

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Reepham Church of England Primary School

High Street, Reepham, Lincoln LN3 4DP	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Lincoln
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Local authority	Lincoln
Date	19 September 2017
Date of last inspection	8 November 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Controlled 120581
Headteacher	Ian Randall
Inspector's name and number	Yvonne Shaw 245

School context

Reepham is a slightly smaller than average size school with 197 pupils on roll, few of whom speak English as an additional language. Most pupils are from a White British heritage. There is a well below average proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium throughout the school. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is average. Attendance is above the national average and persistent absenteeism is low.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Reepham Church of England Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The strong, committed and enthusiastic leadership of the headteacher, fully supported by well-informed governors who keep the Gospel of Christ in the forefront of their decision making, has galvanised the school community into a deeply caring Christian community with a true sense of family at its core.
- Christian values are deeply embedded and influence every aspect of the school's life and work. As a result, learners grow in self-belief and achieve very well in all aspects of their development.
- The links between the church, school and community are both strong and supportive. These links, which are underpinned by the school's Christian values, further enhance the rich sense of family.
- Worship plays a key and meaningful part in developing learners' spirituality and understanding of prayer.
- The partnership with the school in Nepal enables learners to develop a good understanding of Christianity as a worldwide faith and of Christian service.

Areas to improve

- Extend learners range of religious vocabulary in collective worship and religious education (RE) to further enrich their understanding of faith.
- Implement the plans of the Awe and Wonder Committee to bring about changes to class based worship so that these acts more fully reflect the excellence of whole school worship.
- Ensure that the website and key documents make clear the deeply rich Christian distinctiveness which is embedded within the school.

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

The school's Christian vision, for all learners to 'be best prepared for life', is fully achieved through sharing Christian values. These values underpin high quality teaching and learning, care and support for all members of the school family, and through collaboration with others. This ensures that all flourish as individuals and are valued as children of God. It is strongly proclaimed on a daily basis and in multiple aspects of the school's work. It is further reflected in the way in which all are made to feel welcome, part of a wider family, valued and loved. The explicitly Christian values of responsibility, forgiveness, love, respect, friendship and co-operation, are owned and understood by all adults and learners and are effective in ensuring that the Christian vision shines throughout the life of the school. The values are woven through the curriculum and skilfully used in lessons, so that learners see clearly how they impact on their own and the lives of others. As a consequence of this, the behaviour and attitudes of learners and the relationships in this expanding school are deeply respectful, loving and co-operative. Additionally, the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of learners is a key feature of life and learning in this school.

There is a strong and longstanding relationship with the local church and the incumbent brings energy to the school. She understands how to relate to both children and their parents and is a well-recognized figure in the school community. She makes a strong contribution to the spiritual development of all, for example through supporting and taking an active part in the development of areas for reflection in each classroom. These areas not only promote Christian values but also display artefacts from other faiths to deepen learners' awareness of the diversity of our world. The church services are much valued by parents and these occasions are frequently oversubscribed. This supports the school and church in working together to serve the community.

The school has created an exciting and stimulating climate for learning, underpinned by high quality teaching, robust assessment systems and focused on tracking pupil progress. The daily living of the Christian values of the school and their impact on behaviour enables all to learn well. In lessons, it can clearly be seen that learners want to do well and, equally as important, want each other to do well. Outcomes are consistently well above national outcomes at all Key Stages. Learners enter Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) with knowledge and skills which are broadly in line with the national picture and leave well above. Vulnerable groups, including those supported by the pupil premium, achieve well through thoroughly planned lessons and resources to support them. Learners enjoy school and this is reflected in attendance rates which are above the national average. There have been no exclusions in recent times. Learners say that they feel safe and cared for in school and are confident that they know who to turn to should they feel worried about any issue. Incidents of bullying are minimal, and if they do arise, are quickly dealt with demonstrating the determination of school leaders to value everyone for who they are and promote equal opportunities for all.

Staff and parents praise 'the caring environment in which adults are happy to work and children can grow to be well rounded, globally- minded citizens, for whom faith plays a key part'. Parents also describe their school as 'a bubble of goodness' and 'outstanding because it is on a different level'. Here can be seen the impact of the supportive Christian framework where children are challenged to learn and parental support is positively encouraged. However, what is less well proclaimed, is the school's Christian character on the website and some key documents. The school's link with Nepal enriches children's awareness of Christianity as a worldwide faith and responsibility to be global citizens of the future. It further strengthens children's understanding of Christian service through many giving both their time and effort to support the Nepalese school. Additionally it is extending learners knowledge, understanding and respect for communities which are very different from their own.

Religious education (RE) is very well taught, and achievement in this subject is in line with that of other subjects. Learners say that they enjoy the subject showing a strong understanding of how faith has both meaning and impact on human lives. They are impressive with their depth of thought when considering 'Big Questions' and a varying range of opinion. Where they are less confident is in the use of appropriate religious vocabulary. The subject makes a significant contribution to learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development which in turn, enriches the Christian distinctiveness of the school.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Worship is central in the daily life of the school. High quality acts of worship are designed to include learners and staff as participants and provide a place where all can reflect on how to apply what they hear. Learners recognise that this influences positively the behaviour and relationships in school because they articulate that they want to 'do as Christ showed us'. Acts of worship are inclusive and those of faith other than Christianity and those of none say that they derive great benefit from these acts of worship. Participants enter the place of worship with respect and engage with stimuli such as videos or music, joining in with the hymn which might be playing. There is an effective balance in the elements of worship, including Bible teaching, praise, prayer and reflection. Participants experience fun

and excitement and join in enthusiastically with leaders varying the pace during worship so that participants are also invited and encouraged to enjoy moments of quiet reflection.

Leaders carefully plan collective worship. Careful links to appropriate Bible stories are included in the planning so that there is a structured and progressive element to learning about the centrality of the Bible to Christian belief. It is also used as the basis for teaching the school's core values. Senior staff are fully involved in the oversight of worship and this sets the tone for the whole school. They understand that worship must not simply be presented to children, but involves them and enable them to develop their own spirituality. During the year learners are introduced to the key celebrations, traditions and beliefs of the Christian faith. They understand some key Christian and Anglican traditions for example, weddings and the liturgical colours for the altar cloth. References to Father, Son and Holy Spirit help learners' understanding of the three persons of the Trinity which is at a level appropriate to their age. The Awe and Wonder Committee of learners, guided by adults, is taking an increasing role in the leadership, including the evaluation, of worship. They are keen to develop this role further. As a result of their evaluations, across a range of setting for worship, they have accurately identified that class based acts of worship do not yet fully reflect the excellence of whole school worship.

Prayer is an integral part of worship in the school. Learners say that they value the opportunity prayer provides to reflect on their own and others' lives and know that it deepens their spiritual awareness. The opportunity to pray is not restricted to times of worship, and the school community regularly uses the prayer box which is prominently displayed. Prayer is further enhanced by the many inspirational quotes in and around the school including those of key Christian leaders such as Mother Theresa. Every display in the school has the IΧHUS (sign of the fish) on it with a quote to deepen learners' spiritual awareness. This widens the scope and opportunity for prayer and reflection outside of formal acts of worship.

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

The headteacher provides strong, effective leadership which is firmly rooted in Christian principles. Other members of the leadership team affirm that he seeks to model 'a life rooted in Christian values' as well as continually promoting the Christian vision of the school. He is very well supported by the leadership team, which includes learners as leaders. Together they set the tone for relationships that are based on love and mutual respect. Senior leaders, including governors, have ensured that the school community can articulate the school's Christian vision because all are involved in agreeing and reviewing the vision.

There are robust systems for school self-evaluation which include monitoring the Christian distinctiveness of the school. This enables senior leaders to respond quickly to identified needs. School leaders regularly involve learners, parents and governors in reviewing the work of the school. All areas for development from the previous inspection have been met and new priorities have been accurately identified. Governors are very supportive of the school and proud of its achievements. They demonstrate an in depth understanding of academic achievement and also the welfare of all learners. They have a firm commitment to developing a wide range of skills in their learners so that 'all are best prepared for life'. However, they are not complacent and exercise the critical friend role very well. They are very well led by the chair of governors. They have demonstrated that they understand that the school's environment plays a significant part in enabling learning to take place. The care and cleanliness of the environment reflects the firm commitment to the value of respect. Best possible use is made of every corner of the school to ensure that its small size is not a negative aspect. Governors and senior leaders are very mindful of the need for succession planning, and have invested in high quality professional development to 'grow their own leaders'. This is further enhanced through a strong relationship with the diocese and use of the support it offers. Additionally, through living the school's value of co-operation, work done by senior leaders within and across a variety of other schools, further develops individuals as future church school leaders.

Governors regularly review their policies although not all state clearly the Christian commitment to all being 'best prepared for life' nor link to the school's values. This is also the case for the website which does not reflect the deeply rich Christian distinctiveness which is embedded within the school. For example, within school the pupil voice is strong and deeply respected but neither the school council nor the Awe and Wonder Committee have their own page.

The Worship and RE Leader is highly effective in implementing a very clear vision for development. She is very well respected and staff call on her to strengthen their own knowledge and skills. There are strong links with the parish church and the incumbent brings tremendous energy to her role within the school, building supportive relationships with parents and families. Statutory requirements are met in both collective worship and RE.