

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Christ Church Church of England Junior School	
Pendennis Road, Downend, Bristol, BS16 5JJ	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Bristol
Previous SIAS inspection grade	Good
Local authority	South Gloucestershire
Date of inspection	10 October 2017
Date of last inspection	9 October 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Controlled 109165
Headteacher	Pippa Osborne
Inspector's name and number	Mike Graham 286

School context

Christ Church Junior is an above average size school situated in Downend, a mixed urban suburb in north Bristol. The proportion of children with special educational needs and disability (SEND) is close to the national average. The proportion of disadvantaged children, those supported by pupil premium extra funding, is below average but increasing. A large majority of the children are from a White British heritage background. The headteacher has been in post since September 2016, but was deputy headteacher for two years previously. A new deputy headteacher and one other member of the leadership team have joined the school recently.

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

- Exemplary Christian leadership from the headteacher and the senior leadership team is supported with the utmost conviction by staff and governors. This has led to the establishment of a vibrant Christian vision for the school that is lived out by all its members.
- A loving Christian ethos underpinned by Christian values has established a secure school family within which all children flourish in their learning and personal development.
- Exceptional worship and religious education (RE) lead to various exciting explorations of the Christian faith. These experiences enable children to grow spiritually, morally and culturally.
- Excellent caring relationships throughout the school family demonstrate Christian values in daily life.

Areas to improve

- Enable and encourage children, staff, parents and governors to write a new school motto, so as to proclaim boldly the strong Christian ethos of the school in a child-friendly way.
- Continue with and extend the work being done to deepen the staff and pupils' understanding of the Holy Spirit's impact on worship and life for Christians in order to deepen their spiritual lives and to encourage the development of spontaneous prayer.

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

Christ Church Junior is a school where every child is nurtured and cherished as an individual, precious in God's sight. Christian values are the bedrock of all that occurs in and around school. The Christian vision of the headteacher, shared by the whole school family, is crystallised in her statement, 'A Christian approach to all that we do has to be explicit and implicit. (This will) enable us to offer the best we can to every single child regardless of background, culture, faith and ability.' The school's chosen values of love, hope, courage, humility, forgiveness and generosity are not only well presented and biblically based, but are demonstrated by every member of the school family. The effect is evident in relationships and in behaviour, which is exemplary. For example, the humility and generosity shown by children to one another during discussions is remarkable. They unfailingly show respect to the speaker, whether it be a teacher, a visitor or fellow class member. Bible verses referring to the love of God and the example of Jesus, from which children draw support and inspiration for life, are prominent in displays. They also feature frequently in worship, RE and newsletters. The Christian love with which the children are surrounded gives a sense of peace and security, so that there is no fear of failure and they are all enabled to give of their best. School and national test data, and the most recent Ofsted report, show that progress is consistently good, often exceeding national expectations.

All staff play their part in caring for individual children and, where appropriate, their families. A governor praised the pastoral care, describing it as 'a modern creative approach with rigour and ambition'. The attitude inspiring such work is summed up by a comment from the associate minister, 'It is inclusive, underpinned by the six Christian values, and truly values every individual.' This makes a significant and positive impact on the social, moral, spiritual and cultural (SMSC) development of the children. All are made to feel warmly included. Two parents commented that 'children's emotional needs are always met' and 'the teachers always have time for them - and us!' Excellent RE gives the children an impressive understanding of other faiths and cultures, so that they are well prepared to play their part in breaking down barriers and prejudice.

The rich curriculum and many extra clubs and activities provided enable children to grow emotionally and to broaden their experiences of life. One excellent example is the 'Monday Thing', a Bible club running on Monday lunchtimes which focuses on Christianity and values making significant differences to the children's lives. School council members are proactive and articulate in providing a strong voice within school. Staff and leaders give the council respect, and they have introduced many improvements.

The school environment is bright and inviting, with numerous, often interactive, displays and quiet areas both in the school and in the grounds. There is a 'Forest School' area for outdoor-based work, and for quiet reflection in the beauty of God's creation. The impact on their spiritual and social development is strong, as demonstrated by the insightful 'big questions' hanging from the school council's new reflection area in a quiet part of the playground. One such question encouraging deep thought is 'Where do we go when we die?'

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship is inspiring. It is relevant and sincere, and makes a significant difference to the lives of all members of the school community. The variety in leadership, style and format of worship ensures that it is always engaging. Biblical teaching is a very strong element, setting the values into their Christian context. Humour is well used and the respect and awe shown by all present is most impressive. The headteacher's leading of a worship time based around love and the parable of the lost sheep demonstrated exceptional skill in engaging children. The variety in presentation and involvement of staff and children was outstanding. Every child was given the chance to write a prayer or a wish on a strip of paper. These were later made into 'prayer chains' in each classroom.

Singing and prayer are both sincere and moving, and the children frequently play key roles in planning, leading and evaluating worship. Visitors from other Christian churches add further variety to the style of worship, and therefore the children have a deep understanding of several elements of Christian worship. Annual visits by a Ugandan bishop add rare and special insights into Christianity as a worldwide faith. The impact of collective worship on the spiritual lives of the whole school family is clear and impressive.

Prayer is a natural part of school life, with the use of children's own prayers in worship and throughout the day clearly evident. Staff and governors use spontaneous prayer when appropriate. The children have a good understanding of God as Trinity. They have a clear grasp of the Christian view of God as Father and creator, and of Jesus as Son and saviour. They are also aware of the role of the Holy Spirit, with one boy commenting, 'The Holy Spirit is the part of God that is always with us'. The potential of such power to inspire Christians in life and in prayer is yet to be explored to an appropriate extent. The contribution to worship from the vicar, the associate minister and other key church members is significant. Anglican traditions are understood by children and used regularly and sensitively. Easter and Harvest 'experiences' bring these festivals alive for all involved. Children speak

highly of the 'Assembly Team', a group of Christians who work in many local schools bringing Bible stories to life through drama and music.

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

The headteacher's leadership is characterised by a strong conviction and an uncompromising determination that children receive nothing but the best in care, teaching and encouragement within an explicit Christian ethos. She leads by example with her relatively new deputy headteacher as a close ally and support. Staff and governors follow that lead in giving unstinting love and care so as to bring out the children's best qualities. Success has been achieved through exemplary teamwork whilst welcoming several new members of staff. They feel privileged to be part of the Christ Church family, commenting on the outstanding quality of support they have received. They are strongly influenced by the Christian love and fellowship underpinning school life.

There is excellent support for the work being done from church members, notably the associate minister, the vicar and his wife, and several parents and governors. Members of several denominations form the Assembly Team, who support the school three times a year. The school's Christian vision is directly linked to the Bible and the life, teachings and example of Jesus. A child said during worship, after reference to the parables of the lost son and the lost sheep, 'God still loves us, whatever we do, and He won't forget.' The Christian values arising from and exemplifying this vision make a strong impact on the school curriculum. There is however no school motto through which the vision can be proclaimed. Governor monitoring and evaluation ensure that the curriculum is balanced and develops the whole child, and that worship and RE meet statutory requirements. The Christian character of the school shines through, and is experienced by all who enter this warm and welcoming community. Every family is aware that openly Christian love and care is always available, especially at times of need. The impact of the Christian vision of the school is secured through diligent strategic planning. The senior leadership team and the governors regularly undertake thorough and honest evaluation of this planning and policymaking. The governors' evaluative work is supportive and yet challenging when appropriate, keeping staff focused on the Christian vision. The areas for development from the previous report have been tackled well. Preparation for future leadership in church schools is built on excellent teamwork, delegation and high quality in-service training.

Partnerships with the local churches, the wider community and parents are strong and mutually supportive. The school raises money for various charities, and children are proud of the fact that this is a demonstration of the Christian sense of justice and of compassion in action. Parents and carers are very appreciative of the Christian care shown. They know that, for all of the staff, the wellbeing of every child is paramount. Parents are very proud of their school. One commented, 'my daughter talks about God and Jesus at home, and has a prayer corner in her bedroom!' Another spoke of a teacher's 'loving concern' for her child when her great uncle was on life-support, and yet another said, 'we are encouraged and inspired by the head and deputy. They are absolutely amazing – a great team.'

SIAMS report, October 2017, Christ Church Church of England Junior School, Downend, Bristol, BS16 5JJ