



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

St Martin's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Ranmore Road, Dorking, Surrey RH4 1HW

Previous SIAS grade: Satisfactory

Current SIAMS grade: Good

Diocese: Guildford

Local authority: Surrey

Dates of inspection: 20 November 2015

Date of last inspection: 16 March 2012

School's unique reference number: 125141

Headteacher: Jane Gorecka

Inspector's name and number: Marcia Headon 761

School context

St Martin's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School is a larger than average school of 376 pupils. The biggest pupil group is of white British heritage and the proportion who speak English as an additional language is very low. The proportion with special educational needs and physical disabilities is below national averages, as is the proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for additional funding. The senior leadership team, apart from the headteacher, have all been appointed since the previous inspection. The school was graded as good by Ofsted in May 2015.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Martin's as a Church of England school are good

- The headteacher's vision for St Martin's as an inclusive school based on Christian values pervades and strongly influences the whole school community.
- The links with the local joint Anglican/Methodist church provide strong pastoral and spiritual care for the whole school which enhances the life of pupils and staff.
- The use and understanding of the purpose of prayer promotes the spiritual development of the pupils.

Areas to improve

- Map the values of the school against the curriculum so that it is evident where they are contributing to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils and how this may be enhanced.
- Ensure that the evaluation of collective worship considers the impact of collective worship on the pupils.
- Involve pupils more in the planning and leading of collective worship.

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

The school has a strong set of values which influence its work. The pupils are very aware of the values which they have considered through the Value of the Month, although they are less aware of the whole suite of school values. They know how the values of belonging, care and courage are derived from Bible stories and how they impact on their lives inside and outside school. The values have a particularly strong influence on pupils' social and cultural lives. For example, they know that to care means to help others less fortunate, or indeed anyone in need. They show this by older children helping younger ones in the playground without being asked to do so, by helping to collect and pack clothes and bedlinen for an orphanage in Zambia, raising money for charities such as Little Legs for Life or by helping in the local Dorking gala event or singing at a residential home for the elderly. The school meets the needs of learners well because of the nurture and support it gives them. The impact of this is shown in the good attainment and progress of the pupils. In 2015 children in Reception attained above other children nationally and the proportion of Year 1 pupils who met the expected standard in phonics was well above the national figure. At Key Stage 1 attainment was securely above national averages. At Key Stage 2 outcomes have improved from the previous year and pupils make good progress. Children who are in receipt of additional money to support their needs make good progress, and overall the gaps in progress between them and their peers are closing. The school is a warm and friendly place, where children want to come to learn and so attendance is good. Excellent relationships exist between the staff and pupils and strong mutual support is evident amongst the staff. The good behaviour of the children can be directly related to the values of the school. Pupils develop their spiritual understanding through religious education (RE), collective worship and the whole curriculum. Older children express their beliefs and understanding using quite sophisticated spiritual language. In a Year 5 RE lesson pupils were reflecting upon Holman Hunt's painting 'The Light of the World' and explaining the symbolism in it. They gave very thoughtful answers and one girl cleverly linked the closed door to possible reactions to recent events in France. Another spoke of the light inspiring communities in crisis. Reflective corners in each classroom are well used by the pupils of all ages. In one classroom the Bible and the Qur'an were displayed showing the school's and pupils' appreciation of diversity. Pupils understand the role of the local church in the area and because of its shared status with the Methodist Church they understand the importance of local Anglicanism. RE is enjoyed by pupils as it makes them think. The school uses the Surrey Agreed Syllabus and pupils are given opportunities through the lessons and the 'Key Questions' to discuss and to explain their own thinking. RE teaching contributes well to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development. Pupils show some understanding of different faiths and are able to make comparisons with Christianity. Standards in RE are in line with other subjects.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship is tightly linked to the values of the school and the majority of pupils describe it as fun and creating a sense of belonging to a community for them. They are able to recall the Bible stories they have listened to and the majority can explain the recent messages of these stories for example, having to have courage to tell someone something difficult. Collective worship is carefully planned by the deputy headteacher and foundation governors. It is centred on the values, the liturgical year and Christian festivals, and emphasises the link with the local church. The weekly pattern of worship of whole school, class or singing worship allows children to worship in different ways and the fact it is led by staff or Vicar or members of the church also allows them to experience different traditions. A good atmosphere is created in the hall by use of music on entry, the lighting of a candle and simple liturgy. The pupils especially enjoy going to the church on important festivals. They have a highly developed sense of the importance of prayer. They have been taught about different types of prayer and the school is a prayerful community. Books of prayers written by pupils have an important place on the reflective tables in classrooms and in class worship. The prayer tree placed in the

foyer is well used with the prayers being offered to God by a prayer group in school which includes parents. The prayers are then used in the church by the clergy which reinforces their significance. Parents attend services in the local church at important festivals as well as the class assemblies and music assembly based in school. Pupils' understanding of the Trinity is just beginning in Key Stage 2 but at Key Stage 1 they have little appreciation of the Holy Spirit. Pupils are involved in collective worship in that they take part in class worship, acting out stories or pupils leading some events at the church and at school, but generally pupils have very little involvement in planning and not enough in leading worship. Collective worship is regularly evaluated by a variety of stakeholders, but it is the quality of the act of worship which is being evaluated not its impact. The school meets the statutory requirements for collective worship.

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

There is no doubt in the minds of anyone associated with the school that the headteacher lives out her vision which is based on compassion and a belief that each child is created by God as a unique person and their differences accepted and cherished as such. The value of care and ensuring the school is inclusive, is uppermost in the minds of school leaders. The commitment of resources to emotional and educational support for pupils demonstrates this strongly. Evaluation is very important to the work of the school which has a good understanding of its current strengths and areas for development. For example, school leaders and governors revisited the use of prayer earlier this year to ensure it was consistent across the whole school. They also revisited the values replacing "quality" with forgiveness as this reflected the current position more accurately. The school development plan is sharply focused with a section on church school distinctiveness. The school curriculum is broad. However, while teachers make reference to the Christian values as they arise in lessons, they have not systematically mapped them against the content taught or against pupils' SMSC development, to ensure all the values, and not just those recently discussed, are totally embedded across the curriculum. The governors are highly effective and very committed to the school. They hold it tightly to account and know the school well through monitoring days when they visit and talk to pupils and staff. They have addressed the points from the previous inspection, although there is still work to do on the evaluation of the impact of worship. The school is attentive to the professional development of its staff. The current RE leader has attended development courses, is completing an MA with a module on RE and had a very thorough handover from her predecessor. Currently, the whole staff have not had any specific development on enhancing the Christian distinctiveness. Partnership working with the local community is very strong. The links with the joint Anglican/Methodist church have been enhanced since the previous inspection. The school contributes to the parish magazine and the staff feel very affirmed and supported by local Vicar. Parents are well engaged and highly supportive of the school. They like the values which their children are being taught. As one said 'Faith and community is what the school is all about'.

SIAMS report November 2015 St Martin's CE (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School, Dorking RH4 1HW