

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

St. Wilfrid's Church of England Primary School

Eastern Road
Haywards Heath
RH16 3NL

Diocese: Chichester

Local authority: West Sussex

Dates of inspection: 7 October 2014

Date of last inspection: June 2009

School's unique reference number: 126056

Headteacher: Dr Janet Davies

Inspector's name and number: Connie Hughes 765

School context

St Wilfrid's is an urban, voluntary aided primary school with 413 pupils on roll. The headteacher, appointed since the last inspection, will retire in April 2015. Pupils represent a range of socio-economic backgrounds, with between 20% and 25% of pupils in each class on the Special Needs Register. There are strong links with St Wilfrid's Church, neighbouring Anglican churches and other Christian denominations in the town.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St. Wilfrid's as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The distinctive vision statement, "Enjoying lifelong learning with Jesus as our Guide", symbolic Christian environment and inclusive learning provision nurture every child to succeed.
- Collective worship (CW) is an affirmation and celebration of the Christian ethos and values that underpin the daily life of the school.
- Religious education (RE) and spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development provides excellent knowledge and experiences for all learners.
- The effective leadership and co-ordination of RE and CW within the daily life of the school, in conjunction with the Governing Body Spirituality Committee, enables all pupils to fully understand, respect and participate in the school's Christian foundation.

Areas to improve

- Evaluate, as planned, the use of and consistency of RE assessment strategies in line with the new curriculum, to maintain and enhance, the high standards across the school.
- Revise the monitoring and evaluation process of CW to reflect its thorough planning format and produce an in-depth picture of its strengths and areas for development.
- Identify members of the teaching team to work alongside the very effective RE and CW co-ordinator to secure best practice in future leadership.

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

The stimulating and eye-catching displays throughout the school reflect the school's Christian distinctiveness. They are interactive, commending and valuing pupils' achievements and SMSC development, for example, The Ten Commandments for My Life. Pupils' knowledge and experience are enhanced through well-resourced themed reflection areas in the classrooms and corridors, including a focus on the Bible and prayer. Pupils enthusiastically articulate how they are 'Enjoying lifelong learning with Jesus as our guide'. For example, a Year 1 pupil brought in a picture he had drawn at home, "This is our church school full of kind friends. The other side is Jesus on the cross". SMSC experiences impact strongly on applying Christian values and pupils' responses are celebrated. For example, the presentation of the C.A.R.E. cup, awarded each half term, to a child who is a caring, attentive, reassuring and encouraging member of their class.

The school's Christian ethos is highly respected in the community it serves. Parents and carers commend the daily commitment the school places on "walking the talk" in living Christian values. Examples shared included an appreciation of the very informative school newsletters, including an open invitation to join the weekly parents' Prayer Group. Purposeful structured professional development and pastoral support, including the Every Child a Reader' (ECaR) programme, nurture and play therapists enable teachers to address the high percentage of pupils with special needs. Pupils engage in high quality experiences, which influence positively on behaviour and attitudes to learning. Standards of attainment are at least in line with national expectations, with pupils, including the most vulnerable, achieving high levels of success. All pupils actively engage in structured learning about different faiths and traditions enabling them to explore, understand and respect Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith in a diverse society. The established partnership with a school in Cameroon has enabled the school to enthusiastically celebrate their shared faith, identify similarities and differences in their culture. The established annual 'Prayer Space' week enhances periods of silence and spiritual reflection as pupils respectfully pray for the world, their families and friends.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding.

All members of the school community recognise the central role of collective worship in the daily life of the school. Outstandingly, distinctly Christian acts of worship take place twice a day, once for each key stage, enabling the school to engage and inspire all pupils. During special festivals in the year the whole school come together to celebrate their Christian distinctiveness. The outstanding leadership of the worship co-ordinator provides structured guidance for worship leaders, including clergy, teachers and youth workers. High quality and engaging worship leaders significantly influence the Christian ethos of the school. There is a wealth of stimulating and well-resourced plans, with themes based on Anglican tradition, the life of Jesus and biblical teaching rooted in Christian values and beliefs. Pupils confidently engage and contribute to a rich and inclusive variety of worship experiences. Creative ways in leading acts of worship stimulate prayer and reflection, for example, the use of multimedia, drama and music.

Strong links with St. Wilfrid's Church, including weekly worship led by the rector, who, with the parish community sees the school as "their centre of mission". Year 6 pupils are well prepared for the Eucharist Service under the spiritual guidance of the rector. Pupils are developing their understanding of the Trinity through songs, worship responses and dismissals as observed in the Key Stage 2 worship. Inclusive daily classroom prayer time signifies its importance in the life and living legacy of Jesus enhancing pupils' spiritual reflection, personal and collective responses. For example, younger pupils are guided through the language and symbolism of praying using a penny; a penny is round and helps us to pray for the world and thank God for its creation. Pupil representatives, known as the 'Dream Team', in a close working partnership with the governors Spirituality Committee, audit RE and CW annually. Evaluating collective worship in line with its strong planning structure would enhance its strengths and identify areas for improvement.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

Religious Education (RE) embeds the distinctive Christian character of the school. The RE subject leader, with a positive and enthusiastic outlook, has driven the actions from the previous inspection to significantly improve the curriculum content and assessment strategies. The impact of diocesan professional development has strengthened teachers' RE subject knowledge and their classroom practice. The school leadership team continue to drive improvement to achieve and maintain high standards. In line with changes to the National Curriculum, they are reviewing the RE assessment practices, including peer and self-assessment, to measure impact on pupil progress judgements.

The teaching of RE is consistently good to outstanding across the year groups. Excellent teachers' skills, stimulating resources and a creative curriculum inspire pupils learning in an exciting and engaging way. Marking and dialogue between teachers, other adults and pupils are consistently of a high quality. Skills and knowledge are consolidated, appropriately challenging and enable learning to be extended for all pupils. RE standards of attainment are at least in line with national expectations and a significant number of pupils achieve higher outcomes.

Pupils consistently demonstrate their learning about love, peace and thanksgiving from biblical scriptures in their daily lives. For example, a self-motivated young pupil used sign language as she respectfully sang the Grace in the Prayer Corner. Thought provoking questions from enquiring pupils, "Are you born a Christian or do you become one?" significantly enhance pupils SMSC development. Pupils spoke confidently and openly about their Christian beliefs and values in lessons when comparing choices and consequences of pupils' behaviour towards others through a study of Islamic sacred texts.

Children's ministry teams, from Christian community churches, lead thriving weekly extra-curricular activities, re-enforcing the RE curriculum and worship themes.

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

The headteacher's dedication and success in securing the school's Christian distinctiveness is outstanding. The leadership team and governors work in strategic partnership to embed the faith foundation of the school. Teachers and support staff are explicit in ensuring the Christian ethos permeates the daily life of the school. The strong parental, church and community links provide for the care, well-being and achievement of all children.

The governing body actively promote the school's distinctive Christian foundation and is a significant factor in the process to appoint a new headteacher. The rector puts the school's needs to the forefront of the parish community, who consistently provide financial and pastoral support. Responsibility and accountability for the schools' success takes place through the outstanding and highly visible leadership of the chair of governors, the commitment of a highly skilled governing body and a strong Christian fellowship within the school team. Timetabled curriculum subject leader presentations at full governing body meetings effectively further governor's knowledge in monitoring the impact of teaching and learning on pupil achievement. School documentation is an accurate self-evaluation of its areas of strength and ongoing improvement focus on maintaining and developing its outstanding Christian distinctiveness. The RE and CW subject leaders' excellent knowledge and motivational skills are recognised as an asset to developing leadership potential and distributing management responsibilities in church schools across the diocese.

Parents shared their confidence in the integrity of the schools Christian environment. They consistently praised the school for its open door communication and engagement with them, ensuring the care and well-being of their children, stating, "they never let us down."

SIAMS report October 2014: St. Wilfrid's CE Primary School, Haywards Heath. RH16 3NL