

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Cragside Church of England Primary School

Westloch Road, Cramlington NE23 6LW

Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Newcastle
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Local authority	Northumberland
Date/s of inspection	7 July 2017
Date of last inspection	11 July 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Controlled Primary School 134473
Headteacher	Paul Rusby
Inspector's name and number	Richard Goodman 889

School context

Cragside is a voluntary controlled Church of England primary school. It is a larger than average primary school with 367 pupils on roll. The current headteacher took up the post in September 2013. The school was inspected by Ofsted in March 2017 and was graded as continuing to be good. The percentages of pupils who are in receipt of the Pupil Premium and those who have a special educational need are below national averages. The vast majority of pupils are white British.

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

- Inspirational leadership from the headteacher ensures that all staff understand, promote and live out the Christian vision. This has an incredibly positive impact on pupil achievement and their personal development.
- Collective worship is very well led and managed. This ensures that pupils develop a clear understanding of Biblical teachings which then inform their behaviour and relationships.
- Extensive opportunities exist for prayer and reflection. Consequently, there is a well-developed sense of personal spirituality across the entire school community.
- School leaders form strong and mutually beneficial partnerships with parents, church and the local community. As a result a range of partners contribute to and enrich the lives of learners.

Areas to improve

- In light of the new ministry team at the local church, maintain and further embed links which are of benefit to school, parish and the community.
- Extend leadership opportunities through establishing the school as a beacon of outstanding practice in supporting other schools. The school has a lot to offer in ensuring a Christian vision significantly impacts on the lives of pupils.
- Further engagement with and experience of the Eucharist to enhance pupils' spiritual development.

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

This is a very happy and loving school where staff see their fundamental role as helping each child to flourish, shine bright and achieve their full, God-given potential. This Christian vision frames all that the school does and is underpinned by the desire to provide the very best for their pupils so that they can live life to the full. The vision is summed up well by the school's motto 'let your light shine' inspired by Matthew's Gospel. Christian values, such as kindness and respect, are modelled each day by both pupils and staff and have an incredibly positive impact on the lives and well-being of all pupils. These inform how they relate and act towards one another. There is a drive for pupils to achieve highly which is characterised by an aspiration for all to flourish. This has ensured that achievement is high, with many pupils, particularly those who are vulnerable, achieving above their expectations. As pupils are so happy in school, attendance is very high. There is an obvious level of individual care and support wrapped around each child which ensures they want to be in school. Significant time and support is invested in those families where attendance falls below the expected level.

Rich and varied curricular experiences, particularly within religious education (RE), and extra-curricular opportunities are woven together to support deep spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Corridors are furnished with high quality displays showcasing Christian values that are put into practice on a daily basis. One example shows pupils taking part in the Archbishop of York's Award. Pupils complete random acts of kindness and work together to plan a community event linked to the values of love, care and respect.

School rules are framed positively with the aim of letting all pupils' light shine. There is a significant emphasis on the development of empathy, tolerance and respect towards others. This contributes to exceptional behaviour and positive relationships between all, around school. Anti-bullying week, known as friendship week, takes place at the start of each year and sets the scene for how all members of the school community should treat one another with instances of bullying being rare. Pupils have a clear understanding of the link between their behaviour and Jesus' teachings. Children talked animatedly about following Jesus' example of helping all people. It is obvious that the entire school community practices the golden rule of treating others the way they would like to be treated. Pupils have access to worry boxes. This provides an open forum for worries to be dealt with, contributing to the well-being of all pupils. The positive relationships evident between pupils generates an enthusiasm for learning. Teaching staff shower the children with individual attention and personalised support helping to cultivate their full potential. Pupils are given opportunities to share their loving thoughts and feelings about others. Teachers regularly offer a 'special day' for each pupil. This allows children to verbally express their genuine love and respect towards others during registration period, helping to promote self-esteem.

Significant time and energy has been invested in promoting pupils' understanding of and respect for diverse communities. Regular visits to different places of worship and projects focused on diverse cultures help to develop respect, tolerance and love towards all people. Pupils have a concrete understanding that people, regardless of race or religion, should be treated in a loving way. The RE curriculum allows children to learn about other cultures and faiths. Pupils speak of putting themselves in others' shoes and developing empathy towards others. The RE curriculum also significantly contributes to the school's Christian character. Topics are based on Christian values and are linked to Bible teachings. Within RE, children are given time to contextualise the content and consider how they demonstrate the Christian values in their lives.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Great value is placed on collective worship resulting in a clear impact on pupils' lives, especially with regards to informing behaviour and relationships. Pupils understand that teachings such as the Parable of the Good Samaritan provide reference points for the way they should act towards others. The varied range of worship leaders, styles and types generates an engaging atmosphere that helps to inspire the school community to reflect on the Christian values. On a half termly basis 'family worship' is used to celebrate pupil achievement, vividly displaying examples of how children live out the Christian values.

Collective worship is focused on weekly Christian themes and is planned around festivals in the Church's year. The emphasis on each act of worship is to draw out an understanding of Christian values from Bible stories and meaningfully link these to pupils' own lives. Pupils are offered many opportunities to participate in worship and engage with and reflect on Christian teachings, values and practices. Pupils are encouraged to act out Bible stories, read out prayers they have written and are invited to be still and reflect. The school community's spiritual development is further aided by regular visits to the local church to celebrate Easter, Christmas and the annual leavers' service. Leaders recognise the importance of developing pupils' understanding and practice of the Eucharist. However, further engagement with the Eucharist is necessary to enhance pupils' spiritual development. Children are given a myriad of opportunities to engage with prayer and reflection. Each classroom contains a prayer and reflection space where pupils are given the freedom to consider life's big questions. An outdoor prayer garden is regularly used to focus pupils' thoughts during RE lessons and for times of spiritual reflection. This all significantly contributes to the development of personal spirituality and helps pupils to gain a deeper understanding of Christian

values. Time is invested in pupils creating their own prayers which are often incorporated into collective worship. Pupils regularly engage with the Lord's Prayer developing a secure understanding of its relevance and meaning. The lead for collective worship is ambitious in further enhancing children's personal spiritual development, particularly through the use of prayer. A prayer labyrinth has recently been planned to provide pupils with an even greater experience of prayer and reflection.

Bible stories and teachings are acted out and used regularly within collective worship to support pupils' understanding of the school's Christian values. This is strengthened by the use of Godly Play, supported by parish youth workers, within RE lessons and class-based worship. Consequently, pupils have developed an impressive understanding of Jesus Christ and of the Trinitarian nature of Christianity.

Collective worship is extremely well-led and managed. This has ensured that the issues in need of development from the previous report have been addressed with significant outcomes for pupils. A pupil worship committee has been created that plans and leads assemblies and evaluates the effectiveness of links between worship themes and Christian values. The school community experiences a range of worship leaders, including staff, children and clergy, which ensures a varied approach in helping to engage and inspire the pupils. Effective systems have been put in place to evaluate collective worship, including governor monitoring and child-appropriate evaluations. These have helped to identify strengths and to effectively drive forward improvements.

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

The headteacher passionately articulates and champions the school's Christian vision of ensuring that each child will flourish, shine bright and achieve their full, God-given potential. This has inspired the leadership team, filtering through to all staff, to put the Christian values into practice, living them out on a daily basis. The unique Christian ethos permeates through the entire life of the school. At the heart of all decision making is the anchor point of the school's Christian vision. This has had a positive impact in that pupils achieve highly and that a sense of joy radiates from the entire school community.

School leaders are determined that Cragside offers pupils and adults the opportunity to be part of a Christian community. Christian values underpin policies, are publicised on the school's website and are made explicit in the application process for school posts. The headteacher and his team are never complacent and have made effective use of self-evaluation to plan strategically for continuous improvement. Christian values are interwoven within the school improvement plan, ensuring that they frame the direction of the school. The progress of pupils is monitored closely with intervention strategies continuously analysed in order to evaluate the impact they have. Governors clearly understand the Christian vision and are aspirational for pupils in wanting nothing but the best for them. The organisation of governance sets out individual governor responsibilities which are acted out with challenge, support and love. The headteacher was adamant that when he took up post the rebranding of the Christian ethos and values would be conducted through a collaborative approach. Consequently, staff feel empowered, valued and have a deep desire to live out the Christian vision and values. A recent re-evaluation of the vision has ensured that joy and the 'love of learning' have now been incorporated into the school's vision statement.

A powerful and effective, 'shoulder-to-shoulder', coaching model has been developed, significantly contributing to a positive learning experience for all. Rooted in the values of care, humility and endurance the coaching programme allows staff to share their expertise and to develop their own practice. Staff talked of becoming empowered to be 'leaders in their own areas'. Regular opportunities are given for a variety of staff to complete learning walks, and lead collaborative planning and the scrutiny of pupil work. All of this is linked to the aim of ensuring the best possible outcomes for pupils. As a result there has been a focused approach to preparing future leaders of church schools. RE is superbly well-led and managed. The RE lead has been given the time and support to develop an effective RE curriculum and to provide training and support to teachers across the school. Recent external accreditation from the RE Quality Mark provides further verification of the effectiveness of RE in the school. Secure and mutually beneficial links have been developed between the school, local church and the wider community. One parishioner commented that the school 'is a beacon of light in the community'. Youth parish workers regularly come into school to work with children within RE and through prayer spaces. Services for Easter, Christmas and the leavers' commemoration are held in the local church. All of this adds to and enhances the distinctive Christian character of the school. Pupils engage in numerous community activities and projects which are centred on the values of love and kindness. This is testament to pupils living out the Christian values outside of the school gates. Regular communication exists between school and home helping to further engage parents in contributing to school life. Weekly newsletters are sent out by the headteacher which highlight school events and celebrate pupil successes and achievement. They also set challenges for parents to take part in activities with their children linked to the school values. Half termly 'family worship' is an opportunity for parents to come into school and share in the celebration of children's achievement. One parent talked of the spiritual nourishment evident throughout school which ignited her Christian belief and catalysed her attendance at church. The school clearly meets statutory requirements for RE and collective worship.