



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Ewhurst Church of England Voluntary Aided Infant School

The Street
Ewhurst
Cranleigh
Surrey GU6 7PX

Previous SIAMS grade: Outstanding

Diocese: Guildford

Local authority: Surrey

Dates of inspection: 13 January 2015

Date of last inspection: 20 January 2010

School's unique reference number: 125181

Headteacher: Jane Dyer

Inspector's name and number: Andrew Rickett 201

School context

Ewhurst is a smaller than average size rural infant school with 85 children arranged into three class groups. About half of the pupils come from outside the school catchment area. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below the national average as is the number entitled to the pupil premium. The majority of pupils are from a white British heritage and favourable socio-economic backgrounds. Attainment on entry is broadly in line with national expectations. Attendance is also broadly in line with national averages. The headteacher currently spends two days each week supporting a local church infant school as an interim executive headteacher.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Ewhurst Church of England Infant School as a Church of England school are outstanding

- Christian values underpin and have an evident impact on the school's approach to relationships, the children's wellbeing and attitudes towards learning.
- Collective worship provides important times for children to be still and reflect and sets the tone for the school day.
- The leadership and management ensure that ongoing development of the Christian ethos has a high profile as an integral part of overall school development planning.

Areas to improve

- Develop the involvement of children in the regular planning and leading of collective worship.
- Develop the assessment of religious education (RE) so that analysis of data is used more effectively to identify future improvement and track pupil progress.
- Ensure that the RE scheme of work is updated in the light of latest national and diocesan guidelines.

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

The start of a process to identify a set of core values in 2012 provided the school with an opportunity to reflect on what it meant to them as a community to be a church school. The outcome of this process itself has deepened the school community's understanding of this and the six core values chosen has given the Christian ethos of the school added meaning and purpose. It is what the school has since done with these six values that make the school outstanding as a church school. The values have been integrated into the life of the school so that they impact on pupils' wellbeing as well as linking with learning attitudes and through this to their academic progress which, by the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 2, exceed national expectations. Love, friendship, respect, honesty, perseverance and community are firmly established in the life of the school. Pupils are able to explain how each of these values have roots in Christianity through teaching in collective worship and are lived out both within and outside of the classroom. The school has worked hard to ensure that links are made in the curriculum to these Christian values. For example, values are linked to topics in the creative curriculum and through pupils' personal and social education. Pupils have very good opportunities to explore and express their views on these values as part of their learning and the quality of reflection makes a valuable contribution to the development of their spirituality. Relationships throughout the school reflect the pupils' view that love is the most important of all the values. Adults and children show respect and honesty in the way that they treat each other. They listen carefully to the views of others and talk with confidence about their own ideas and thoughts about matters of faith and belief.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Acts of worship are special times in the school day. They are also integral to the overall life of the school, to which they make a significant contribution through explicit links between core values and all aspects of school life. This is something that children appreciate and which even the youngest children understand. For example, Year 1 children can explain how the prayers they say in collective worship help them to understand the importance of forgiveness and that it is the right thing to do no matter how difficult it is to sometimes achieve. It is this level of understanding, that values are not always easy to live out, which makes the impact of collective worship outstanding: the messages children hear are recognizable in their own lives and experiences. Worship themes are strongly linked to Bible stories and deliver clear messages that children understand. The development of explicit links between the six core values and worship themes has been a significant aspect of the pupils' understanding of their Christian roots. Pupils respond enthusiastically in acts of worship and have plenty of opportunities to engage through prayer or discussion. Opportunities for them to be involved in planning and leading worship are currently more limited. There are good opportunities for pupils to reflect and pray throughout the school day. Pupils have an excellent understanding of the purpose of prayer and how it can help a person in times of trouble. They talk about prayer in terms of God as Father and Jesus the Son and have a growing awareness of the Holy Spirit. Collective worship makes an important contribution to the pupils' understanding of the church year and the celebration of major Christian festivals. There is a close link to the parish church through the regular opportunities to worship there. Pupils regard the church as a natural extension of the school. Monitoring of acts of worship is effective. Evaluation contributes to school development planning and enhances the worship the worship experience.

The effectiveness of religious education is outstanding

Standards of attainment in RE exceed national expectations for the majority of children by the time they leave the school at the end of Key Stage One. A significant number of pupils achieve at a high level and this represents good progress from their starting points. Standards in RE compare favourably with other core subjects. Pupils acquire a very good understanding of Christianity and are developing their knowledge of a range of other world religions. A wide range of skills are taught so that pupils can apply their knowledge of RE to learn from their

studies. This is reflected in their ability, at this young age, to identify some similarities between different religious beliefs and apply that to their growing understanding of how faith underpins values and making simple moral choices. Teaching is of a high quality. Teachers challenge children's perceptions and have high expectations of the level of engagement in their learning. Children are encouraged to explore concepts through child initiated activities which gives them time to learn in depth. The ongoing use of children's responses, recorded by teachers and teaching assistants, is used very effectively to supplement formal assessment so that there is a secure grasp of each child's attainment. The analysis of assessment data has not yet been carried out so that children's progress can be more accurately tracked across the school and thereby used to inform trends and identify areas for further improvement. Religious education makes an excellent contribution to the promotion of the Christian ethos through the opportunities that arise in RE lessons for pupils to extend their learning by exploring moral and social issues, often linked to the core Christian values. The collaborative nature of the leadership of RE means that there is consistency of approach to teaching and learning and a secure understanding of pupils' attainment.

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

The leadership and management, including governors, have a strong commitment to the ongoing development of the Christian ethos. The headteacher has ensured that, not only has the school fully addressed the areas for development from the previous report, but has introduced initiatives that are successfully meeting the raised expectations of the current inspection criteria. This has ensured that the school has made good progress since the previous inspection with the leadership maintaining a clearly articulated vision for the school as a church school. A good example of this is the closer links between the school's values and pupil learning through the pupils' learning toolkit. Self-evaluation as a church school is robust and embedded in the overall school improvement cycle. Focused monitoring by senior staff and governors gathers evidence that feeds into priorities for development with specific actions for improvement. This cyclical process of self-evaluation means that the leadership and management have an excellent grasp of their strategic role in continual development as a church school. An important aspect of the effectiveness of the leadership and management is an emphasis on training and staff professional development. Through this training, the leadership is aware of the need to ensure that the RE curriculum is regularly reviewed to ensure that it complies with latest requirements both nationally and from the diocese. The school has a very close relationship with the local church and the rector is a well-known member of the school community to both children and their parents. The school meets the requirements for RE and collective worship.

SIAMS report January 2015 Ewhurst CE VA Infant School Cranleigh GU6 7PX