Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

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| Weston Lullingfields Church of England (Foundation) Primary School | |
| Weston Lullingfields Shrewsbury SY4 2AW | |
| **Current SIAMS inspection grade** | **Good** |
| **Diocese** | Lichfield |
| Previous SIAMS inspection grade | Good |
| Local authority | Shropshire |
| Date of inspection | 12 January 2017 |
| Date of last inspection | 23 March 2012 |
| Type of school and unique reference number | Foundation 123513 |
| Headteacher | Meriel Edge |
| Inspector’s name and number | Reverend Alison M. Morris 759 |

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| **School context**  Weston Lullingfields Church of England Primary School is a rural school which is smaller than the average sized primary school. There are 37 pupils aged from 3 to 11 years. It serves the village of Weston Lullingfields and its surrounding areas. All pupils are taught in two mixed age classes. Pupils are mainly White British and come from mixed socio-economic backgrounds. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs stands at 7%. The school has close links with the clergy and local church. In September 2015 the school was judged to be good by OFSTED. The acting headteacher is a teaching head and was appointed in September 2016. |
| **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Weston Lullingfields as a Church of England school are good**   * Christian belief, faith and dedication by the acting headteacher are effectively infusing the school’s distinctive Christian vision and identity within the community. * Effective pastoral care and effective intervention strategies based on Christian values enable pupils to blossom and flourish within a safe and nurturing Christian community. * Significant and purposeful relationships between the clergy, the governors and the school express the school’s spirituality and foster the Christian distinctiveness. |
| **Areas to improve**     * Engage all governors in the process of implementing rigorous and robust formal systems of monitoring by establishing a more efficient and consistent monitoring schedule for church school development. * Foster more partnerships which will allow pupils to encounter lifestyles with people of different faith and cultural traditions to deepen pupils’ understanding of a multi-faith and multi-cultural world. * Increase provision for pupils to experience a wider range of Anglican tradition and practice associated with the world wide Anglican communion. |

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| **The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is good**  **at meeting the needs of all learners**  A distinctive Christian character and ethos is apparent in school and is being successfully embedded into all aspects of school life. Specific expressions of Christian distinctiveness, Anglican character and a positive ethos are both explicit and implicit throughout the school. This is an inclusive school where all members of the community feel welcomed and valued. As a result the school lives out its mission statement of ‘Small school, big family with God’. This vision is accessible to pupils who clearly understand its meaning. Core Christian values, which are rooted in the teachings of Jesus Christ, are being enacted by all and have a significant impact upon pupils’ lives. They are being successfully shared among all stakeholders. Individual personalised learning is possible due to the small numbers in this school, which is underpinned by the Christian character which strengthens its commitment to meet the holistic needs of each child. For example, intervention programmes such as ‘Forest School Play’ supports the needs of specific pupils in their learning. Well planned literacy and numeracy support is also effective in speeding up progress, so that most able and pupils with special educational needs now make good progress. As a result, pupils’ progress is improving although attainment is still low. However, emphasis upon improving pupils’ attainment is a priority. Pupils are treated with dignity to be fully nurtured in this happy, inclusive Christian environment. Staff have high expectations and aspirations for pupils where all are valued. Pastoral care and welfare provision is very effective in supporting the pupils to achieve their best. Pupils’ social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is being nourished and challenged through Christian values, taught within a strong Christian framework within the planned curriculum. Examples of effective practice include the Creative Learning Days, and the teaching of RE (Religious Education) which contribute to an evolving rich and broadly balanced curriculum. Pupils enjoy the school’s approach to creative learning and so are keen to attend school. This is reflected in the attendance figures which stand at 99.36% which is well above the national average. Attitudes to learning are positive within a culture of praise and reward. Enthusiastic and dedicated staff model core Christian values which enhances pupils’ learning. Pupils are courteous, happy and behave well, supported by a moral code underpinned with Christian values. Pupils have a good sense of self-awareness and communicate well. They understand their role to be responsible citizens reflected in the accredited award the school has received from the ‘UNICEF’ project. Pupils also participate in the mission of the wider community through fundraising and charitable giving. For example, donations to Operation Christian Child show the pupils’ attempts to put their faith into practice. Older pupils understand what it means to be a pupil at a church school and make the link to Christian teaching in the Bible. Classrooms have developed Christian focus areas, worship tables and multi-faith symbols which, when used, make a significant contribution to pupils’ spiritual development. Focused displays around the school, for example, ‘The Tree of Thankfulness’ and artefacts in the foyer visually express the school’s Christian distinctiveness and encourages reflection and meditation. A calm and purposeful atmosphere is now promoting a learning environment which has the capacity to raise achievement and embed further the school’s vision. |
| **The impact of collective worship on the school community is good**  Worship is of vital importance in the whole school community. It is distinctively Christian and evokes a sense of gathering within a spiritual atmosphere. It has a strong focus on the person of Jesus Christ and a growing awareness of the Trinity. Worship is valued and makes a good contribution to pupils’ spiritual development. It uses a structured approach which includes a gathering prayer, reading and a blessing. Worship, through its moral messages, influences pupils’ actions and behaviour, creating a positive learning environment. Pupils have good attitudes to worship because the thematic approach relates to their own experiences and meets their needs. As a result, they are very actively engaged throughout. Pupils are reverent, sing enthusiastically and are engaged in prayer and fellowship. They speak positively. One pupil said, ‘I like worship, it calms me down.’ In addition to collective worship, pupils have many opportunities for spiritual reflection and also to evaluate their own behaviours and attitudes through curriculum activities. Artefacts such as lighted candles and other religious symbols are used to create awe and wonder and foster reflection and prayer. The sharing of Bible stories energises pupils’ attention. One pupil said, ‘The teacher makes worship fun, so we want to join in’. Worship encourages pupils to put their faith into action. This view is reflected in the way pupils relate and respect each other. One parent noted how ‘children of all ages play together and look after each other’. Pupils can speak about Jesus’s teaching and how it impacts on their lives. They were able to explain the meaning of the Bible story on the widow’s mite and how it related to their own lives. Worship is planned on half termly basis using ‘Understanding Values’ and SEAL (social, and emotional aspects of learning) with additional themes from Biblical material, Christian values and beliefs which are based on the Christian calendar. Through the work of the clergy, purposeful pupil involvement is beginning to take place through drama, leading prayer and engaging in some evaluation. For example, a baptism was re-enacted in church by the pupils who acted out their roles. Anglican traditions and practices are being embedded in worship but knowledge of the broad range of worship in the Anglican communion is the next step for deeper understanding. Key Christian celebrations, such as harvest, Christmas and Easter take place in Holy Trinity Church. Links with the vicar and foundation governors ensure that Christian values are reinforced so that Christian distinctiveness has a high profile. Their input makes a difference to this Christian school. Parents respond very positively to invitations to share in worship both in church and school. As a result, some parents enjoy, and appreciate worship in school. One parent said, ‘We are made to feel part of the big school family.’ Prayer spaces and reflection areas are creatively used within limited space around the school and encourage pupils’ personal spirituality. Pupils regularly write their own prayers and contribute to worship both in school and church. One pupil said, ‘When you pray to God, He prays back’. They also use familiar prayers, including The Lord’s Prayer, and show understanding of its meaning. Evaluating the impact of collective worship to inform future planning is however, too informal. The school correctly identifies that this needs to be more formally embedded by foundation governors, so that the quality of worship continues to be substantial and of high quality. The school also recognises the need to make a clear distinction between worship and assembly in the life of the school, so that pupils’ and parents’ understanding of these special activities are supported. |
| **The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school is good**  The acting Headteacher, supported by governors, staff, and parents is developing a strong personal vision and commitment to enhance the school’s Christian distinctiveness. One parent said, ‘It makes a difference when the headteacher has a living faith’. Both the acting headteacher and governors are very proactive in living out the Christian vision and values, in an attempt to raise the Christian profile of this school. There is a real desire to promote a caring Christian ethos which is shared by all. Christian values and distinctiveness also foster a happy, safe and secure atmosphere where pupils are starting to enjoy learning and to achieve well. Both staff and governors have an honest view of the future developmental needs of this school. The recent School Improvement Plan represents a very significant step forward in this development. All governors are supportive of this strategic drive to improve academic standards. A strong governance structure ensures that systems of planning, recording, monitoring and evaluating are in place for pupil achievement. Self-evaluation and reflection impacts well, as skilled governors act as critical friends who effectively set the school’s strategic direction. A significant contribution by the acting head teacher has also strengthened the capacity to plan for future development and to ensure improvement in progress and attainment. One parent said ‘the headteacher wants everyone to achieve their best’. Statutory requirements for both RE and collective worship are both met. They are led well and supported by staff and pupils. The Shropshire Agreed Syllabus for RE provides a scheme so that pupils have a deeper respect of Christian values and beliefs whilst also developing an understanding of other faiths, including Judaism and Islam. Pupils’ books are being scrutinised and standards monitored and this ensures that RE has a high presence within the school. Parents have confidence in the school, feel valued and are now more positive about the future of this school. They also recognise and appreciate the Christian faith, links with the church and the values that underpin school life. The clear Christian leadership is evident in the positive relationships between staff and pupils which mean that all members of the school community feel valued. A parent remarked, ‘the acting headteacher’s enthusiasm builds up confidence in you and your child’. An example of this is seen in the interactive learning journal between home and school, as well as the extensive work and support of the Parent/Teacher Association. Parents believe pupils’ academic and personal needs are being met and are enhanced through extra-curricular activities such as horse riding and the film club. They believe that the school is professional in its dealings and speak well of the school. One parent said, ‘Pupils are given a good start in life.’ Close links with the local church, its members and the vicar nurture the close relationships and have a positive impact on the school’s Christian distinctiveness. For example, some church members lead cookery and gardening sessions for pupils while others help with reading. However, a greater understanding of the Anglican nature of this school needs to be explored and developed further. Partnerships are developing with the diocese and the local community. This is starting to promote a positive image of the school in a wider locality and also providing an opportunity to increase admissions. This, in turn will impact upon the school’s viability for the future. Pupils have a deepening sense of Christian identity and are being encouraged, through specific activities to be aware of their wider responsibilities within a multi-faith and multi-cultural society. Links with Kenya, as well as the Cultural Learning Days and a visit to a synagogue are examples of emerging practice and development. However, the school acknowledges that further planned activities for pupils to encounter the lifestyles of people of different faiths are important for deepening pupils’ understanding of a diverse society. |

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