

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Kington St Michael Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School	The Ridings, Kington St Michael, Chippenham, SN14 6EF
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Diocese of Bristol
Previous SIAMS inspection grade:	Outstanding
Local authority	Wiltshire
Date of inspection	18 October 2016
Date of last inspection	12 September 2011
School's unique reference number	126332
Headteacher	Tracy Cornelius
Inspector's name and number	Daphne Spitzer 37

School context

The school serves the small rural village of Kington St Michael and its immediate surroundings as well as the nearby town of Chippenham. There are 120 children on roll arranged in 5 mixed age classes. The majority of children are from White British heritage families. The numbers with special educational needs and/or disabilities as well as those in receipt of the pupil premium are below the national average. There is a vacancy in the parish. The headteacher is a National Leader of Education and the school is a National Support School, working with other schools within the county of Wiltshire.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Kington St Michael Church of England Voluntary Controlled as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The substantial role of the Worship Council in promoting spiritual development has a significant impact on the lives of the whole school community.
- Outstanding relationships promoted by the school's Christian values of forgiveness, friendship and trust have a strong impact on children's personal development.
- The visionary leadership of the headteacher, staff team and governors, drives the continuous improvement of the school's distinctive Christian character thereby raising its impact.

Areas to improve

- Develop a core set of Christian values, linked explicitly to Biblical teaching to promote children's academic achievement as well as their personal and spiritual development.
- Include monitoring and evaluating of this core set of Christian values in the self-evaluation process by governors to raise the impact of the school's Christian values on the whole school community.

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

Kington St Michael is a warm and welcoming Christian community. The school creates a secure inclusive Christian environment in which all children are cherished and highly valued in line with the core Christian belief that each is unique and made by God to be 'special, equal but different'. Children say that understanding their own special qualities and attributes boosts their self-confidence and self-worth. This, in turn, 'motivates them to live up to the expectations they have been given' by their teachers. The school's distinctive Christian character has a significant impact on children's high academic achievement and attendance. Christian values are embedded in the daily life of the school. Children talk with animation about the Christian value of thankfulness, linked to the story of Jesus and the ten lepers or Noah, and how it influences many of their actions. This is evident in the way they volunteer to raise funds for others less fortunate than themselves. Strategies to promote spiritual awareness are highly effective. Children talk about the beneficial effects of calming activities such as stilling which enable them to 'let go of distractions' and focus on their learning. Relationships at all levels are outstanding. They are built on key Christian values of trust and friendship linked to stories about the life of Jesus. In the same way children also talk about the need to show forgiveness which ensures that relationships are harmonious. This results in a strong sense of belonging to the school community or as a child commented to a 'mushed up family'. The family feel is promoted by older children taking on highly responsible roles in supporting younger ones. Although Christian values are very effective in promoting children's personal development and well-being they do not have the same impact in promoting children's learning. This is because although children understand the relevance of the values of perseverance and courage they do not readily associate them with biblical teaching. At Kington St Michael children play a prominent role in promoting the school's distinctive Christian character through the innovative work of the Worship Council. For instance, since it was formed a few years ago, it has enhanced spiritual development by completely transforming the whole school setting for worship in the hall. This was as a result of the council's own request. It has a deep understanding of what it means to be a church school and meets regularly bringing views from others to challenge and support its work. Very effective teaching in religious education (RE) enables children to think deeply about their feelings and those of others. This is the result of the excellent way that spirituality is promoted. This was evident when young children were exploring their own ideas about prayer and belonging to their school community. In this way they were well able to understand how it felt to belong to a Hindu family celebrating Diwali. This is enhanced through visits to places of worship including Sikh and Hindu temples and a Roman Catholic church. Religious education enables children to develop a strong sense of mutual respect towards other people as well as positive attitudes towards people of diverse communities; actively encouraging positive attitudes of acceptance and tolerance towards others, values which underpin British society.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship is distinctively Christian and of central importance in the life of the school. This is because all teaching staff attend worship demonstrating that they find it relevant at a personal level as well as for children. Worship plays a significant role in promoting the school's Christian values. For example, the value of generosity illustrated very effectively in an act of worship led by two older children using the parable of the goats and sheep was well understood. However, the school plans, cover a large number of Christian values over a three year programme. Consequently, some values featured in the past, are not as easily associated with Bible stories by children as those covered more recently. Children are gaining a good understanding of Anglican practice. Worship develops children's understanding of Anglican tradition very effectively. For example, by their good understanding of the colours of the church's seasons as well as the importance of the Trinity in Christian worship. Simple liturgical greetings and responses as well other innovative strategies have strengthened and enhanced the spiritual setting for worship. For example, the start of worship is symbolised by a banner with the greeting which is then reversed at the end with the worship with words emphasising the enduring presence of God. Beautiful artworks, to which all children contributed, depict stories from the Bible have also enhanced the spiritual setting for worship. Children from the art club have also contributed to the spiritual life of the school by creating the

artwork for classroom reflection areas. As a result, worship promotes spiritual development very effectively. A prayer walk which includes prayer stations in the school grounds and focusses on promoting peace and personal spirituality has a profound impact. This is illustrated by children's comments that the school fences represent God's protecting love enclosing the school. The leadership and management of collective worship is very effective. It ensures that the programme is varied and led in a variety of styles and settings by a range of leaders including children. Worship is monitored and evaluated very well by observations as well as seeking children's views.

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

The headteacher's outstanding leadership and strong staff teamwork has ensured that the school's Christian vision has increased since the last inspection with consequent excellent outcomes for children. This is particularly evident by the increase in the impact of worship since the last inspection. The school's motto has now been underpinned by a biblical text from St Paul strengthening the school's Christian vision. The headteacher's style of leadership which empowers others has created a culture where all ideas and contributions are welcomed and individuals flourish. This is clearly illustrated by the way the worship council was formed under the leadership of a parent who is also a Licensed Lay Minister. Although self-evaluation strategies are good because they have led to improvements, governors have not systematically monitored the impact of the school's Christian values on the children's learning as well as personal and spiritual development. They have yet to review how effectively its large number of Christian values meet the needs of the children and fulfil its school's vision. The vicar, who left in the summer, was regarded as the school chaplain and contributed greatly to the life of the school is much missed. A new highly experienced foundation governor is now supporting the role of monitoring and evaluating the school's distinctive Christian character in a supportive and challenging manner. Parents, staff, governors as well as children, to contribute in a variety of ways to the school's self-evaluation process. The leadership of RE is good ensuring that the subject is regarded as a core subject and is very effective in promoting the school's distinctive Christian character. Very effective self-evaluation has identified the need to increase visits to places of worship of other faiths as well as other Christian denominations with successful outcomes. Relationships with the diocese are good. Prayers for the school are included alongside those written by children in regular parish church services. As a result, the spiritual life of the school as well as that of the church is enhanced and a strong sense of a cohesive Christian community has been developed. The recent Lord's Prayer Experience led in part by the Worship Council at the church had a significant impact. It considered the prayer in depth and resulted in the school's choice of the version used by the church. These are good examples of the strength of the partnership between the church and school. Links have been sustained with a child in India and this together with links with other international schools enable the school to prepare children very well for life in modern Britain. The school meets the statutory requirements for RE and collective worship.

SIAMS report October 2016, Kington St Michael CE VC Primary School, Chippenham, SN14 6JG