head teacher takes the lead in planning worship, using themes linked to Christian values and the main Christian festivals. Pupils give examples of Bible stories that they hear in worship, for example David and Goliath, which they say encouraged them to be brave, to trust in God and to ask him for help if they are in trouble. These stories are linked to modern examples so that pupils can further relate them to their everyday lives. As a result, the choices pupils make regarding behaviour and attitudes are good.

Pupils chosen from across the school set up an altar table at the start of worship. The table is covered by a fall made by members of the local church community and pupils place a candle, cross, Bible and fish symbol on it. These symbols reinforce pupils' understanding of Anglican traditions and act as a focus for worship. Pupils say that the candle reminds them that God is the light of the world and always with us. They understand the cross as a symbol of Jesus' death, but they are unsure of the significance of the fish symbol. Pupils are not yet secure in their understanding of the Trinity as a whole.

Foundation governors make regular visits to the school and church to monitor acts of collective worship. They monitor planning annually. Pupils' views on collective worship are taken into account. They talk about writing their own prayers for use in class and collective worship. They say that they use prayer in their everyday lives to say thank you to God and sometimes to ask his forgiveness if they have done something wrong. As a result of their feedback to governors, prayers used are now more closely related to the worship theme. They have also been given more opportunities to be actively involved in collective worship and enjoy participating in role play and drama activities. Pupils do not have time for reflection in all acts of collective worship and have yet to take an active role in planning.

The effectiveness of the religious education is satisfactory

The subject is in transition as the school completes the development and implementation of its scheme of work and assessment procedures in line with the new Norfolk Framework. The headteacher (RE subject leader) and the local incumbent, who is the RE governor, have worked together to plan the changes. Careful consideration has been given to the blocking of RE teaching to ensure pupil engagement and continuity of learning.

Sequences of lessons that have been carefully planned, allow pupils to engage with, enquire into, explore and evaluate a key question for example “Why are Christian people baptised?” They enjoy exploring the theme in a variety of interactive thought provoking ways. This gives them opportunity to learn about the topic, for example the significance of baptism, as well as enabling them to express their own thoughts and feelings. They are encouraged to make links between RE teaching and key messages they hear in collective worship. During discussion they ask challenging questions such as if God loves everyone, why did all but Noah and his family have to die? Visits to places of worship provide first hand experiences, deepening pupils’ knowledge and understanding. Pupils devise their own questions, related to their topic, to ask the vicar when they visit the church. Appropriate learning outcomes are clearly defined and pupils’ responses assessed against them. When this happens, outcomes for pupils are good. However this approach is not consistent across the school, so overall attainment and progress in RE is not yet in line with national expectations. Foundation governors monitor RE planning but do not systematically monitor outcomes for pupils. The school’s scheme of work meets statutory requirements and the statement of entitlement.

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

Foundation governors actively promote a clear Christian vision for the school, firmly rooted in Christian values. This contributed towards sustaining the school during an unsettled period last year. The headteacher, supported by all staff, provides strong leadership for the school as a church school and is committed to promoting the well-being of all learners.

Parents value the school’s Christian ethos and its strong links with the local churches. Some give this as their reason for choosing this school for their children. They talk about how Christian values are exemplified in relationships in school. A significant number attend the school’s Christian celebrations in churches in the benefice. Families from the school attend the monthly Sunday Plus activity based service in the benefice, something which is supported and promoted by the school.

The school and church community work together to effectively support pupils SMSC development. The rector leads collective worship and the curate runs a weekly Bible club. Pupils who attend enjoy the Bible based activities they take part in. They produce displays, for example images of God, which encourage reflection on the part of others. The PCC raises money to provide pupils starting at the school with a copy of ‘Stories Jesus Told’ as well as the Bibles, that are presented to pupils at the end of their time at the school. Pupils and parents appreciate these gifts as supporting the school’s Christian foundation.

Appropriate developments in RE and collective worship form part of the school’s improvement and development plan. All staff are committed to the future development of the school as a church school. They attend training for example to support their teaching of RE as well as the Christian distinctiveness of the school.

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