

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Rockwell Green Church of England Primary School

Brooklands Road, Rockwell Green, Wellington, Somerset. TA21 9DJ

Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Bath and Wells
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local authority	Somerset
Date of inspection	4 July 2018
Date of last inspection	8 July 2013
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Controlled 123800
Headteacher	Morwenna Dunstan
Inspector's name and number	Rev Jeremy Hellier 899

School context

Rockwell Green is a larger than average size village school close to the town of Wellington. It has 204 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils live near the school. Most pupils are of white British heritage, but a small percentage have English as an additional language. A higher than average proportion of pupils receive the pupil premium grant and free school meals. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is in line with the national average. The school has grown in size since the last inspection and is served by the Wellington team ministry.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Rockwell Green primary school as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The headteacher and senior team, together with the governors, provide strong spiritual leadership which is the foundation of the school's Christian distinctiveness.
- The impact of the school's ethos on spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is clear in the confident way pupils speak about the school's values and spiritual matters.
- The distinctive Christian values are deeply embedded in the life of the school and provide the environment that allows all pupils to flourish in all aspects of learning
- A very high priority is given to worship and religious education so that all learners understand that prayer is the 'golden thread' that links all the values.

Areas to improve

- Support and increase the involvement of pupils in planning collective worship at all levels to further develop their understanding and valuing of worship.
- Review the understanding of Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith to improve pupils' appreciation of the diversity of faith and belief.
- Improve the explanation of the school's distinctive Christian vision on the website so it is readily apparent to all.

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

There is a very strong sense of community driven by widely shared and deeply held Christian values. These are based on the statements 'Train up a child in the way...' (Proverbs 22 verse 6), and the words of Jesus saying 'I am the Way...' (John 14 verse 6). The strength and impact of this is clearly seen in the fact there are no school rules, and all behaviour management is conducted in the context of the values. The ethos created allows learning to flourish at all levels. The senior leadership team applies its vision to supporting staff in matters of pupil attainment, progress and wellbeing. The impact of this is evident in the way teachers conduct lessons and other activities leading to ready enthusiasm for learning. The distinctive Christian character of valuing people also drives the way in which the school employs additional staff to assist in raising the achievement of learners. This is particularly evident in the approach to the funding of support for disadvantaged pupils. The work of the recently appointed part-time chaplain is invaluable in sustaining the school's Christian values. She, together with the emotional learning support assistant, the incumbent and a variety of clergy and lay ministers show pupils how to live out the values. Not all pupils are Christian, and there is a spirit of inclusivity so that collective worship and religious education are enjoyed by all learners. The impact of this is evident in pupil reflections around the fire at Forest School. Religious education is well organised and supports the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils by relating the values of the Christian way to their lives. Reflection on the importance of special places and the idea of pilgrimage is just one example of how religious education supports pupils in their personal spiritual journey. Care for all pupils is reflected in an incentive system encouraging pupil attendance, and as a result attendance is just above the required level. Sharing the values with parents means they are able to identify how they impact on children beyond the school environment. Pupils discuss Christian values with their family, and parents speak readily of spiritual conversations which have an impact on siblings not yet at the school. Pupils are very confident in expressing their thoughts about spirituality. The Christian value of loving and valuing one another as a unique part of God's creation is clearly lived out, and this is evidenced by the way pupils look after one another and the staff. The impact of this upon pupils is seen in the way they are able to explain why they should behave in a particular manner. They are able to link this with biblical stories and the life of Jesus as a role model. Overall the school's Christian character is highly developed, well supported by links to the Wellington team ministry and other churches and their ministers, and clearly embedded in the whole school community. This character creates an atmosphere where learning and achievement are a natural part of following the Christian way exemplified in the life and teaching of Jesus.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

The outstanding impact of collective worship is evident in that the pupils talk about it readily. The high value placed on worship is reflected in the very careful planning of the teacher who co-ordinates it. There is daily worship as a whole school or in classes. Checking on the impact of this is seen in that whole school worship is followed up in class worship the following day. A link with 'Bibles for Children' facilitated by the Methodist church allows all pupils to receive a Bible as a gift, and this gives them ready access to scripture. Worship is planned using biblical material, and pupils are readily able to link Christian values with Bible stories. As an example, pupils readily identify the story of Jesus resisting temptation in the desert as one source of the Christian idea of perseverance in faith. They understand that because Jesus did this there is a Christian duty to do the same. Pupils respond well to opportunities in class worship for reflection around the school's values. Pupil involvement in planning is more limited. Pupils are able to reflect on acts of worship and write their thoughts down. Facilities such as the sensory garden in the centre of the school allow further opportunities for reflection. The garden is a clearly appreciated by pupils and they have opportunities to maintain it as well as use it. Anglican practices are evident with formal Christian greetings and responses, use of crosses and candles, and a very clear understanding of seasonal colours. Pupils have an impressive understanding of the Christian idea of God as three in one, and the various symbols associated with that idea. Class reflection areas around the school are well used and pupils understand their purpose. Prayer and worry monster is well used. This is a soft toy where children write their worries down, and zip them inside the toy. Children clearly find this helpful and the impact on their spiritual and mental health is evident. A strong feature of reflection areas is the use of pebbles with symbols for each of the school's values. Pupils readily explain the various symbols, and their understanding of the Christian values is impressive. Tactile experiences such as making wool bracelets in the seasonal colours and other imaginative ideas are used to support worship and reflection. These experiences are appreciated greatly by pupils who speak readily of ways in which they involve themselves in spiritual reflection. Forest school is another good example of this. A strong ecumenical team of clergy and laity, the chaplain and others lead worship on a regular basis, and their involvement strengthens and encourages the Christian vision. Pupils participate in worship through drama, running equipment and other activities. Worship takes place in a variety of settings, and as a result, pupils understand that approaches to God may be made in different ways and contexts. The parish church of All Saints is used by various groups and classes, although the growth of the school makes it difficult to accommodate all pupils in church at once. However, the place of church has a powerful presence in the lives of pupils. Parents speak warmly of festivals and special events,

and it is clear that a number make a significant effort to attend. Overall worship makes a very strong impact on the school community and is reflected in the lives of pupils.

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

Leaders articulate and confidently live out a vision of the Christian way within the school, although the detail of the vision is not immediately apparent on the website. Policies are clearly rooted in distinctively Christian values, and every policy begins by referring the reader back to the school's values. The school aims to serve its community by creating a stable and secure Christian environment, and a period of stable leadership has facilitated this. Governors, the chaplain and the senior leadership team are committed to providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice as defined by the 'Roots and Fruits' programme. The example set by leaders provides a role model for pupils, and this is seen in the calm and confident way difficulties are dealt with. All stakeholders are involved in self-evaluation, particularly through responses to questionnaires. Comments from parents on the school's Twitter account indicate their appreciation of the school and the impact it has on their children. Parents have easy access to staff who quickly resolve any concerns. Parents speak of the impact that Christian family values have on their home lives. Use is made of the nearby parish church, and church members take a strong interest in the life of the school. A particularly impressive link has been established with the local branch of the Royal British Legion, an important part of the Wellington community. Pupils help look after war graves in the cemetery and other activities, and as a result Christian values of respect, service and sacrifice are reinforced strongly. Relationships with church and community are very strong and demonstrate clear and substantial mutual benefit. Development of staff and governors is very strong. A variety of skills are evident on the governing body. Governors readily undertake development and training both with the local authority and the diocese. Distinctively Christian values drive all decision making about the wellbeing and achievement of staff as well as pupils. As a result, staff speak strongly about working at Rockwell Green as being much more than a job as they are involved in a caring team. This is reinforced by the headteacher who takes the view that people are always the best resource a school has. Foundation governors understand their role and visit regularly. Governors use a visit proforma and note examples of Christian distinctiveness and other features that allow learning to flourish. Development of church school leaders is evident. This benefits the school through promoting best practice amongst all staff. The religious education and collective worship co-ordinator is well supported in the role, and this is evident in the time given to allow development of a highly organised approach to both areas of school life. Leaders show a ready appreciation of what is required to maintain and further develop as a church school.

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