

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Greatham Church of England Primary School

Egerton Terrace, Greatham, TS25 2EU

Current SIAMS inspection grade

Outstanding

Diocese

Durham

Previous SIAMS inspection grade

Outstanding

Local authority

Hartlepool

Date of inspection

4 May 2018

Date of last inspection

2 July 2013

Type of school and unique reference number

Primary 111673

Headteacher

Nicola Dunn

Inspector's name and number

David Tait 887

School context

Greatham is a smaller than average size primary school serving a small village on the outskirts of Hartlepool. There are 92 pupils on roll. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported through pupil premium funding is above average. The proportion of pupils with disabilities or special educational needs is broadly average. Almost all pupils are from a white British background. Since the previous inspection, the school has experienced a significant turnover in staff. Staffing is now stable. At the most recent Ofsted inspection in October 2017, the school was graded good.

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

- Christian values lie at the very heart of all aspects of school life and are understood by all members of the school community. They impact significantly on pupils' lives and their achievements.
- As a direct result of the school's distinctive Christian character, relationships at all levels are of the highest quality.
- Collective worship is central to the daily life of the school. Pupils engage in a varied worship programme with regular opportunities to plan and lead. This has a significant impact on their spiritual development.
- Children enjoy their learning in Religious Education (RE) and are excited by the curriculum. As a result, RE makes a substantial contribution to the Christian character of the school.
- Links with the parish church and local community are strong. Children and their families value the care, support and guidance that pupils receive from this partnership.

Areas to improve

- Develop pupils' awareness of Christianity as a multicultural world faith in order to extend and deepen their understanding of the diversity of Christian belief and practice.
- Extend pupils' understanding of the value and purpose of personal and spontaneous prayer in order that they are able to make use of this in their own spiritual lives.
- Involve all groups within the school community in school self-evaluation using the SIAMS self-evaluation schedule so that all groups are able to contribute to church school improvement.

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

A shared, lived out and deeply embedded Christian vision underpins all aspects of school life. The school's Christian values of love, peace, forgiveness, trust and hope are central to every aspect of school life. These values, and their biblical roots, are understood by all members of the school community. Inclusive and caring relationships for example are understood in terms of forgiveness which leads to reconciliation. As one child stated, 'forgiveness allows time to heal and that's what Jesus would want.' Similarly, hope is understood as a resilient dependence on the strength God provides. Pupils have a well-developed understanding of biblical texts and how these relate to values. 'The Feeding of the Five Thousand' noted one child, 'shows that Jesus will provide and so there is hope for everyone.' Likewise, the Old Testament stories of Moses and the Red Sea and Daniel in the Lion's Den demonstrate 'that God wants us to trust him.' The school's values make a positive contribution to the excellent behaviour seen around the school and are instrumental in ensuring that pupils feel valued and safe. Parents and carers are able to see the school's values in action at home as well as in school and are fulsome in their praise of the school as a 'special place where all are welcome.' The school's Christian character has a significant impact on pupils' strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development. Pupils are passionate and excited about RE. They look forward to their lessons and relish the opportunity to learn about both Christianity and other world faiths. As one child remarked, 'RE helps you to think and sometimes change your mind about things if you need to.' As a result, learning in RE makes a significant contribution to the school's Christian distinctiveness and the school has successfully addressed a focus for development from the previous inspection. Pupils' understanding of the multi-cultural and diverse nature of Christianity is less well developed. Therefore, pupils' do not have a fully developed awareness of the global nature of the Christian faith and the breadth of Christian practice. Attendance is above average. This reflects the culture of welcome and hospitality within the school which, in turn, results in pupils who are enthusiastic in their attendance. Parents recognise that staff go 'above and beyond' to ensure that individual and family needs are met. The value of love for example has motivated leaders to support families during particular traumatic circumstances. Pastoral care and support is of a high standard and attentive to individual needs and circumstances. Consequently, it has a positive impact on the well-being of all pupils and supports positive attitudes towards learning. Pupils talk openly and enthusiastically about their pride in their achievements, both individually and collectively. This is seen in strong relationships at every level and is reflected in the above average outcomes achieved by pupils at each point in their schooling and the strong progress that pupils make throughout their time in school. Reflection areas throughout the school ensure that pupils have opportunities for considered thinking, personal reflection and prayerful response rooted in the school's Christian ethos and linked to the school's values.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship inspires the whole school community and is inclusive of all members. Parents of all faiths and none appreciate that worship gives their children a sense of belonging and enables them to reflect on their beliefs. It is at the heart of each day and promotes the Christian distinctiveness of the school exceptionally well. Pupils place a high value on collective worship. As one child remarked, 'worship is where I can explore my prayers as part of one big family.' High quality planning of themes includes a strong emphasis on Bible teaching and links seamlessly to the school's Christian values. Pupils have excellent knowledge and understanding of local Anglican practice, the times and seasons of the church's year and the major Christian festivals. Similarly, pupils have an excellent understanding of the person of Jesus Christ and of biblical stories from both the Old and New Testaments. Pupils' understanding of The Holy Trinity is very well developed. As one child explained, 'the Trinity is one God with three parts- the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Three in one and one in three.' This understanding is effectively supported through high quality work in RE. Children are enthusiastic, thoughtful and respectful in their responses to worship. Indeed much of the school's extensive charitable work evolves as a direct result of pupils reflecting on worship themes. A variety of leaders lead worship. Pupils regularly plan and lead worship independently in both small class-based groups and as a whole class. As a result, pupils have a high level of ownership and involvement in the delivery of worship. Regular monitoring and evaluation of worship is carried out by all involved including pupils, staff, parents and governors. This ensures that the views of all are shared and acted upon in order to further improve the quality of worship. For example, the times of worship have been altered in order to facilitate greater parental involvement in worship. As a result, parental attendance at worship has increased. A governor, himself a retired priest, specifically linked to worship joins the school for worship regularly. He evaluates worship and as a result of his active involvement, all governors are fully informed about developments in worship. Prayer is an integral part of school life that is given high importance by all members of the school community. Pupils have very good understanding of the importance of prayer and of the types of prayer and their purpose. Pupils know The Lord's Prayer and set Anglican responses. They explain how 'prayer is a time to speak to God' and are able to articulate different times when they pray and how it helps them. Times of personal prayer and reflection are valued, especially the classroom prayer spaces which are sensitively linked to the particular needs of each class at key points in the school year. However, the school's

use of other opportunities to enhance pupils' spiritual development is not as well developed and there are some missed opportunities for pupils to make use of a variety of contexts for prayer in their own spiritual journeys.

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

The school leadership team has a clear and distinct vision firmly grounded in the school's distinctive Christian values. These are then shared with the whole school family who are, in turn, able to express the positive impact the values have on every aspect of school life. Leaders are clear that their passion is that 'everyone can live out our core Christian values in order that they can become good members of society through these.' Leaders model, coach and support others to ensure the vision is embedded so that these values nurture the excellent relationships found at every level within the school. The strong direction of the leadership team ensures that the Christian vision for the school is at the core of school improvement. Christian distinctiveness is the driver behind all aspects of school development with plans for school development informed by the school's values. As a result, the school has been successful in addressing the areas for development from the previous SIAMS inspection. Insightful self-evaluation by school leaders informs improvement. Self-evaluation of Christian distinctiveness, however, does not fully involve all groups in school including parents, staff, governors and pupils. Parents are very appreciative of how the school lives out its Christian mission. For example, they attribute the excellent pupil behaviour to the school's Christian values. Similarly, school staff speak of the value and worth placed on them as individuals and the way in which the school has nurtured them at different points in their careers. Succession planning is well supported and effective with the development of middle leader roles and the deputy headteacher acting up during the headteacher's recent absence. The Christian ethos of the school infuses the whole curriculum with appropriate links and subject matter developed by subject leaders. Both RE and collective worship are given high priority. As a result of this, outstanding practice is found in each and statutory requirements are met. The school enjoys effective partnerships with stakeholders. These include other local schools and the diocese. The diocese is a valued link and has supported developments in the teaching of RE and in understanding of Christian values as well as wider support for school self-review. Links with other local schools have been instrumental in developing Christian distinctiveness and worship. The school is regarded as being at the centre of the local community and there is a highly effective partnership with the local parish church of St John the Baptist. This has been not only sustained, but strengthened, during the vacancy for a parish priest. Indeed these links have flourished despite a period without an incumbent. The church very much regards school worship as parish worship and these are opportunities for the growth and sustaining of both.

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