

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Froxfield CE Primary School

Petersfield	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Portsmouth
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local authority	Hampshire
Date of inspection	16 November 2017
Date of last inspection	06 November 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	VC 116289
Headteacher	Vickie Farrow
Inspector's name and number	Laura Bosworth 928

School context

Froxfield is a smaller than average rural school that has expanded over four years from a very small infant school with 31 pupils, to a primary with 97 pupils aged 4 – 11 years. Nearly all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged is below the national average. The school has higher than average mobility as a result of in year admissions and movement out to independent schools within Key Stage 2. The headteacher has been in post since April 2013. The school was judged to be good in its Ofsted inspection in November 2014.

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

- The highly effective leadership provided by the governing body and headteacher ensure that a strong Christian vision and ethos underpin the whole life of the school and lead to positive outcomes for all.
- The exemplary behaviour and positive caring relationships in the school are firmly rooted in the school's core Christian values.
- Prayer and worship form a central and important part of school life and have a significant impact on the understanding, thoughts, and actions of pupils not only in school but in their lives beyond the classroom.
- Spiritual development is extremely good because opportunities are planned in to the wider curriculum and all staff ensure that any incidental opportunities are maximised.

Areas to improve

- Within collective worship, maximise opportunities to further develop pupils' understanding of the Trinity and the underlying Christian teaching which underpins the school's core values.
- Develop more opportunities for pupils to plan and lead worship, including the opportunity to spontaneously lead prayer within worship.

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

The impact of Christian character is outstanding because the core Christian values, based on biblical teachings, are owned and understood by all and are embedded in every aspect of school life. Children and adults in the school clearly articulate the positive impact that the school's Christian character has on their lives. One parent explained: 'This school values everyone, they look after the little things when others may not.' Pupils regularly refer to the core values and can explain how they underpin their 'Golden Rules' which help them to behave well as citizens and learners in the school community. These positive attitudes ensure that pupils achieve well and have high aspirations. The caring Christian ethos is also apparent in the way that all members of the school community show appreciation for each other. This is particularly evident in the care shown by older pupils towards the younger ones, not just in the planned activities such as 'Buddy Readers', but also in incidental moments such as older pupils looking after younger ones on the playground.

Strengthened by its links to the neighbouring church, the school provides a beating Christian heart for this community. This is particularly evident in the joint celebrations and charity work carried out through the school and parish, especially in their link with a community in Ghana. This link has enabled pupils to understand the wider Christian church through a real experience. Pupils empathetically talk about the needs of their peers in Ghana and how this knowledge has helped them to understand and appreciate more fully the things that they have in their own lives, whilst also recognising the similarities they have with a Christian community somewhere else in the world.

The school is tireless in exploring ways to engage pupils in rich learning activities which impact positively on their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Recent work on developing a shared understanding of spirituality has already had a significant impact, with pupils of all ages being able to use commonly understood terms to describe 'spiritual moments'. One pupil explained how her involvement in an event called 'Jazzmass' had led her to have what she described as a 'mirror moment', a chance to reflect on how the opportunity had helped her to overcome her fear of performing and realise what she was capable of. Parents also recognise their children's developing spirituality. One parent described how, on a recent school trip, the youngest children had been encouraged to stop and observe sunlight coming through the trees, enabling them to experience a moment of wonder or 'window moment'.

Pupils feel very proud of their school and openly talk about how sad they will be to leave it. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported because they are valued as unique individuals. Needs are quickly identified and every effort is made by the school to meet these needs to the very best of their ability. Relationships are very strong and pupils understand that this makes their school a special place to be. The school has higher than average mobility but its caring ethos ensures that new families are quickly made to feel welcome. Pupils who have joined the school at times other than the start of the Reception Year, describe how they have been looked after and how they have quickly made firm friendships. Parents also demonstrate the core Christian values in the way that they welcome new families, ensuring that new parents are given a 'buddy' to help them settle in. The school also applies its core values of love, respect and courage when approaching issues relating to attendance by being prepared to tackle difficult issues, but provide support and care to help families achieve improvements.

Pupils view religious education (RE) as an exciting subject and enjoy their concept days. They are very proud of their 'Concept Books' which go with them as they travel through the school. Although opportunities to explore the theological and biblical teaching behind the school's core values are not planned for, pupils naturally explore, question and discuss concepts, recognising and respecting the beliefs of others. The RE curriculum ensures that pupils have an understanding of Christianity as a world faith as well as developing pupils' understanding and respect for other faiths. Pupils demonstrated this when they enthusiastically relayed some of their learning about Diwali.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

The impact of worship is outstanding because collective worship is valued as a central part of school life. Collective worship is carefully planned around Christian values which change on a half termly basis and leaders ensure that the views of all stakeholders are regularly considered so that there is continuous improvement. Pupils participate enthusiastically in worship and are able to talk knowledgeably about the value in focus. During discussion, one pupil explained the current worship value of 'compassion' and gave his view of how it linked to the school's core values. Pupils articulate clearly the importance of worship to them, describing it as a special time which allows them to think about, and reflect on, Christian teaching and Bible stories, including the life of Jesus. They understand that what happens in their worship time has a real impact on their lives beyond the act of worship itself. During the worship observed, pupils readily gave examples of where they had either shown compassion themselves or seen others show compassion, this included giving money for the recent poppy appeal and sharing something with someone who had very little.

Pupils are focused and engaged during worship. They enjoy the opportunities they are given to actively lead and participate, such as acting out a Bible story or reading a prayer. They would welcome the opportunity to take on a greater role in leading and planning worship. They value the times they are given for prayer and reflection and speak enthusiastically about the 'prayer stones' that link their prayer life in the classroom to the whole school celebrations. Parents are aware of how their children enjoy and cherish the worship and prayer life of the school and one parent explained how her child had even created their own 'worship area' at home to mirror the one in the classroom. As well as during daily acts of worship, children also pray at regular times during the day, such as before lunch and at the end of the day. However, there are less opportunities given currently for pupils to pray spontaneously.

Pupils have a sound knowledge of Anglican traditions through the use of rituals such as gathering prayers and responses, the use of coloured cloths linked to the liturgical year and the use of traditional hymns. The school has introduced the lighting of three candles to represent the Trinity in both class and whole school worship. The children are able to explain how these candles represent God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and, although it is at the early stages, they show a developing understanding of how Christians understand God as three forms in one.

A range of people lead worship on a regular basis, this includes the headteacher, all teaching staff and the local clergy. All daily acts of worship are planned in line with the themes agreed so that pupils are able to deepen and build upon their understanding of the Christian value in focus. As well as the weekly whole school worship in church, the school community joins together there for key Christian festivals such as Christmas and Easter. The school community also supports church led celebrations such as the Christmas carol service. Recently, links between the school and parish were further strengthened when they joined together to organise an Ascension Day service. One parent described this joint service as 'extremely moving'.

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

The dedicated leadership of the headteacher is firmly rooted in a clear Christian vision for the school. At all times she models the core values of love, courage and respect, as do all members of the committed staff team who understand their roles in maintaining and developing the school's distinctive Christian character. The core values are rooted in Christian teaching, and every opportunity is taken to embed these values so that they are evident in every sinew of school life. All staff recognise the importance of spiritual, social, moral and cultural development and maximise opportunities that arise. Through the prayer and worshipping life of the school, leaders ensure that pupils grow spiritually and gain an understanding of Christian teachings so that they are able to reflect on how these can impact on their own choices and actions and those of others. Through the rich opportunities planned in RE and the wider curriculum, which include the use of the outdoor environment and visits to other places of worship, pupils are enabled to develop as well-rounded learners who appreciate their place within a local and global community.

The school communicates very well with parents and the wider community. They seek and take on the views of stakeholders as a natural part of the self-review processes and this, together with the effective leadership of RE and collective worship, enables all pupils to thrive and grow as unique individuals who feel valued and nurtured in this special and distinctive place of learning. The school meets the statutory requirements for RE and collective worship and ensures that it has an inclusive and welcoming approach for all. The governors, staff and clergy have ensured that community and church links are strong and this sense of belonging is highly valued by all. The parish and community bring clear benefits to the school and the school, in turn, benefits the parish and community by ensuring that they have a thriving and active involvement in wider community life. Parents and pupils spoke enthusiastically of an 'African evening' which not only celebrated a sense of togetherness, but also the community's links to the wider world.

The governing body are very well informed as a result of their active monitoring and thorough self-review procedures. This enables them to provide effective challenge and further strengthens the school's capacity for ongoing improvement and development as a church school. Governors and school leaders prioritise staff training and development and are able to articulate how this has a positive impact on school improvement such as the recent work with the Diocese on spirituality. Leaders have ensured that throughout the change from a very small infant school to a small primary, the school's core Christian ethos has been maintained and enhanced. Their self-evaluation has correctly recognised the changing needs of the older age range. Through the introduction of roles such as School Ambassadors, they have provided the older pupils with the opportunity to explore how they can live out the Christian values as the more senior members of the pupil community.