

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Potterhanworth Church of England Primary School

Main Road Potterhanworth Lincolnshire LN4 2DT

Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Lincoln
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Date of inspection	22 September 2017
Date of last inspection	28 November 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Controlled 120534
Headteacher	Debbie Challinor
Inspector's name and number	Fiona Griffiths 705

School context

Potterhanworth is smaller than the average size primary school with 99 children on roll. Children come from the surrounding area and are mainly of White British heritage. They come from mixed socio-economic backgrounds. The number of children with special educational needs or disabilities is above the national average. The number of children entitled to receive the pupil premium is in line with national figures. Attendance is broadly in line with national averages. There have been significant changes to staffing since the previous inspection. Religious education and collective worship is being led by a teacher new to the role. The school has close links with the local church and community. An additional classroom has been provided by a local charity and a pre-school on the school site will be managed by school governors from November 2017.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Potterhanworth as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The vision and drive of the headteacher, effectively supported by staff and governors, has embedded strong Christian values that are lived out in all aspects of school life.
- An inclusive Christian environment underpins excellent relationships and positive teaching and learning experiences which enable children to make good progress and achieve well.
- The strong sense of community means that children and their families are well supported and nurtured.
- Collective worship is engaging and motivational and creates a special time for personal growth.

Areas to improve

- Provide high quality opportunities for children to explore their growing spirituality in greater depth through the development of a sensory garden within the school grounds.
- Develop staff expertise in delivering the new RE syllabus so that they provide more challenging opportunities for children to deepen their understanding of Christianity.

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

Potterhanworth's Christian character is outstanding because the school is rooted in the Christian faith where all are encouraged to achieve and everyone's wellbeing is of great importance. The nurturing and inclusive learning environment creates excellent relationships where children are proud to belong. One child commented, 'teachers make you feel amazing for the things you have done'. The six distinct values of respect, fairness, commitment, trust, friendship and responsibility make an exceptional impact on the lives of the children and the school community. Children are able to reflect on the lives of other people, including those from different cultures and traditions through their learning in religious education (RE). Children understand the need to be tolerant of others regardless of their faith background; a year 6 child explained that 'through our learning about the five pillars of Islam I can now respect the beliefs of others'. Religious education makes an excellent contribution to the Christian character of the school. Together with collective worship it helps children to deepen their understanding of the Christian story. Children explore questions in relation to the creation story and share their understanding of God. The Christian character of the school makes an outstanding contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of the children and ensures that spirituality is central to the broad and balanced curriculum. Its provision is enhanced by educational visits throughout the school year, for example to St. Andrew's Church and Lincoln Cathedral, each widening learners' understanding of diversity. Since the previous inspection, dedicated cultural diversity days and links with a school in the Caribbean, have deepened learners understanding and respect for the lives and heritage of others. This understanding is exemplified through the local charitable events, close to the heart of the school. All members of staff act as good role models and children of all ages demonstrate excellent behaviour towards each other and adults in school. Exclusion is rare and seen only as a last resort. This is due to the well embedded core values which impact strongly on day to day actions in and around the school. Children work well in teams and share their ideas with one another. They respond positively to being challenged as they connect belonging to an encouragement to do their best with support for each other. Learning is a meaningful experience because it relates to the children's lives. Children say that they enjoy school and readily identify work from across the curriculum of which they are proud. Attendance is in line with national averages. Parents speak passionately of the way in which school staff respond to their child's needs and how they are regularly consulted on the school's future developments. Families from a wide area actively choose the school for their children because of its strong Christian ethos and its good reputation for nurturing all learners and supporting their individual needs. A stained glass window and displays in the school entrance reflect the Christian nature of the school, as do those along the school corridors and in classrooms. Reflection areas are in evidence and the children use these to develop their thinking and raise questions at a deeper level. The use of an outdoor reflection area has not yet been fully developed to allow children greater opportunities to explore their own spirituality in greater depth.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Acts of worship are an integral part of the school's support for the emotional and spiritual wellbeing of all children. Each occasion is held in high regard and the reverent atmosphere for reflection and prayer is an aid to spiritual growth. Worship is central to the life of the school and well supported in its delivery by staff and clergy; it is engaging and motivational. Adult led worship has a thorough structure which places values firmly at the centre of themes rooted in Bible stories. Children remember acts of worship because carefully delivered messages are easily accessible and consequently have relevance to their lives. Acts of worship are distinctively Christian and fully inclusive and at the same time interactive and fun. Since the previous inspection regular planning, delivery and evaluation of worship by the children has impacted positively on the school community. Children talked about planning and delivering worship based on 'thought of the week' and how this helps them to reflect on God's world. They are confident to voice their understanding and thoughts on how the Bible explains the difference between right and wrong. Children gain a sense of occasion through carefully chosen music, lighting of candles and the use of Anglican liturgy. Children of all ages demonstrate high levels of participation confidently offering contributions and increasingly making connections between Christian values and biblical teaching. Singing is enjoyed as an integral part of daily worship and does much to enrich the experiences of all those present. Older children are developing their understanding about God as Father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit and have a strong sense of 'God is with us'. Children gave a simple explanation of the 'Holy Trinity' hymn which they sang during morning worship and of how it is fundamental to the teachings of the church. Every other year children take part in an act of Holy Communion in church to experience this important aspect of Anglican worship. The Bible has a prominent place within worship and children regularly use Bibles within their classroom settings. Prayer is used well throughout the school day and children share their prayers in class reflection areas. They show a great understanding of the purpose of prayer as talking and listening to God. Older children have studied the Lord's Prayer and recite it during worship whilst younger children are encouraged to sign. The school regularly uses the parish church as a place for worship in order to enhance the overall spirituality of the occasion. Parents regard the celebration of festivals such as Harvest, Easter and Christmas at the local church as part of the life of the school's spirituality.

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

Leaders and managers share a passion and commitment to the Christian ethos and the difference it makes to the lives of children. The leadership team and the governors are extremely effective in the development of the school's Christian ethos which has continued to thrive since the school's previous inspection. They confidently articulate a vision for the school based on clear Christian values which are shared with the whole school community. The Christian vision impacts positively on standards of achievement and the wellbeing of the community. This is clearly demonstrated in the outstanding level of care shown to children and their families through the high quality pastoral care. One parent encapsulated this by saying 'the headteacher is always on the playground at the start of the day, and the teachers make you feel welcome. There is a real sense of belonging in this school'. The emphasis on Christian values is a key reason for many parents choosing the school. A well-developed partnership between the school, the community and the diocese results in a high awareness of local, national and global issues. Senior leaders, supported by governors and clergy, model active Christian leadership. This has an extremely positive impact on placing the school at the heart of the local community. Procedures to monitor and evaluate the overall impact of the Christian ethos on all aspects of school life are in place. This gives senior leaders a clear grasp of what needs to be done to continue developing the distinctive Christian ethos and have the full support of the governing body to do so. They ensure that areas for development are carefully identified and that issues from the previous inspection have been fully addressed. Governors, for example, monitor RE and worship to identify further areas for improvement and understand the need to develop their skills and abilities in continuing to challenge the school as a church school. Self-evaluation is therefore realistic and shows a good capacity to continue to improve as a church school. The school has benefited from clear advice from the diocese. Members of staff show great passion for their duties and the focus on raising standards. A creatively planned curriculum enables children to learn about Christianity and other faiths through exciting lessons. During the inspection an RE session with the younger children focussed on the meaning of harvest through carefully chosen activities. Children were able to offer their suggestions as to why they should thank God at this special time of year. This was a highly successful session. Older children's investigational and reflective skills were in evidence during a lesson on Buddhism when they produced a Bodhi tree created with wisdoms and sayings of their own. The RE leader who is new to the post has a growing understanding of developments in RE which will ensure the subject moves forward. These developments have yet to be shared with staff and therefore further training opportunities are required to provide more challenging opportunities for children to deepen their understanding of Christianity. Since the previous inspection children have greater involvement in how collective worship is delivered. Governors take seriously their role in appointing senior leaders who support the church school ethos. Children, parents and staff all comment on the enjoyment and enthusiasm that is brought to worship. Parents say the school is successful in creating a sense of belonging in which everyone treats each other with tolerance and respect. The school meets the statutory requirements for RE and collective worship.

SIAMS report September 2017 Potterhanworth CE Primary School Potterhanworth Lincolnshire LN4 2DT