

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Peter's Church of England Primary School

Main Road Alvescot Oxfordshire OX18 2PU

Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Oxford
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Date of academy conversion	March 2015
Name of multi-academy trust	Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust [ODST]
Date of inspection	25 May 2018
Date of last inspection	June 2013
Type of school and unique reference number	Academy 141833
Headteacher	Sam King
Inspector's name and number	Lizzie McWhirter 244

School context

Currently there are 58 pupils on roll in this former infant school which became an academy in March 2015 under ODST. It is now a growing primary school with pupils from Reception to Year 3, the majority of whom are from a White British background. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and /or disabilities is below the national average. The number of pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding is below average. St Peter's is part of the Burford Partnership of ten schools. The headteacher became the religious education [RE] subject leader in January 2015. Significantly, almost half the pupils are from military families.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Peter's as a Church of England school are outstanding

- This is a welcoming and nurturing Christian family community where pupils and adults thrive and succeed.
- Exemplary relationships at all levels, based on trust, ensure that 'belonging, believing and building a future' is understood and lived out by the whole community.
- The Christian vision, dedication and commitment of the headteacher, with the support of all her staff, ensures that the distinctive Christian character of this school embeds all policy and practice and the strategic direction of the school as a church school.
- The excellent partnership between the school and St Peter's Church enriches the worshipping lives of the pupils and their families.
- The good religious literacy of these young pupils derives from the consistently good quality of teaching and learning they receive.

Areas to improve

- Deepen pupils' global awareness of Christianity as a worldwide faith and their encounter with

people of all faiths to nurture their spiritual and cultural development and their understanding of diverse communities.

- As a growing primary school, ensure there is sufficient challenge through planning, monitoring, evaluation and assessment in RE to meet the needs of all pupils.

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

St Peter's effective Christian vision of 'Belonging, Believing, Building a future' is at the heart of all school life. For example, the core values of love and friendship enable pupils to learn, grow and flourish. Relationships and behaviour are excellent, with the achievement of the whole child central to the school's mission. Exemplary relationships built on trust, with these young pupils and their parents, are the key to high levels of success. Attendance is high and there have been no exclusions, with any vulnerable children well supported. Highly skilful teachers and incredibly flexible teaching assistants, who have specialist skills in, for example, speech and language, foster self-esteem in pupils. They use what motivates pupils to ensure success within a secure and safe environment. Consequently, pupils' academic achievement is good and often outstanding. The majority of pupils make better progress than pupils nationally from their starting points. Pupils are proud of all their achievements, which are celebrated daily in class and weekly in collective worship.

Worship and RE make very good contributions to pupils' personal and spiritual development and to the school's Christian character. St Peter's provides a range of after school clubs, including musical theatre, gardening and sporting activities, to enrich pupils' learning and support a wide range of achievement. Pupils are both excited and challenged by RE, which has a high profile and follows guidance from the diocese in using the 'Understanding Christianity' resource. Whilst pupils derive great enjoyment from their RE and collective worship times, they say they would welcome more visits and visitors. Whilst it is not their immediate experience, pupils greatly appreciate the richness of different cultures and diverse communities. Whilst fundraising for many charities extends pupils' global awareness, they have limited understanding of Christianity as a worldwide faith. The school acknowledges that deepening these young pupils' experiences are important in this rural context.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

The strong liturgical tradition at St Peter's stems from its close association with neighbouring St Peter's Church. This excellent partnership greatly enriches the worshipping lives of pupils and adults alike. The pattern of worship includes church services at Harvest, Christingle, Mothering Sunday, Pentecost and St Peter's Day as well as Eucharistic worship. Pupils are encouraged to pray and reflect as well as lead worship, with The Lord's Prayer well used and known by pupils. The use of prayer spaces help to engage with God's creation and enable pupils to 'think beyond themselves'. For example, pupils can recall the events of the Easter story when they see a rock on the beach and make the connection to Jesus' tomb. They also connect with the lighting of a candle to represent Jesus as the light of the world 'and how he came to life on Easter day. We celebrate Easter as it represents Jesus on the cross.' As a result, a deeper Anglican ethos has grown and liturgical greetings and responses are integral to the worship offered and experienced. For example, The Lord's Prayer and the fruits of the spirit help the school community to understand better the Christian belief in The Holy Trinity. Pupils are able to explain the significance of Ascension-tide and Pentecost in their own words and show empathy with the early disciples. They enjoy 'finding out about people in the world, God and Jesus'.

Staff surveys and evaluation of worship confirms the importance of 'coming together to think and reflect and explore the different representations of God'. The rector and governors affirm the 'deepening connection with the church over time'. For example, services are 'incredibly well attended by parents'. Pupils find Bible stories inspiring and relate them to their own lives. For example, they speak of the importance of listening to God as Jonah did, and cite Moses as a leader who 'did not give up, but kept on trying'. One Year 1 pupil went on to say that, 'The Bible is a holy book. It keeps the Holy spirit alive and it keeps our belief in God alive. When we read it, it makes us feel like Jesus is around.' Above all, these young

pupils refer to their school's Christian vision as helpful guidance for life. For example, one pupil commented that, 'Believing means have faith in yourself. We belong to St Peter's Church. It's like your family.'

Pupils, staff and governors currently evaluate worship. As the school grows as a primary school, pupils will have more opportunities to plan worship and develop their leadership roles. Currently the headteacher, her staff and the rector plan worship together, involving and including pupils in age appropriate ways.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

Achievement in RE is high and meets and often exceeds, the expected standards. This is because the quality of teaching and learning in RE is very good and assessment is in place. Pupils know what their steps to success are because they follow the same policy as in other core subjects. Staff have good subject knowledge and ask effective questions of pupils. Whilst new resources are being used for the teaching of Christianity, the Oxford Agreed Syllabus is used for the teaching of other faiths. The headteacher is the RE subject leader and is very committed to RE, undertaking CPD and reporting to governors as well as supporting colleagues. The adoption of this role indicates the importance placed on RE by the school. RE makes a significant contribution to spiritual, moral, cultural and social development. The school's values enrich and underpin this key aspect of Christian distinctiveness. St Peter's is incorporating the 'Understanding Christianity' resources into teachers' planning and teaching. This is already having an impact and deepening pupils' thinking, with its biblical focus and depth of enquiry. Consequently, these young pupils can articulate the Christian story of salvation very well and 'their biblical literacy is amazing'. Pupils take great pride in their work. They enjoy meeting people of faith and Year 2 pupils were captivated by their recent visit to a synagogue, which greatly enhanced their knowledge and understanding of the Jewish way of life. As a result, they could explain the symbolism of the Kiddush cup at Shabbat for Jews just as well as explaining the symbolism of Holy Communion for Christians. One Year 1 pupil designed a prayer book 'with chapters which has a Jewish prayer and the school prayers and lots of prayers in that book'. In the past, RE has not been monitored as much as other subjects, but now it is as robust as monitoring for English and mathematics. The school recognises that RE is not just about literacy, but encourages pupils to become more compassionate and courageous. They also learn skills to help them to 'persevere, keep on trying and concentrate'.

RE starts where the children are and challenges more able pupils with 'digging deeper'. Pupils are familiar with the 'Growth Mind-set' approach and so the introduction of the 'Understanding Christianity' resource came at a very helpful time in the context of learning about the big story of The Bible. For example, pupils ask, 'What do Christians believe God is like?' and 'How do Christians show that they love God?' One pupil, reflecting on the parable of The Prodigal Son, said, 'He forgave him because he said he didn't deserve to be his son and he was really sorry. God forgives us if we are sorry and he wants us to forgive people when they have done something unkind and when they are sorry'.

Going forward, the challenge will be to plan, monitor and assess RE to ensure sufficient challenge for all pupils.

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

St Peter's has maintained its outstanding judgement, not least because the headteacher is dedicated in her effective Christian leadership. Governors praise the way she 'models community and in essence, love'.

Leaders and governors at all levels believe in the core purpose, vision and mission of the school, in that God's love underpins the life and work of this school. Many parents cite the 'nurturing, individual approach of the St Peter's family'. Military families especially value the nurturing, caring side of St Peter's which is, 'such a great starting point, where its pupils are known by their uniform and their behaviour'.

Self-evaluation is accurate, with governors committed to detailed and informed reports. Christian values are the foundation for all policy and practice. Pastoral support and wellbeing for adults and pupils alike a firm priority for St Peter's governors as is academic and spiritual and personal development. Staff are fully supported by the headteacher and the governors in their professional development.

Parents like the strong moral code which is 'everyday, not just Sunday and is a good grounding for life'.

Parents feel at home in the church which, 'brings everyone together', with one parent saying, 'I've started to

feel it's my church now'.

Community links are strong, such as the village fete, Harvest show and charity work , both locally and nationally, often inspired by themes in collective worship. The school features regularly in the monthly Parish Pump magazine. RE and collective worship are very well led, managed and resourced and both meet statutory requirements. Worship and RE are regularly on the agenda of governing body meetings. Parents testify that their children's 'awareness and acceptance of different faiths really captures them'. Pupils are encouraged to believe in themselves and flourish as a result within this family environment. Governors speak highly of the school's membership of ODST and the 'phenomenal change' in the last five years which has made all the difference. St Peter's still values being part of the Burford partnership and working together for moderation to ensure continued academic success. As the school grows and develops as a full primary school, the transition to Burford for the Year 6 pupils will become easier and RE and worship will meet the needs of the older pupils.

St Peter's is truly a place where, 'It is a privilege to be part of the St Peter's family where all adults and children are respected and valued and where Christian values underpin all we do'.

SIAMS report May 2018 St Peter's CE Primary School Alvescot Oxfordshire OX18 2PU