



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Sproughton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Church Lane,
Sproughton
Suffolk
IP8 3BB

Previous SIAMS grade: Good

Diocese: St Edmundsbury and Ipswich

Local authority: Suffolk

Dates of inspection: 18 November 2014

Date of last inspection: 21 June 2010

School's unique reference number: 124752

Headteacher: Karen Read

Inspector's name and number: Chris Wilson-Town 686

School context

This is a smaller than average rural primary school with 108 children aged between 4 and 11 years old. Half the school population live outside the catchment area. Since the last inspection, there has been a change of headteacher and an incumbent has been appointed, who became chair of governors in September 2013. The school is located in one of the two village parishes it serves. Children from the other village are transported to the school. The school has limited space for worship involving more than children and staff. Most festivals and celebrations take place in the nearby church but steps are taken to ensure that the school has a presence in the other parish church.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Sproughton Primary School as a Church of England school are good

Established strengths

- The school community is united in celebrating its Christian values and ensuring that these underpin the learning and personal development of children and adults, enabling an openness to Christian teaching and a respect for all.
- The Christian fellowship between the school's leadership, the church and the Parochial Church Councils (PCC), as exemplified by the personal witness and faithful commitment of the foundation governor, secures a clear presentation of the Christian message and its Anglican tradition.
- Religious Education (RE) makes a strong contribution to the good social, moral, spiritual and cultural (SMSC) development of the school which enables children to overcome barriers to learning and make good progress.
- The commitment of the headteacher and staff to facilitate periods of quiet and calm for

reflection and prayer ensures that children are consistently able to demonstrate tolerance and respect for different views, faiths and cultures.

Areas to improve

- Strengthen the place of prayer and spirituality in the school through careful evaluation of the existing provision for reflection and consideration of how outdoor provision may enhance opportunities for children.
- Consider the organisation and implementation of collective worship (CW) so that there are greater opportunities for parents to share in the celebration of the Christian message and the children's contribution to it.
- In partnership with parents and the wider community, review how the school's Christian distinctiveness is presented, regarded and valued so that the school leadership can give a clearer account to its influence and impact outside school.

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

'God would want us to be a Rights Respecting school because he loves everyone'. This child's comment encapsulates that the school creates a distinctively Christian learning environment where children grow in confidence and achieve their potential, secure in God's love. Children recognise that values such as respectfulness, forgiveness and generosity are rooted in Christian teaching. Parents see the school as providing 'life messages' and confirm that children use their learning in RE and CW to inform and guide their behaviour in their relationships. Visual presentations remind children of good attitudes for learning, such as perseverance. High quality displays on Remembrance powerfully celebrate children's perception of courage and thankfulness. By encouraging opportunities for quiet reflection and trusting children to respect other's views, staff enable children with weaker recording skills to succeed. 'God lights the world and gives peace' arises from children making models to characterise peace. Through the committees and young leaders, older children exercise responsibility and practise care and stewardship. The incumbent blessing their garden gives reality to creation and new beginnings, enhancing children's spiritual understanding. Christian spirituality is understood by older children but lacks clear definition. Sharing experiences with Hope School, Kenya helps children see how lives elsewhere are very different and appreciate what they have. Fund-raising activities are related to fairness and generosity. All children speak of RE's importance 'learn more about God and Jesus', 'different religions and inspirational people' and that it can help 'you deal with things in your own life' and 'do the right thing'. Children say they enjoy active learning in RE such as the Hindu wedding ceremony. Parents confirm that children 'know more about other faiths and cultures'. They have a good understanding of Christianity as a world religion, fully respect other faiths and, through well-chosen links with another school, see Britain's multi-cultural diversity.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Children describe collective worship as 'bringing the school together under God' and 'helping the school to pray together'. Therefore, all children and adults share in a celebration of the school's daily life and worship. The headteacher effectively coordinates planning, involving children, the incumbent and PCC members and encompassing Values for Life and Open the Book. As a result, CW is well rooted in the Bible, affirming Christian distinctiveness. Using liturgical colours and other seasonal foci, such as the Jesse tree for Advent, helps children to understand the Anglican year's structure. The limitations of the school hall mean that festivals such as Pentecost and Harvest, and larger celebrations take place in the parish churches. Parents join with such celebrations and talk about it strengthening personal connections with the church. Children participate willingly, leading their own 'Open the Book' style worship, and

say that acting stories helps them to learn about being thankful or forgiving. Parents agree; children show kindness and care because 'it is what the Bible teaches us'. However, there are limited opportunities to see children practise worship in the school and so CW's impact on parents is less well-defined. Children enjoy writing prayers, seeing it as helping the whole school talk to God. They understand how reflection is a personal activity; the prayer corner is well-used because it is accessible throughout the day. Children say it helps them to be calm if they are anxious, 'I can write my name on God's hand and know that he will look after me'. Children say there are no similar spaces outside. Formal monitoring by teachers, governors and older pupils is well established and informs future planning but evaluation is not sharply focused on sustained impact.

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

The school's leadership recognises that, for many, school provides the most consistent and tangible presentation of Christian belief. They are united in wanting children to be moved by and have an openness to Christian teaching, so that they can 'have God within them'. The foundation governor models this when she helps children explore and deepen their understanding of the Bible and prayer. The good achievement of children who are anxious or have specific needs is secured by the leadership's visible emphasis that calmness and praise enable effective learning, also leading to good attendance. However, how these are expressions of the Christian vision are not clearly described. The strong links with the school enhance the churches; collage crosses, displays of children's prayers and participation in the Easter experience draw the communities together in the Christian faith. Each PCC say prayers for the school and, through the dedication of church members, parents speak of 'being welcomed' and 'belonging'. However, the school's leadership has not yet assessed how parents and the wider community evaluate the impact of distinctiveness. Therefore, their contribution to its development is limited. RE leadership is strong, evaluative and contributes well to the school's curriculum development. Partnerships with the Diocese and other church schools secure effective professional development to enhance Christian distinctiveness. As a result, current and future church leaders are well-prepared. Self evaluation is well-founded and the development foci have been addressed with clear benefits to children's learning. Statutory requirements are met, though RE is not well-detailed in the prospectus.

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