

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Stanton Harcourt Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School	
Main Road Stanton Harcourt Witney Oxfordshire OX29 5RJ	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Oxford
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Date of academy conversion	May 2014
Name of multi academy trust	Eynsham Partnership (EPA)
Date of inspection	14 June 2018
Date of last inspection	10 June 2013
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Controlled Primary 313130
Headteacher	Rachel Crouch
Inspector's name and number	Gill Walley 644

School context

This is a small oversubscribed rural voluntary controlled school with 124 children on roll in four vertically grouped classes. It has close links with the local parish church and the local community, and it joined the Eynsham Partnership Academy of Schools in 2014. Some pupils enter the school with above average ability and most are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with English as an additional language, special educational needs and/or disability or who are entitled to free school meals is below the national average but increasing. 10% of the pupils are Young Carers. The school population is stable but some pupils leave or join part way through their time there. The current headteacher has been in post since May 2017.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Stanton Harcourt as a Church of England school are outstanding.

- Pupils show a deep understanding of the Biblical contexts of the six values which underpin the school's work and vision because they discuss the values in worship and throughout the day.
- There are very strong and mutually beneficial links with the parish church and the local community so that pupils feel completely involved in local and church life and enjoy the opportunities they have to be involved.
- Leaders and governors have maintained and strengthened the Christian distinctiveness of the school since the last inspection and they now see it as their core purpose.
- Parents speak very enthusiastically about the impact the Christian distinctiveness has on their children. They feel that the values the children live out help them to become good citizens in later life.

Areas to improve

Develop a more formal system for recording pupils' evaluations of worship to give a fuller picture of its impact on them.

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

The Christian values drive every aspect of the school's work to ensure that every pupil achieves to the best of their ability in an extremely supportive and nurturing environment. Relationships between pupils and adults are strong so

that pupils feel completely safe and cared for as individuals. The school's approach to issues such as attendance and pupils' behaviour is determined by the Christian distinctiveness. Pupils and their families are well supported if they experience any difficulty because the school lives out its values of care and respect for everyone. Pupils who find learning more difficult are welcomed and given the support they need to succeed. As a result, all pupils make good or better progress and achieve well. Behaviour, both in lessons and in less structured times of the day, is exemplary. Older and younger pupils play extremely well together, with older pupils supporting the younger ones. When there is any conflict pupils reflect on the values they have not displayed and are asked to explain what they need to do to make amends. Pupils who do not have a Christian background say they feel completely involved in the life of the school, and they say the values help them to make the right choices. They also regard the values as ones to help them in later life. The school shows profound respect to all its families and often invites parents to share information about their faiths and customs with the children to give them first-hand experience. When each value is in focus it is shared with parents and visitors so that they can discuss how it influences family life with their children at home. Pupils show great respect and interest in learning about different world faiths. They celebrate their festivals and learn about them in Religious Education (RE) lessons and gain a deeper understanding by visiting their places of worship. The headteacher has introduced and developed a very active link with two primary schools in Uganda which helps pupils to understand how important it is to help others less fortunate. It has also given them an excellent understanding of Christianity as a world faith and older pupils can explain the differences and similarities between Christianity in their locality and overseas. Pupils are encouraged to have leadership roles and to take ownership of developments. For example, the School Council spoke to governors about their ideas for the outdoor new prayer space. The curriculum and other activities develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding well, and also help them to understand and live by British values. Lessons are planned which engage pupils well and inspire them. Teaching is always at least good and teachers plan lessons which challenge pupils to achieve well. They are encouraged to question and discuss their views. This develops their confidence and their respect for one another. RE has a very high profile in the curriculum and RE lessons help pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as well as their exceptionally good understanding of the Christian faith.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding.

Worship has a very high profile in the life of the school and is greatly valued by everyone. Pupils are very familiar with the incumbent and his lay reader because they visit the school regularly to lead worship and to be involved in clubs and RE lessons. They look forward to him leading worship once a week, both in school and the church. Pupils and staff explain how they are uplifted and encouraged by worship. Parents attend worship and are made very welcome. Worship is predominantly Anglican, with pupils using a Christian greeting of 'Peace be with you' at the start. They light 3 candles and explain that this represents the Trinity. They also see the school, the church and the village, depicted as the backdrop for worship, as a reflection of the Trinity. Worship typically includes children reading a Bible passage, followed by a story which exemplifies the current value and makes it easier for pupils to understand. Pupils understand the Christian festivals and liturgical seasons. Older pupils can retell the most significant events in the life of Christ. They behave extremely well and enjoy taking part in role play or explaining what they know. Pupils are invited, but not instructed, to say Christian prayers and sing choruses, and some find it helpful to look at the candle while they pray. Pupils' spirituality is very well developed and reflected in the contributions they make in worship and in lessons. Most staff lead worship so that pupils experience different approaches. All staff and the incumbent plan together so that themes are consistent and each act of worship helps pupils understand how to apply the values to their lives. Pupils have written and now use lunchtime and home time prayers in their classrooms. These prayers are also based on the values as a further way of helping children to understand how the values can be reflected in their behaviour. Pupils are now much more involved in planning and leading acts of worship and the Worship Group has particular responsibility. For example, they help to prepare the holy table and to light the candles. Each classroom has a prayer and RE table and display, emphasising their importance and enabling pupils to reflect during the day if they wish to. Pupils enjoy learning about different faiths and say this helps them to respect everyone in the community. Some friends visited the school during Ramadan to explain this to pupils and a display of their artefacts sits beside the holy table. Sikh visitors have also talked to pupils about their faith. Worship encourages pupils to think of the needs of others in the community and leads to a wide range of charitable work. Pupils evaluate the impact of worship informally but a more formal process would give leaders a more accurate picture of the impact worship has on them. Parents are now invited to evaluate all aspects of the Christian distinctiveness and the impact this has on their children. Their views, along with the results of governors' monitoring, are used to set targets for further developments. Worship meets statutory requirements.

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

All groups of stakeholders identify many steps which the new headteacher has taken to strengthen the Christian distinctiveness further. The values of care, respect, equality, achievement, trust and excellence are completely

embedded in the life of the school and children explain what it means to show that value. They also talk of the Bible stories and passages they know which demonstrate each value in a Christian context. For example, when talking about trust pupils spoke about putting their 'trust in the Lord forever, for in God the Lord we have an everlasting rock'. Each value is shared for several weeks so that pupils completely understand them. RE and worship are led by the headteacher, she has instigated improvements and ensures that practice is consistently outstanding. All staff feel very well supported and encouraged by her, and confident to deliver engaging and challenging lessons. Ongoing professional development for staff is a very high priority, and regular monitoring and evaluation drives constant improvement. Governors have a strong presence in the school and a very good understanding of the school's Christian distinctiveness. They monitor rigorously and are fully involved in evaluating and identifying areas for further development. They hold leaders to account because ensuring the progress of all groups of pupils, irrespective of their background or needs, is their core purpose. Governors and school staff work closely with the diocese and governors have recently engaged in a review of their roles and their impact on raising standards. The school has adopted the Diocesan scheme of work for RE and its recommended method of assessing pupils' progress in RE. Governors have given thought to succession planning because maintaining the Christian distinctiveness is of the utmost importance. The school works in partnership with other schools within the academy. For example, there is a parents' prayer group for all of the church schools and regular collaboration between their governors. Parents are involved in evaluating the Christian distinctiveness and suggest ways in which it might develop further and have greater impact on their children. They and their children feel that the school values them as individuals and that their welfare has the highest priority. The recommendations of the last inspection have been met. Pupils are now much more involved in planning and leading acts of collective worship both in school and in the church. They are very proud of the new outdoor space for prayer and reflection and look forward to planning the activities which will happen there. The headteacher is developing more links with the local community so that pupils are even more involved in village life and are able to make a greater contribution.

SIAMS report June 2018 Stanton Harcourt CE Primary School, Main Road Stanton Harcourt Witney OX29 5RJ