

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Pauntley C of E VC Primary School

Pool Hill, Newent, Gloucestershire. GL18 1LL	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese	Gloucestershire
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Satisfactory
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Date/s of inspection	08 March 2017
Date of last inspection	08 May 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Controlled 115643
Executive Headteacher	Chris Ward
Inspector's name and number	David Scorer 841

School context

Pauntley Church of England VC Primary School is located close to the town of Newent. It has 42 children on roll, taught in two multi-age classes. The vast majority of children are from White British heritage families. The number of children with special educational needs and /or physical disabilities (SEND) is well below the national average. The number of children who are eligible to receive additional funding through the pupil premium grant is well below the national average. There have been no significant changes to staff in the last four years. The numbers on roll since then have grown steadily.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Pauntley VC as a Church of England school are good

- The executive headteacher, staff and governing body are effective in promoting the direction of the school's distinctive Christian character.
- Relationships at all levels, informed by Christian values, guarantee a high level of pastoral support for all members of the school community.
- Children express their views and opinions on matters of faith and belief with thoughtfulness and confidence.

Areas to improve

- Formally record the monitoring and evaluation of the impact of recent initiatives by senior leaders and governors, to clearly identify success and areas of improvement, which will then inform school development planning.
- Provide the opportunity for pupils to systematically plan and lead worship, to further enhance their spiritual development.
- Broaden the children's understanding and experience of diversity, so they can fully appreciate Christianity as a multicultural world faith.

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

Pauntley is a caring and inclusive Christian community, which is built on love and respect for others. A focus on the school's core values of 'Friendship, Courage and Respect', combined with twelve Christian values is referred to by all members of the community. This has resulted in positive relationships with clear evidence of love and care throughout the whole school community. The school acknowledges the fact that there has not been sufficient time for recently introduced initiatives to be deeply embedded into the daily life of the school. As a result, the school has not formally evaluated the impact of recent developments, such as the spiritual garden. Children are clear about the benefits of the school's Christian values on the lives of the whole school community. One example was stated by a child who said, 'Our values that we learn from Bible stories don't just guide us at school, but prepare us for life, making us better citizens.' Furthermore, children are actively encouraged to live out the school's Christian values. For example, pupils of mixed ages play harmoniously together during break times, when cooperation and mutual respect is the expected and celebrated norm. Religious Education lessons are planned to ensure that there is an appropriate emphasis on the stories of Jesus. As a result, the children's knowledge and understanding of Christianity is good. Academic achievement, attendance and behaviour have shown steady improvement since the last inspection and this is largely attributed to the School's focus on its Christian character. The school has developed a shared understanding of spirituality and how spiritual development can be encouraged through explicit curriculum planning as well as reflective areas in and around the school. Outside, a spiritual garden has been developed to provide a place where children can think and pray. Children and staff display very positive attitudes towards their local community. This is reflected in the school's involvement in and commitment to fostering links with the local church and community. For example, regular acts of worship are extremely well attended by all stakeholders, as are church-based Harvest and Christmas services. This results in plentiful opportunities for all stakeholders to engage in and share their spiritual development. The school's Christian ethos, collective worship and RE are effective in supporting children's spiritual, moral and social development. One child highlighted the basket of produce on display in the school entrance explaining, 'We want to help those less fortunate than ourselves. Anyone can donate food to this basket at any time and it is then passed on to those who need it most.' However, the school does not provide opportunities for the children to develop their understanding of Christianity as a multicultural world faith.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship is an important and established part of the day. The children are able to talk about the Christian values that underpin all that they learn. As a result, the key messages permeate all aspects of school life and are clearly visible throughout the setting. Children display strong relationships with each other, clearly evident in the way mixed age groups positively interact during play times. However, there are not sufficient opportunities for pupils to plan and lead worship, to further enhance their spiritual development. The three candles and Bible are a constant reminder of the importance of Christian traditions, with one child explaining, 'During grace, we always light the candles that remind us of God the father, son and holy spirit. They remind me that I am never alone in my life.' Worship is often a time of quiet and stillness although at other times it can be highly interactive with enthusiastic singing. High levels of engagement are fostered and scheduled in the school's collective worship planning. For example, on the day of the inspection Key Stage Two children contributed in the form of drama role play to the collective worship based around the school's current Christian value of Forgiveness. Pupils display positive attitudes about worship, with one pupil stating: 'We always have a Bible story to illustrate the value we are learning about. We also think about what we can do better ourselves and for others.' The children have good opportunities to take part in bible readings, drama and storytelling which further encourage high levels of engagement. Evaluation of worship by children and senior leaders enables them to identify areas for development. As a result there has been an increase in pupil participation and responsibility during collective worship. Parents speak favourably about the school's celebration services which are held at the parish church. One parent said, 'It's lovely to have us gathered together for these special occasions, like one big family.' These serve to further strengthen the links between the whole school and wider community. The special setting of these services promotes spiritual development very well. Prayer is an important part of the school day beyond collective worship. Dedicated reflection areas are provided in each classroom for children to 'stop and think, especially if we are ever sad'. Children are actively involved and engaged in creating, sharing and valuing reflection opportunities. The impact of this has resulted in worship having a greater relevance to the lives of both children and adults.

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

The executive headteacher, staff and governors have ensured that the school has addressed the areas for development from the previous inspection report. The senior leaders' vision for the school is clear, epitomised by the headteacher's desire to harness the schools Christian values to foster 'a safe and happy family environment, where everyone develops'. As a result, all members of staff work as a cohesive team and demonstrate key Christian values such as the core school focus of respect. This in turn ensures high levels of care for each other and a clear feeling of value whatever their role. One staff member's comment was, 'The staff have collectively fostered a culture of ingrained positive attitudes. This creates superb role models for all children to benefit from.' School leaders and governors have a well-established understanding of how the Christian faith underpins all aspects of the school's life. This was supported by one governor whose comment was, 'We constantly question our policies and provision to ensure our core values are common-place across the school. Our open door and welcoming practice result in any issues being dealt with swiftly.' The core set of values based on the Christian vision for the school are evident visually and in practice throughout the setting. These were agreed following wide consultation which included the whole school community. As a result, the Christian values have become even more firmly embedded and are having a significant impact on the whole community. The governors express their support for the way the school is promoting its Christian values, particularly with every governor's commitment to the ethos committee. However, there is limited formal evaluation of the impact of the distinctive Christian character in order to identify areas for development. Strong links with the local church ensure that the school is at the heart of the community. Pupils understand the involvement and importance of the church in the local and wider community. The school has a very effective partnership with parents who describe the school as having a clear Christian vision that welcomes all children. The result is that members of the school community feel welcome and believe that they contribute to the life of the school, and indeed positively benefit the whole community. One comment from a parent was, 'The values taught to our children emphasise the strong sense of caring for one another and make our school full of smiles. We feel like our school is our secret diamond.' The governors understand the need to prepare for future leadership. This has brought measurable planned success with the current deputy headteacher regularly leading the school in the place of the executive headteacher on set days of the week. The arrangements for RE and collective worship meet the statutory requirements.

SIAMS report March 2017, Pauntley C of E VC Primary School, Gloucestershire, GL18 1LL