

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Staplegrave Church of England Voluntary Controlled Church School.

Hudson Way, Staplegrave, Taunton, Somerset TA2 6UP

Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Diocese of Bath and Wells
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Date of academy conversion	September 2014
Name of multi-academy trust	Diocese of Bath and Well Multi Academy Trust (B&W MAT)
Date/s of inspection	28 th November 2017
Date of last inspection	21 st September 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Academy 141159
Headteacher	Jenny Venning
Inspector's name and number	Steve Ford 764

School Context.

Staplegrave School has undergone significant change since the last SIAS inspection. It is a small primary school with 205 pupils. It has fewer than average pupils with special educational needs. It has near national average number of pupils who attract additional funding. Attendance rates are high. Most learners are of White British heritage. Data shows the school performing above national average in reading, writing and mathematics. The school works in partnership with those in the B&W MAT and others. An interim headteacher, who started in September, is leading the school for the current academic year.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Staplegrave Church of England Voluntary Controlled Church School as a Church of England school are outstanding.

- This is a church school that engages passionately in a common vision, of 'life in all its fullness' shared and engaged in by learners, staff and governors.
- The school is clearly identified by its Christian values that are evident throughout the school, embraced by stake holders and appreciated by Christians, non -Christians and non-believers. The school's Christian ethos encourages trust and confidence and clearly leads to the success of its learners.
- All members of the school community are valued and appreciated. This contributes to the high staff morale and involvement, the high rate of attendance and the positive approach to learning.
- Through the well-structured religious education (RE) programme, use of faith visitors and visitors from other cultures, school links with Kenya, learners are aware of the multi-faith and multi-cultural society that is our world.
- The Joint schools' 'ethos committee' is effective in keeping the Christian character and ethos of the school in focus and provides support and challenge to the leadership.

Areas to improve

- Develop further opportunities for engagement with diverse people, beliefs and cultures in ways that help learners understand the reciprocal benefits of these experiences.
- Review the effectiveness of the school's Christian values in order to ensure they act as a memorable and consistent guide to learners' development.

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

Staplegrave's Christian ethos is reflected in its broad and balanced curriculum, support for parents and learners and rich extra-curricular opportunities. The school's Christian character is appreciated by all stakeholders and is inclusive in nature. The Christian ethos enables children to express their ideas and try new challenges without fear of failure. As a consequence, they enjoy school, achieve well and attendance is good. Learners and adults feel part of a Christian family. This confidence is also identified by parents who comment that they feel welcome at school, they like its values and feel they can contribute to its success.

The school's 16 Christian values are enthusiastically embraced but too numerous to act as a memorable and consistent guide. They give rise to excellent relationships between all stakeholders resulting high standards of behaviour in the school. It is a calm and ordered environment. The clear Christian values are readily and passionately talked about by learners, staff, parents and governors. They have an impressive impact on the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of the whole school.

There are significant opportunities and spaces in the school for learners to develop their spirituality, for example, prayer/reflection spaces in each classroom, outside reflection space and access to artefacts to aid reflection and prayer. Children regularly use these spaces and engage daily with the spiritual element of their lives. Consequently the school is developing reflective, receptive and considerate young people who are clearly aware of the needs of others. This provision and practise motivates personal spiritual development.

Through the school's engagement with the pupil selected charities, its link with a school in Kenya and frequent visitors to the school, the learners are well aware of Christianity as a world faith and a faith that exists in different cultures. They are also aware of similarities and differences in cultures at a simple level as a result of these links. They understand the broad Christian duty of care and responsibility to other peoples, beliefs, cultures and the world as God's creation. However, they have less awareness of how their lives can be enriched through engagement with this diversity.

Religious education provides learners with rich opportunities through which they explore and develop their own beliefs and learn about Christianity and other world faiths. Learners therefore find this area of study to be both exciting and challenging. RE, contributes greatly to the school's Christian character and the learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The school's clear understanding of its Christian character means it has maintained a focus on staff and learners' well-being and achievement through the challenge of change. The strong embedded Christian ethos and values have guided this school to maintain stability and progress through this time of transition.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship is central to the life of this school, it is well thought out, resourced and monitored for quality. It has excellent impact upon the learners and this can be observed in the relationships in school and the excellent and challenging displays around the campus. Collective worship is highly valued and learner engagement is enthusiastic. Children feel inspired to contribute, Evidence of pupil inspiration through dance and poetry based on the collective worship theme of courage was observed. The school has established a group of pupil worship ambassadors. These worship ambassadors are confident in leading and delivering worship in various forums, including whole school, house group and class collective worship. All members of the school community can take part in sharing, being responsible for, leading or contributing to Christian worship.

All learners and adults in the school share the collective worship experience and this significantly strengthens Christian values and character. The shared experience consolidates and confirms the Christian message uniting the whole school in a confirmation of Christian values. This creates a school environment where everyone feels valued. The collective worship programme is well planned and managed by the leader of collective worship and the joint schools 'ethos group'. This group, along with the learners' questionnaires, ensures rigorous monitoring, evaluation and continued support for the leader of collective worship. It has a clear impact on the development of collective worship, maintaining its high quality and Christian message.

Collective worship is led by a variety of school personnel, learners and visitors, thus ensuring a rich worship experience. This high-quality provision enables the school community to have a broad view of Christianity and demonstrates inclusivity. It engages and motivates participants in developing their own understanding and exploring their own beliefs. Acts of worship are clearly Anglican in nature with use of a lit candle and response, the use of an altar table, liturgical colours and Christian symbols. The clear planning focuses on biblical material and the life of Jesus, ensuring learners are aware of the links between the biblical texts and the world they live in. Collective worship reaches out to other stakeholders, through such practice as joint prayer jars for family, staff and learners, and invitations to collective worship, particularly to Friday celebration worship, where the school's Christian values are recognised and celebrated.

Worship has a strong focus on the Trinity and prayer. Learners are very articulate regarding the Trinity as three different aspects of God. They clearly understand this Christian teaching and its relevance to Christian believers. They are able to speak about the Trinity with great confidence and awareness. The school community clearly values prayer. Prayers are often contributed to collective worship by learners either individually or as a group. They frequently have everyday relevance to children's experiences, making prayer relevant to their daily lives. Learners express their enthusiasm in comments such as, 'Prayer is 10 out of 10', 'Prayer is important because it makes you feel good', 'Prayer gives me time to reflect on my behaviour'.

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

Staplegrove Church School, has a clear and confident understanding of what its biblically inspired vision for 'providing life in all its fullness' means. It has resulted in a broad and challenging curriculum, a caring and supportive environment for learners and adults with additional support for those in need. The school's Christian foundation guides its leaders' daily decisions. Policies clearly refer to the school's Christian values. Leaders show compassion in their dealings with all members of the school community. They create a peaceful, stable setting for pupils, staff and parents. Their approach to resolving issues is reflective, calm and considered. Staff, learners and parents' morale is high, they have confidence in and high expectations of the school.

Governors, teachers and the senior leadership team (SLT) are able to explain how the Christian vision promotes learners' development. This is validated by an 'ethos group' comprising governors from two schools, incumbent and staff members. It makes a valued contribution, using comparative information that helps assure standards and enable the school to improve.

The school's self-evaluation gives vital feedback to the management team, who adjust school plans accordingly. This evaluation respects all stakeholders and enables them to feel they can make a difference.

The governors have an active role in promoting high standards and the development of the Christian ethos. The links between SMSC development and Christian values are well explored by governors and SLT. Programmes for SMSC, and Christian values are cross referenced to improve cohesion, understanding and impact.

In line with their vision to provide life in all its fullness, leaders have developed highly beneficial partnerships. Links with the wider communities of the B&W MAT, Taunton Learning Partnership (TLP), the parish and parent groups enable the school to provide experiences which enrich learners' education. For example, parents lead on some projects from their own professional expertise, such as in a recent science project. Parents with other faith backgrounds also lead projects within the school, for example, a class project on Islam. The result of these partnerships is that the learners are provided with more experiences, opportunities and a more challenging curriculum.

The school has benefitted from staff and governor training including work on Christian values. The diocese is supporting the school through the process of appointing a new headteacher. The school's links with the local parish church of St. John's, is close and has enriched the experience and spiritual awareness of the learners. The incumbent is a regular visitor. There is mutual and substantial benefit for all in these partnerships enabling learners to witness this close Christian relationship in action.

Governors are positive about church school leadership and continue to ensure the current staff have good quality professional development opportunities to improve their skills. This provision is well planned with substantial benefit for the current leaders who have guided the school through recent change. They are developing a well-informed process to secure the appropriate person to lead the school into the future.

Leadership of RE and collective worship is important, the leader is given both excellent support and resources. The import of these two areas is high on the agenda of the SLT. The impact of this support is the high standard achieved in RE, the clear Christian character and the excellent quality of collective worship.

SIAMS report November 2017 Staplegrove Church of England Voluntary Controlled Church School, Hudson Way, Staplegrove, Taunton, Somerset TA2 6UP