

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Fingringhoe Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Church Road, Fingringhoe, Colchester, Essex CO5 7BN

Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese	Chelmsford
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Local authority	Essex
Date of inspection	7 November 2017
Date of last inspection	October 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Aided Primary 115139
Headteacher	Suzy Ryan
Inspector's name and number	Lizzie McWhirter 244

School context

This smaller than average primary school currently has 88 pupils on roll. The proportion of pupils for whom extra funding is received due to social or economic disadvantage is lower than the national average. The proportion of pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs is slightly higher than the national average. There have been significant changes in staffing including a new headteacher who has been full time in school since January 2017. The headteacher is also the religious education [RE] subject leader and responsible for special educational needs.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Fingringhoe as a Church of England school are good

- This is a close knit Christian community where dedicated staff, parish priest and governors serve the pupils and their families very well on its school improvement journey.
- The supportive partnership with St Andrew's Church enriches the worshipping lives of pupils and adults alike.
- The core Christian values of care, compassion and courage underpin all school life. As a result, pupils grow confidently in this accepting Christian environment and achieve well.

Areas to improve

- Embed the monitoring and assessment of RE to inform future planning and RE's contribution to the school's distinctive Christian character.
- Enable pupils to plan and evaluate collective worship more frequently to support their spiritual journeys.
- Nurture pupils' spiritual and cultural development to enrich their global awareness and understanding by enabling them to meet people from a range of faiths more frequently.

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

Fingringhoe's strong Christian ethos inspires and enables pupils to have an unforgettable high quality education where they thrive and are successful. Indeed, there are three core and foundational values, those of courage, care and compassion. These stem from biblical teaching and permeate every aspect of school life. This is attributed to the Christian tradition and the school's caring and open and inclusive nurturing ethos. Pastoral care and relationships at all levels are strong. Learning is well matched to pupils' needs and includes an approach based on the 'Growth mind-set' model. Such learning takes place within a spirit of 'speaking the truth in love'. It has, for example, helped to turn nonchalant pupils around and led to higher standards in class. Attendance has improved over the last year because the school has worked very closely with extended families and outside agencies, ably supporting disadvantaged families as part of its school improvement journey. Progress data across the school has improved and is much better when compared to previous years. Most pupils across both key stages have made sustained progress in writing and mathematics, with some pupils exceeding expectations. This includes vulnerable pupils, some of whom have made significant progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Writing has improved significantly amongst boys and mathematics for girls. This is because of the support structures in place to overcome any barriers to learning so that the previous gap in attainment has been closed. To facilitate this, for example, trained teaching assistants using 'Talk Boost'. They have been coached in this alongside other schools including church schools in their cluster. This approach has made a significant difference to speaking and listening in the classroom. Consequently, pupils have grown in confidence and their self-esteem. Codes of conduct include a code for collective worship. These help to promote good behaviours for learning based on the school's underpinning and values.

Worship and RE both make good contributions to the school's Christian character. For example, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural [SMSC] and their personal development is enriched by worship and RE. Roles and responsibilities, such as being play leaders, caring for the school grounds and prayer spaces and other activities are part of the broad range of experiences which support pupils' SMSC development. Creative and active RE, which includes an approach to learning called 'Godly Play'. Such approaches successfully enable pupils to understand Christianity as well as learn about different faiths. This helps them to appreciate the cultural diversity within their own community and in the UK. Visits to St Andrew's Church take place, which is very much used as an extension of the school. It is a 'habitual place for the pupils and they are very comfortable there'. Pupils say they would like to meet more people of faith and visit their places of worship. The school has already identified deepening pupils' understanding of diversity and difference within Christianity as a worldwide faith as well as other faith communities. This is a true reflection of the school's ethos and vision.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship, with an emphasis on key festivals in the church year, linked to Christian values and biblical teaching, is an important part of school life. It is enjoyed by adults and pupils alike. One of the strengths of worship at Fingringhoe is the partnership with nearby St Andrew's Church and its parish priest. The pattern of worship includes fortnightly church services on Fridays, using a child centred liturgy, which staff and parents also attend. It supports everyone's spiritual journeys. Pupils enjoy worship in church and say they 'feel more sustained by worship and prayer' there. Some pupils say, 'when we walk into church we feel more connected to God as it's where everybody worships'. They cite the historical heritage and the 'very holy items' they see, speaking about the statues, one of whom represents the Trinity. Pupils are growing in their Christian understanding of God as Trinity. For example, they recall worship using symbolism, such as an apple, led by their headteacher and parish priest. Consequently, they speak of 'God the Father is the skin. Jesus the Son has flesh like a human being. The core is the Holy Spirit within us, the inside of God'. They emphasise that, 'The Holy Trinity is a way to help Christians understand God better. It reminds us God is always with us'. Pupils comment that the most important part of worship for them is 'thanking God for all he's created, for Jesus, and for forgiving us from our sins or wrong-doing'. Pupils say and use their own prayers and psalms in worship and lead the greeting and blessing in the Anglican

tradition. Some pupils have the role of acolytes in church services and process candles. Pupils' personal spiritual development is encouraged through praying at times other than in collective worship, such as using the prayer space and class reflection areas. Pupils value 'being able to reflect and having time to say your own prayers'. They think deeply and bow their heads and make the links between Bible stories and their core values, such as courage. For example, 'Peter and John showed courage and stood up for what they believed in'. They cite 'Jonah, which shows us if we change our ways, good things can happen'. Worship inspires pupils to act in the service of others in a spirit of compassion and care, like the Good Samaritan. For example, the school choir sing at the local care home. Whilst pupil views are gathered, these are not always specifically about worship. To this end, some pupils are keen to set up a 'holy council, like a school council, but for church representatives' to improve worship. The school has already identified involving pupils more fully in the planning and evaluation of worship. This reflects the school's inclusive approach to involve and engage pupils fully in school life.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

Fingringhoe's pupils enjoy RE and it has a high profile in school. Since January 2017 there has been a drive to ensure RE teaching is creative and active, enabling pupils to have a rich understanding of Christianity and world faiths. This is because the headteacher is the RE subject leader. The school have been working very closely with the diocesan RE adviser in using the diocesan RE scheme, together with the 'Understanding Christianity' resource. The previous report recommended robust assessment of pupil progress and attainment. This has been addressed and embedding the monitoring and assessment of RE is rightly identified for ongoing development. This is due to developments nationally in assessment practice in the intervening period. Pupils' attainment in RE is assessed against key objectives and progress for each pupil is tracked through the year, using end of unit assessments. More recently, the school's overall attainment and progress tracking tool has been used for RE too. This accurately shows standards in RE are broadly in line with other core subjects. Regular monitoring ensures continuity and progression with teaching and learning consistently good, and with pupils demonstrating a good understanding of Christianity. Pupils currently self-assess their work according to a bronze, silver or gold level. Whilst some pupils find it hard to self-assess accurately, some say they would like the challenge of a platinum level as in other core subjects. Pupils are now asking more questions and thinking at a deeper level, with more independent learning taking place. For example, Year 6 pupils reflect on creation and say they get quite excited as they see how it links together with their science topic. Pupils' religious literacy is good. For example, younger pupils are able to use key vocabulary, such as crucifixion and resurrection and can explain the symbolism of bread and wine for Christians. They recognise Jewish symbols too and say it would be exciting to go to a synagogue. Meeting people of faith is important to deepen their knowledge of other faiths and beliefs. They know that prayer is important for many faiths. Most pupils can explain the symbolism of the Annunciation, Ascension-tide and Pentecost.

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

Much has been achieved in a relatively short space of time on Fingringhoe's journey to school improvement. Given the fact that the school community has changed with regard to many key members of staff, the school's Christian character has been a constant. The headteacher has a good understanding of the school's performance and distinctiveness and ensures RE is well led and managed. For example, RE has its own effective action plan. Both RE and worship meet statutory requirements and support spiritual development well. In addition, valuing others with mutual respect and developing positive relationships is driven by the school's Christian values of courage, care and compassion. This includes supporting all staff in their roles and responsibilities, such as enabling all staff to have clearer expectations in teaching RE. Community links are strong, notably with parents and the parish church. Village events, such as the Christmas fair are held in St Andrew's Church as well as key festivals, such as Remembrance-tide and Christingle. The school has benefitted from training and support from the Diocese as well as links with nearby church schools in the diocesan family. Governors are effective and take their roles very seriously and are committed to the quality of wellbeing for every child and adult. They have addressed areas from the

previous inspection well. They are enthusiastic in their dedication and are committed to the ongoing monitoring of RE as an important aspect of Christian distinctiveness. They speak explicitly of how Christian values underpin pupils' academic and personal development. Staff keep up to date with current developments and are greatly supported by their parish priest, who serves on the Diocesan Board of Education. There is a feeling of belonging and understanding of others in this very positive environment. Staff say, 'at Fingringhoe School we are caring, inclusive and support each other in everything we do but also challenge ideas when needed'. The strong Christian ethos is seen in this school who 'pray with each other'. Parents say their children 'love the church service' and model Christian values at home.

SIAMS report November 2017 Fingringhoe CE VA Primary School, Essex, C05 7BN