

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Oakley Church of England Junior School

Oakley Lane, Oakley, Basingstoke, Hampshire, RG23 7JZ

Current SIAMS inspection grade

Good

Diocese

Winchester

Previous SIAMS inspection grade

Good

Local authority

Hampshire

Date of inspection

23 May 2018

Date of last inspection

3 June 2013

Type of school and unique reference number

116306

Headteacher

Steve Rich

Inspector's name and number

Richard Blackmore 857

School context

Oakley Church of England Junior School is a two form entry junior school. It is situated in the village of Oakley, four miles from Basingstoke. Most pupils come from the local area but an increasing number of other children come from out of catchment. The majority of pupils have a White-British heritage. The headteacher has been in post for five years. The local incumbent who worked with the school has recently retired.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Oakley Church of England Junior School as a Church of England school are good

- Collective worship is valued highly by pupils and plays a very significant role in driving forward the school's Christian ethos.
- Relationships between all members of the school community are highly positive and mutually respectful.
- Christian values are at the centre of every aspect of school life.
- Leaders strongly promote the school's Christian foundation and values. These are articulated well through the teaching, learning and care provided for the children.

Areas to improve

- Ensure that the school's Christian values are used more strongly to promote pupils' achievement.
- Ensure that leaders monitor and assess pupils' spiritual development more closely.

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

The school is committed to and successful in providing high quality Christian education for all pupils. Its Christian ethos is underpinned by the three core values of 'Compassion, Integrity and Forgiveness'. They are deeply embedded in everything the school does. Pupils and staff rightly attribute the very good behaviour and attitudes to learning to the promotion of these Christian values. The school's values help pupils to achieve well both academically and personally, whatever their ability or background. It also means that pupils feel valued, listened to and well cared for. However, there are times when the school's values could be used more fully to promote pupils' knowledge and understanding. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, whether they are

Christian, of other faiths or of no faith. This is because pupils are excited by and enjoy RE and collective worship, which contribute effectively to pupils' understanding of world faiths. Pupils speak knowledgeably about communities less fortunate than themselves and the importance of supporting different community groups and how this demonstrates their responsibility as local and global citizens. High quality relationships are fostered throughout the school. This has led to confident, articulate pupils who care enthusiastically about their learning environment and about each other. These relationships build much trust and respect between pupils and adults make a further and important contribution to pupils' personal development and to their well-being. The school's strong Christian character promotes a deep understanding of and respect for different communities. An example of this in action is the high levels of care and concern for others shown through pupils' very positive approach to fundraising and charities both locally and nationally. Pupils talk about their learning in RE, and how they have been interested to learn about other faiths for example Islam and Hinduism. Pupils' understanding of RE is enriched by visits to places of worship in the area and further afield. Opportunities in RE are planned well and contribute effectively to the development and articulation of the school's Christian character as well as for pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. This is a result of effective links being made between RE and other subjects.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

The high calibre and engaging collective worship reinforces the school's core Christian values and results in a shared and continually renewed ownership and drive for what that means in daily life. Staff and pupils very clearly enjoy worshipping together and enthusiastically respond to the opportunities to participate by acting out Bible stories, which brings to life key Christian messages and stories exceptionally well. Conversations with pupils show that collective worship has a direct and immediate impact on their behaviour and relationships. One pupil said, 'We learn how to be because it is fun and we understand it'. Leaders ensure that collective worship is distinctively Christian, setting out with great clarity the values of the school in the context of Christianity. Worship is strongly centred on the Bible and the teachings of Jesus. Worship forms the focus for the day for all staff and pupils and successfully gathers together and sends everyone out to act out the school's values during the school day. All staff attend daily worship and share in leading worship. Pupils have an excellent understanding of the purpose of prayer and write their own very thoughtful prayers which are used in collective worship and during the school day. They also add personal prayers to the prayer tree and reflection areas in each classroom. The 'teaspoon' (TSP) approach helps pupils when praying to say thank you, sorry and please. Pupils have a keen awareness of the Holy Trinity and talk about the relationship between God and Jesus his son. They also securely understand the Holy Spirit. Children were able to talk about the significance of the three candles in the hall and each classroom representing God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Several local churches, for example the Methodist Church, are involved with the school, bringing a breadth of perspective and different approaches. This also includes 'Open the Book' which the school's church provides. This gives an opportunity for children to take part in presenting the story and developing a deeper understanding. Parents are encouraged to attend services in church and do so to support their children.

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

Leaders at all levels articulate an explicit Christian vision that impacts well on pupils' achievement, the Christian character of the school and the well-being of the whole school community. The supportive Christian family has been created through the combined and successful commitment of the staff and governors. Governors work effectively as strategic partners in shaping the Christian identity of the school. Self-evaluation is used confidently and precisely to monitor and inform a culture of continuous improvement. Consequently, the headteacher and other leaders have an acute and detailed understanding of the impact of the school's work on pupils, their families and the wider community. Support and training from the Diocese has resulted in rigorous and accurate analysis of the school's performance and a good understanding of the leaders' roles in supporting the school's Christian ethos. The leadership of RE and worship has also contributed significantly to the school's Christian ethos and to succession planning and training for current and future leaders in a church school. Staff value the support they receive and the opportunities to share their expertise with other schools, for example with their work on developing effective prayer spaces. The planning and evaluation of RE are detailed and methodical. The progress of pupils is captured well by the leader, and she has incisively evaluated the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. She adeptly interprets their recorded work and verbal responses. For example, during Lent the pupils' comments on the changing pictures associated with this season were thoughtfully analysed and used to prepare for future learning. Leaders have ensured that there is a clear system of termly tracking and assessment which is embedded well. Occasionally, monitoring by leaders does not always focus sufficiently on pupils' spiritual development and their understanding of Christian teachings. The partnership with the local incumbent as a part of the collective worship team has made a positive contribution to the lives of the pupils and there are good plans in place to encourage further church community participation when the new priest in charge is appointed. Leaders work hard to maintain and develop strong relationships with parents. This has strengthened the links between home and school and is in

building the school's caring Christian ethos continually. Parents praise the school for its openness and say that they are kept well informed about their children's development. Stakeholders' views are frequently sought and valued. These actions support the relationship between the school and its wider community. The school meets the statutory requirements for collective worship and religious education.

SIAMS report May 2018, Oakley Church of England Junior School, Oakley, RG23 7JZ