

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Savile Town Church of England Voluntary Controlled Infant and Nursery School

Warren Street
Savile Town
Dewsbury
WF12 9LY

Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese	Leeds
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Local authority	Kirklees
Name of multi-academy trust / federation [delete as appropriate]	N/A
Date/s of inspection	24 January 2017
Date of last inspection	3 July 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	VC 107702
Headteacher	Debbie Douglas
Inspector's name and number	Geraldine Cooper 696

School context

Savile Town CE Infant and Nursery school makes provision for pupils from the age of 2 to 7 on a split site. The school has experienced declining numbers over recent years and currently has 140 pupils on roll. The school serves a predominantly Muslim population in an area of deprivation close to the centre of Dewsbury. However, the school receives a low level of pupil premium. A high proportion of children have English as an additional language and the majority enter the school below national expectations. There has been a significant change in staffing since the last inspection.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Savile Town Church of England Infant and Nursery School as a Church of England school are good.

- School leaders and governors have a clear vision for the school which enables it to be a central Christian presence in the community whilst recognising and respecting the religious integrity of pupils and their families.
- Christian values are at the heart of the schools' commitment to equality and inclusion and have a direct and positive impact on pupil performance.
- Collective worship effectively relates to pupils knowledge and experience through the use of Bible stories and the development of personal prayer.

Areas to improve

- Develop procedures to increase the frequency with which the school's distinctiveness as a Church school is evaluated by the governing body in order to maximise the impact of the school's Christian vision and values.
- Improve the role of foundation governors in the evaluation of collective worship in order to enhance the governing body's effectiveness in evaluating the school's distinctiveness as a church school.
- Increase the capacity of all staff members to create and promote structured opportunities for pupils' spiritual development

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

The majority of pupils enter the school with low levels of functional English and little readiness for learning. Through the promotion of core Christian values of love, kindness and perseverance the school provides a nurturing environment in which children grow in confidence and develop a capacity for learning. The proportion of children reaching a good level of development at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage has increased from 25% to 63% over the past two years. Focussed intervention and a commitment to every child, regardless of ability, ensures that by the end of key stage 1 the majority of pupils are performing at, or just below, national expectations. The school is a 'place of faith' in which the distinctly Christian ethos fosters caring relationships. The positive relationships between all members of staff are an exemplary model to pupils who treat each other with courtesy and kindness. This creates a very inclusive community in which all children are valued as is evident in the warmth with which children with special needs are supported by their peers and all members of staff. The school is pro-active in the co-ordination of multi-agency provision for children with special educational needs and places great emphasis on the support it offers to parents. Parents are provided with opportunities to develop their understanding of, and capacity to support, learning through the provision of maths club and English as an Additional Language (EAL) lessons, which fosters positive relationships. Families are assisted in accessing help and the school has effective relationships with outside agencies in order to promote the learning and developmental needs of pupils. The dedicated team of teachers and support staff work collaboratively to develop a curriculum which is broad, balanced and responsive to pupils' needs and interests. This, coupled with their natural curiosity and eagerness to learn, creates an environment in which spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Sometimes pupils lack the vocabulary to express ideas and this would be enhanced if there was a more consistent approach to provide structured opportunities for pupils' spiritual development. The majority of pupils are of Pakistani Muslim origin and the school is very sensitive in the way that it promotes a Christian ethos and values. Through religious education, collective worship and the wider curriculum, pupils are able to explore their own faith and to develop an understanding of Christianity. Similarities are emphasised and differences between the two faiths recognised. Pupils have regular opportunities to visit a range of local churches which represent different Christian denominations. As a result of these visits pupils have an understanding of God which they can explain in simple ways in accordance with their age and linguistic development. Older pupils are able to compare their understanding of Jesus with the beliefs of Christians. This is enhanced by their celebration of Christmas and Easter. Pupils were able to accurately recount the story of the birth of Jesus because they had participated in a traditional Nativity play. Older pupils have an understanding of Jesus as the light of the world because they learnt the meaning of Christingle in RE.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

The head teacher works closely with staff to ensure that there is a consistent and thematic approach to collective worship which ensures that all pupils are able to engage with, and apply, the school's Christian values to their own actions. There is a clear structure to worship which creates a regular pattern consistently applied by those leading worship each day. This creates a routine in which pupils feel secure and are able to reflect and respond. All members of the school community consider that collective worship has an impact on the positive behaviour in the school and the way that children relate to each other. There is a strong focus on Bible stories which enables pupils to develop an understanding of the similarities and differences between Christianity and their own Muslim faith. Stories are presented in a way which engages pupils and enables them to enter into dialogue about the story and its meaning. Music is a central part of collective worship, creating an atmosphere in which pupils gather and depart in a reverential manner. They clearly enjoy singing songs which are chosen to be accessible to all members of the school community and which deepens their understanding and worship of God. All children engage in the school prayer which is led by older pupils on a daily basis. Pupils' appreciation of the significance of prayer is enhanced by the use of class prayer books. They record their own prayers which reflect their concerns and interests and are able to respond to ideas about the ways in which prayers can be answered ... 'well not if they are selfish like wanting a big car'. Collective worship provides a stimulus to pupils' care of others less fortunate than themselves. The reflection area in the school hall enables pupils to appreciate where significant world events are happening and provides opportunities to think about their impact on the lives of others as exemplified by their support of local and international charities. The school regularly welcomes visitors into collective worship and local Christian leaders deliver collective worship on a regular basis, thus expanding pupils' experience and understanding of Christianity. Careful records are kept and regular monitoring, including the views of pupils. This informs change, for example the choice of songs.

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

The head teacher, in conjunction with a newly established staff team, has established and embedded an ethos which enables pupils to benefit from an environment in which Christian values are central to their education. These values emanate from a dialogue which included all stakeholders. They are presented in a way that is sensitive to, and inclusive of, the Muslim faith of the majority of the pupils and are accepted and valued by the school community. The focus on the school as a place of equality and inclusivity creates a pupil centred approach to decision making which ensures the progress and emotional well-being of all pupils, particularly the most vulnerable. School leaders ensure that resources are focussed on the needs of all pupils through a low pupil teacher ratio and the deployment of focused intervention. All pupils make considerable progress between their arrival and the end of key stage 1. This is universally attributed to the school's distinctively Christian ethos in which pupils develop social skills and patterns of behaviour which promote learning. The head teacher, in conjunction with senior leaders, has a very secure understanding of the centrality of Christian values to the school which has ensured that their self-evaluation is accurate and that areas for development are recognised. However, the governing body does not regularly review the school's distinctiveness as a church school and so does not have a strategic overview of the training needs of staff and governors as leaders of church schools. The head teacher has worked strenuously to build effective relationships with local churches in order that pupils have consistent and positive experiences which enhance their knowledge and understanding of Christian beliefs. This is enhanced by regular visits to different local churches and engagement with visitors into school. As a consequence of this pupils are confident in talking about faith and making comparisons between Islam and Christianity. Parents perceive the school as an extension of family and they participate fully in school life, for example attendance at Friday worship, the annual Nativity play and also classes and workshops. This has a positive impact on pupil well-being and learning. The school has strong contacts with the local authority and the Diocese and works collaboratively with other schools. The RE co-ordinator is part of a local RE network which enables pupils to access greater diversity in their learning about RE. The head teacher works collaboratively with other church schools in the area in order to implement and embed Diocesan good practice.

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