

## Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

<b>Weeley St Andrew Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School</b>	
Clacton Road, Weeley, Clacton-on-Sea ,Essex, CO16 9DH	
<b>Current SIAMS inspection grade</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Chelmsford</b>
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Date of inspection	8 November 2017
Date of last inspection	November 2012
Type of School	Primary 140181
Executive Head teacher	Lorraine Ratcliffe
Inspector's name and number	Iain Gunn 727

### School context

The school is average sized and serves the village of Weeley. It is in collaboration with one other school. They share an executive headteacher who oversees both schools. The two schools are part of the Vine Academy Trust. There is a head of school in each of the institutions. There has been a significant change of personnel in this academic year. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below the national average. The number of disadvantaged pupils is also below the national average. The majority of the pupils are White British. The school has links with the parish of Weeley St Andrew's.

### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Weeley St Andrews CE Primary as a Church of England school is good

- The school's Christian values are deeply embedded into daily life and impact positively on its work.
- The school has strong strategic leadership which provides a clear vision for improvement and effectively supports pupils' academic and personal development.
- Approaches to teaching and learning in religious education (RE) encourage pupils to engage deeply with the areas under consideration and consequently strongly supports their growth in understanding.

### Areas to improve

- To ensure that the pupils have a deep understanding of other faiths so they appreciate different beliefs and practices.
- To have a shared understanding about what spiritual development means within the school's context so that staff are clear about how to plan for and enhance this with pupils.
- To increase opportunities for pupils' involvement and engagement in collective worship so that there is increased daily participation.

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

Values such as love, trust and wisdom are evident across school life. For example, through the way the school deals with behaviour and enhances pupils' personal development. Values are clearly linked to biblical teachings and pupils can articulate and relate them well to their own lives. One pupil explained how the values of love and wisdom were learnt from Jesus and helped them understand why they should help charities. Thought provoking displays and art work provide a constant link to the school's Christian character. Implicitly Christian values are in evidence through the strong and supportive relationships and are shown also in the good behaviour of pupils. Standards at the end of Year 6 are broadly in line with national averages. The progress pupils make is above the national average. Vulnerable pupils are well cared for and make at least as good progress as their peers. Pupils say they love their school and its family feel; they feel safe and want to come to school. As a result attendance is broadly in line with national average and has improved. Parents recognise the care given to their children and rightly link this with the school's Christian underpinning. They speak highly of staff and leaders and endorse how its faith foundation has a positive impact on their children. RE develops the pupils spiritually by allowing discussion and reflection. The pupils value each other's views and are challenged in their own thinking. The spiritual, moral and social development of pupils is overall strong. However, there are some missed opportunities across the curriculum to plan and respond to spiritual issues. This is because there is no shared understanding of what spiritual development and how this relates to the school's Christian underpinning. The school helps a great number of charities both in this country and abroad. It has particularly links with Chandiwana Foundation. Pupils were able to link the work with charities to their values of love and wisdom. Although the curriculum allows for the pupils to learn about other religions, the pupils do not have a deep enough understanding about other faiths. The school has a wide variety of clubs that enhance pupils' moral and social development and they are involved in a number of links with other schools and organisations. A particularly meaningful collaboration is with a local special school where there is a joint school council. This link supports pupils acceptance of difference and diversity well.

### **The impact of collective worship on the school community is good**

Worship plays a central role in school life and makes a positive impact on its Christian character. The school's vision and values are embedded in the content of worship. Candles are used as a focal point during worship and links to Jesus as the light of the world are made. This strengthens the school's Christian distinctiveness and specifically pupils' appreciation of the importance of Jesus for Christians. Well-structured acts of worship, based around biblical teachings, have a clear structure. This includes an opening worship sentence with a responses, mirroring Anglican liturgical practice. The Lord's prayer is said regularly and closes the act of collective worship and has resulted in the pupil's having a clear understanding about its significance. Thoughtfully planned acts of worship are based around the Christian year which mean that the pupils have a good knowledge of key religious festivals such as Easter, Christmas and Pentecost. The Trinitarian aspect of worship is clear and the children can clearly articulate an age appropriate understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. St Andrew's has a strong focus on prayer and reflection. The prayer life of both the school and the individual is deeply embedded. Prayer is a strong part of school life. Not only is it a central stand of collective worship but takes place before lunch and at home-time. A prayer book in each class where pupils can add their own prayers, written in school or at home, enhances opportunities well. Pupils' appreciate the positive value of collective prayer for the community. Parents report that their children discuss the content of worship at home and will often pray for those in need or distress. Pupils plan and prepare services to mark key Christian festivals, although the pupil's involvement in the daily worship needs to be developed. Worship in the school is monitored by the leadership, pupils as well as the governors. This leads to planned training and improvements; an example of this is the improved structure of the worship that the staff deliver.

### **The effectiveness of religious education is good**

RE is well taught with clear progress evident in books and lessons. This is due to the high profile that the subject has across the school as well as consistently good teaching. The standards are in line with other core subjects, both at the expected level and also the higher levels. Recent changes to the curriculum have made the subject much more interactive with pupils enquiring and asking questions of the areas they are focused on. This allows pupils to think very deeply and challenge themselves and others around them within a respectful and positive learning environment. For example, when discussing creation and evolution, pupils stretched their thinking and asked deep questions such as: 'Did anyone create God? What about dinosaurs?'. Monitoring by the RE subject leader has ensured that the curriculum has a balance between Christianity and other faiths. Work in books show that pupils make good progress over time. This is particularly the case in Key Stage 2 work, where there is, for example, clear progression and expectations in a topic on Islam focused on. Pupils are engaged in their learning and enjoy RE. As a pupil commented, 'RE makes me think and is fun'. Teaching uses a range of skills to ensure that the curriculum deepens pupils' thinking about religious and moral issues. This is further enhanced through the recent addition of a resource called, 'Understanding Christianity'. This is already impacting positively on pupils' knowledge, understanding and engagement. A clear assessment system has been developed by the subject leader which allows for strengths and areas to develop to be identified and then acted upon.

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

The steadfast dedication and commitment of the leadership and governing body at St Andrew's has impacted positively on its distinctive and effective Christian character. This is ensuring that the learning environment is enriched and that pupils academic and personal wellbeing is paramount in decision making. Changes to leadership have provided the impetus to consider the school's aims and values. School leaders have worked hard encouraging pupils, parents and staff to understand its Christian foundation and how this impacts on daily life. This means that there is a renewed understanding across the range of stakeholders about the school's Christian underpinning. Through clear systematic planning the leadership have already shown significant impact on the Christian character of the school with developments in the ethos, RE curriculum and worship. Strong links with the Diocese and Vine School Trust have helped to develop the school and action points raised have been addressed. This includes ensuring that the school's distinctive character as an agenda item at governors' meetings. RE and collective worship are led with enthusiasm and skill. Clear progress against the school's development plan can be seen. RE meets all the statutory requirements, although pupils do not have a deep enough understanding of religions other than Christianity presently. An effective monitoring cycle is in place that involves senior and subject leaders as well as governors. This leads to improvement. An example of this is the introduction of evidence books in RE for verbal and group work. Despite there being a number of staff changes, the training in the school is robust enough to ensure that all new staff are able to deliver the challenging new curriculum within the school's Christian context.

SIAMS report (Nov 2017) St Andrew's CE (VA) Primary School, Weeley, Clacton-on-Sea Essex, CO16 9DH