

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Welshampton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School	
Stocks Lane, Welshampton, Ellesmere, Shropshire SY12 0PG	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Lichfield
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Name of federation	The Newhampton CE Schools Federation
Date of inspection	5 July 2018
Date of last inspection	19 June 2013
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Controlled Primary 123510
Headteacher	Andrew Hodson
Inspector's name and number	The Revd Dr Jason Phillips 598

School context

This is a smaller than average school of 77 pupils in a rural village context. Most children are White British. Pupils attracting additional pupil premium support are well below the national average. The proportion of pupils with a special educational need and/or disability (SEND) is just below the national average. In May 2016 the school federated with Newtown Church of England Primary School. Since then the executive headteacher works across both schools. The parish priest has been in role just under a year.

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

- The headteacher's dedicated and compassionate Christian leadership ensures that this school's care for pupils, families and staff is exemplary.
- The deeply embedded Christian values of the school shapes its character so that a confident and extremely inclusive Christian community is created that is most hospitable and where pupils of all backgrounds are respected and welcomed.

- Quality provision ensures that pupils' spiritual growth is significant, resulting in pupils that are confident, thoughtful, resilient and who respect the religious dimension of the world around them.
- The hugely positive links with Newtown CE Primary, other schools, the diocese, St Michael's and All Angels' Church and its popular priest bring substantial mutual benefit.

Areas to improve

- Strengthen and articulate further the school's theological basis, including opportunities for spiritual development, so that they are evident in school documentation and, through learning activities, staff pupils and parents are clear how both underpin the school's vision.
- Demonstrate the impact of the school's Christian Character on standards in religious education (RE) and collective worship by deepening learning and broadening religious vocabulary still further by applying the approach of the recently introduced Understanding Christianity resource across all religions and topics studied including developing a greater awareness of multi-cultural Anglicanism.

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

The school clearly operates as a distinctly Christian community. It is deeply hospitable to all as a consequence. The school's Christian character has a high profile because it is extremely important to this school community. Underpinning the highly effective work of the school and the very positive relationships at all levels is a raft of well embedded Christian values. These Christian values include honesty, forgiveness and courage, for example. The school's primary focus is to fully develop the potential of each person as a child of God through play and prayer. Consequently, the school works hard to ensure wide opportunities to develop skills and talents within and beyond the curriculum. Examples of this include guitar and drum lessons, involvement in the diocesan Open Door Project and in residential visits to Condover Hall. The school has wide, high quality provision for pupils to develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally (SMSC). This provision results in confident, thoughtful, resilient pupils and strong spiritual growth. As pupils' self-esteem is well developed, they generally behave very well and act out of a sense of compassion and integrity. The pupils' new AGREE system of rules are based upon the Christian values at the heart of this school. As one visitor to the school rightly observed, 'the pupils are very happy in their learning environment and speak confidently and articulately about their experiences. They showed a very good understanding of the school's values.' The school has worked hard since the last inspection to develop spirituality. However, a clear understanding at all levels of the school community of the school's approach is not yet fully established. For some people this limits a clear appreciation of how to promote spiritual development. Standards of attainment and progress at the school are at least good and frequently outstanding. This arises from the school's careful teaching and tracking to ensure pupils achieve their God-given potential. The curriculum is creative and interesting and prospers the school's Christian values. An example of this is exploring hope and compassion through poetry writing on conflict and a consideration of

the biblical text, Colossians 3:11. The curriculum has a distinct focus on care for the creation which is promoting an increasing appreciation of God-as-Creator. This work is admirably extended through forest schools work, through field fun and through the continued development of its reflective garden space. Care for others is developed through well considered charitable endeavours such as supporting the Macmillan Nurses and the recent Sports Relief Triathlon. These topics and activities develop an ethic of care and results in thoughtful pupils. However, an active involvement and a determined advocacy for specific causes is not yet evident amongst the pupils thus limiting some of the impact of their efforts. RE clearly shapes the character of this school. Pupils are greatly excited by the subject and have most positive attitudes towards it. RE makes an important contribution to widening pupils' cultural knowledge, for example, through studies on Hinduism and Judaism. Through RE, pupils widen their knowledge of diverse communities and explore the big questions of life. This results in pupils that can express themselves clearly with respect and who are able to honour difference. However, the challenge of some learning tasks is not always as carefully matched to pupils' abilities as it should be. This sometime limits the depth of learning and pupils' religious vocabulary. Over the last two years, attendance has improved still further with most absence now being attributed to illness or unauthorised holidays. In securing high attendance, the school's approach is one of Christian care and challenge to ensure children and families are really well supported.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship has improved greatly since the last inspection with the school acting carefully upon the identified development points. This has resulted in collective worship that is much more varied and includes the pupils more fully in its leadership. Pupils are clearly more engaged when actively involved and articulate that they would like even greater opportunity to lead. Despite significant progress, understanding by some pupils of the component parts of an act of worship is still not as strong as it might be which sometimes limits their capacity to build high quality acts of worship for themselves. Pupils joyfully take part in a range of festivals at church and in school including Easter and Mothering Sunday, for example. They utilise liturgical colours and Christian symbols, including dressing their delightful priest puppet liturgically, to mark the seasons of the church's year. As a consequence, pupils develop a sense of the rhythm of faith in life. The words and forms of worship in school mirror that in St Michael's and All Angels' Church. This develops pupils' liturgical literacy and enables them to participate comfortably and with integrity in worship both in church and school. Collective worship is highly inclusive of pupils from all faith backgrounds and none. The skilled staff coordinator for collective worship ensures that the planning involves a range of people including staff, pupils, the parish priest and governors. Together they ensure that the pupils' knowledge of the Bible, of the person of Jesus and of the Trinity are developed well in engaging and varied ways. This the pupils greatly appreciate and are fascinated by the topics considered. Pupils' awareness of the life of Jesus, in particular his miracles, is especially strong as a result of biblically based provision. However, knowledge of worldwide Anglicanism and multicultural Christianity for some pupils is underdeveloped in collective worship themes, limiting their full appreciation of the Christian tradition. Themes in collective worship make clear

links with the school values and help pupils to apply them in everyday life. An example being the linking of courage by one child to the account of the prodigal son responding to his behaviour choices and in returning to the father for forgiveness. A periodic focus on inspirational people helps pupils to have high aspirations and to reach for their own potential wherever that lies. Prayer and reflection have developed well since the last inspection. Prayer frames the school day giving pupils and staff valued opportunities to be still, to reflect and to be alert to the presence of the divine. This adds greatly to the spiritual atmosphere in school enhancing the spiritual development of pupils and adults alike. Opportunities, such as the popular reflection garden, gives pupils further opportunity to utilise prayer within the rhythm of their daily life. Pupils are confident to offer their own prayers in a variety of ways. The committed collective worship coordinator and governors ensure that statutory requirements are met. They implement an effective system of self-review involving a range of stakeholders so that this aspect of school life is ever-improving.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school is outstanding. The Christian leadership at all levels of the school results in extremely positive relationships within and beyond the school, securing significant mutual benefit for all involved. The headteacher establishes an ethos where everyone is seen as a child of God and worthy of exemplary care. This forms the heart of the school's vision and mission of, 'Play, Pray, Prosper'. However, the theological underpinning of the mission and vision is not yet understood fully by all stakeholders or is as explicit in school systems and documentation as it might be. This sometimes limits the impact of the vision as a consequence. The headteacher consistently models the Christian values of the school and exercises a deeply considerate leadership approach. As a result, wellbeing of staff and pupils is central and a key strength of this school. Arising from its exemplary Christian care, the school responds well to the needs of all groups, including those with behavioural needs. The school utilises its resources well to ensure both inclusion and pupil progress. The headteacher sets high expectations for all encouraging everyone to work towards their God-given potential. Staff and governors monitor and evaluate effectively and track pupil progress and social needs with care so that everyone has a clear grasp of each pupil's needs. Consequently, attainment and progress for most pupils at the school are high and in the top 20% of schools nationally. The school is effective in ensuring staff professional development and in preparing staff as future church school leaders. Highly productive links with the diocese and the federation ensures challenge and support for all the staff of this church school. The parish priest is exemplary in her work with the school in pastoral care, in the curriculum and in leading worship. With the headteacher and the parish warden, she is key to ensuring that the caring ethos of the school extends to the community too. Consequently, the school with the church, plays a hugely significant part in community cohesion. Governors are well led by the chair of governors. Together they monitor and evaluate distinctiveness, bringing about demonstrable improvement of the church school aspects. However, their ongoing use of the SIAMS framework as a developmental tool is not as extensive as it could be. Governors ensure statutory requirements in RE and collective worship are met with positive outcomes. They are effective in supporting the enthusiastic and highly competent RE and collective worship leader. The leader

ensures RE and collective worship inspire staff and pupils alike and significantly shapes the school ethos. Governors ensure the school has a Christian values based curriculum that engages pupils. This curriculum results in well-rounded pupils who demonstrate a sense of empathy and respect for others as well as a strong sense of their own inherent worth.

SIAMS report, July 2018 Welshampton CE VC Primary School, Shropshire SY12 0PG