

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Fringford Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

The Green Fringford Bicester OX27 8DY

Current SIAMS inspection grade

Outstanding

Diocese

Oxford

Previous SIAMS inspection grade

Good

Local authority

Oxfordshire

Date of inspection

20 June 2018

Date of last inspection

25 June 2013

Type of school and unique reference number

Voluntary Controlled Primary 123102

Headteacher

Franco Pastore

Inspector's name and number

Rev Canon Tim Harper 827

School context

Fringford is a small rural Oxfordshire Church of England primary school with 94 pupils. Most are from a white British background. It is a half form entry school with four vertically grouped classes. Ten pupils have special educational needs and/or disability. Four pupils are eligible for free school meals. The school has a close working relationship with five other church primary schools and the Bicester Learning Partnership. In addition to the head teacher there are five experienced teachers. The headteacher has been in post for three years. The school was rated as Good by Ofsted in June 2017.

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

- Fringford is a good and rapidly improving school that delivers a strongly Christian, affirming and holistic education to all pupils.
- The inspirational leadership of the headteacher has driven a significant upgrading of the school's distinctive Christian ethos.
- A committed and effective governing board ensures that the leadership and management of the school delivers outstanding outcomes in all areas of school life.

Areas to improve

- Develop a greater understanding of Anglicanism so that it is understood as a global expression of the Christian faith.
- Increase the involvement of the pupils in planning, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of collective worship so that their experience of corporate and personal spirituality is further developed.

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

The school's distinctive Christian character is outstanding because its core set of Christian values derived from Galatians 5, is well understood, articulated and lived out by all key stakeholders. These are: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, humility, self-control, perseverance, gentleness. The values are firmly embedded in all areas of school life. As a result, the distinctive Christian vision of the school has delivered significantly improving outcomes for all pupils. This can be seen in the way the values underpin academic work in a holistic way, ensuring that good progress is now made by those of every level of ability. A clear mission statement owned by all key stakeholders, which was an area to develop from the last inspection, now steers the life of the school. Driven by the inspirational leadership and drive of the headteacher, his active promotion of the Christian values results in a caring Christian community where everyone seeks the good of one another. Behaviour is consequently very good, as the values are modelled by all key stakeholders day to day. In this way the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) of learners from all faiths or none is wonderfully enhanced. Visitors remark that they see the values 'lived out in the playground'. Due to these good relations bullying is rare, and sensitively dealt with when needed. This reflects best practice as detailed in the Church of England's guidance, 'Valuing All God's Children.' Attendance is above the national average because the school's Christian values inform a compassionate approach to supporting high attendance. Safeguarding is exemplary which supports the Christian vision. The school's curriculum is lively and vibrant. Reflection in all areas of the curriculum underpins both learning and personal development. Parents comment that with their learning the children 'come home and talk a lot about Christianity and other religions'. They speak of the way Christianity is 'overt' and practised every day at school. The consequence is that by understanding and practising the distinctive Christian values, the pupils also grasp the importance of tolerance and diversity in British society and respect for the views of other faiths.' Religious Education (RE) is very well planned, monitored and evaluated using the Oxford Diocesan scheme of work. It integrates with and informs all other areas of the curriculum reinforcing the values of the school particularly effectively. As a result, the pupils enjoy RE lessons and speak of how much they value the insights they gain about Christianity and other world faiths. However, there is a need for pupils to develop a greater understanding of Christianity in the Anglican tradition as a multi-cultural world faith.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship is well planned and monitored by the headteacher and clergy. Worship is evaluated using parent surveys, conversation with pupils and other key stakeholders. This in turn is discussed at governing body meetings and consequently feeds back into the school development plan. It is delivered in a balanced and thoughtful way through the week, culminating in a celebration assembly each Friday where achievement is celebrated in the presence of parents and visitors. Worship sets the distinctive Christian values of the school in their social context through the use of Bible stories linked to life in today's world. As a result, the pupils enthusiastically participate by preparing the hall for worship, singing and engaging in dialogue with the leader and reflecting on the value of the month. 'We ask questions', and 'reflection time helps us take things in'. However, the impact of collective worship is not yet outstanding as the pupils express a wish to be more actively engaged in the planning and delivery of worship. The clergy are frequent visitors to worship and their contribution each week is particularly valued by pupils and parents. Parents comment that clergy make strong links between the Christian faith and life in today's world. The presence and contribution of the clergy encourages visits to the parish church by pupils, parents and friends at major festivals and for study. As a result, all key stakeholders are involved in worship on a regular basis. These occasions are well received and have a positive impact upon them. The consequence is that families attend the village church more regularly, and they say it is 'because my child wants to'. This also helps the school to see itself as part of the Anglican family. A child in Togo is sponsored by the school through Compassion UK. However, there is a need for further development of the pupils' understanding in how Christianity extends to service of others worldwide. Classroom prayers written by the pupils are used throughout the day, and an attractive 'Prayer Space' hut in the playground offers a place to 'Come and have some quiet time or a chat with God'. Each classroom has a reflection and prayer space where pupils learn to engage in personal prayer. In this way the pupils learn to develop a personal spirituality. The impact of this is seen in how the pupils speak with assurance of the person of Jesus Christ as Son of God and demonstrate a remarkably developed age appropriate grasp of the concept of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. 'He is three in one, but just one God'.

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

The leadership and management of the school is outstanding because the work of the committed and effective governing body has significantly improved and continues to improve outcomes for all learners. A focus group, a point from the last inspection, consisting of a range of stakeholders also ensures the distinctive Christian ethos of

the school underpins all areas of school life. The school development plan is always on the agenda and governors make regular visits to the school to evaluate progress. Minutes are colour coded to track questions. All governors have an area of responsibility and perform well. For example, the vicar leads on religious education and a programme called 'Wellbeing' for the whole school community. Through this attention to detail the governing body has become particularly effective at securing the impact of the distinctive Christian ethos of the school in evaluation and strategic planning. As with all school policies collective worship and religious education policies are regularly monitored and updated following discussion at meetings. The very positive impact of all this can be seen in the way the pupils confidently engage with learning, interact with each other and adults, and behave in a caring and responsible manner. Parents comment that school leaders 'look after us well' and pupils that 'the teachers can be trusted here'. All staff are encouraged to engage in professional development, resulting in a motivated and empowered staff team. For example, a staff member recently left the school to become a deputy headteacher. A very strong relationship with the parish greatly enhances the spiritual development of all key stakeholders. Foundation governors are committed to their role. Clergy are regular and frequent visitors and declare how 'we pray for the school'. Clergy also lead a weekly 'Funday School' as an after-school club, which has become so popular that it is being incorporated into the school day. In addition, the parish church runs a Christian summer holiday club which is very well attended. The positive impact of this can be seen in the way parents and pupils speak warmly of the clergy and their teaching of Christianity, and are eager to take part in worship, clubs and attending major festivals. In following the Oxford Diocesan schemes of work for religious education the school meets statutory requirements as it does in collective worship too.

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