

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

<b>Lincoln St Faith's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Infant School</b>	
West Parade, Lincoln. LNI IQS.	
<b>Current SIAMS inspection grade</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Lincoln</b>
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Date of inspection	10 March 2017
Date of last inspection	21 March 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	I20562
Headteacher	Debbie Barkes
Inspector's name and number	Anne Lumb 333

### School context

This is an average sized infant and nursery school which has expanded since the previous inspection so that it is now a three-form entry school. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language remains below the national average, although this proportion is growing and there are currently 17 different languages spoken in the school. The proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium is average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is lower than average. The recent Ofsted report judged the school to be 'Good'. The school is located in close proximity to the local church.

### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Lincoln St Faith's as a Church of England school are outstanding

- Each child is valued as a unique child of God so that individual needs for emotional, spiritual and behavioural wellbeing are met thus ensuring that children are able to achieve their academic potential.
- Christian values, rooted in biblical teaching, are deeply embedded and make a significant contribution to the exceptionally high standards of behaviour and positive relationships throughout the school community.
- There is a highly developed understanding of spirituality within the school community such that opportunities for personal prayer and reflection are part of the everyday experience of children and staff.

### Areas to improve

- Increase the number of opportunities for child-led collective worship so that more children have the opportunity to develop their confidence in presenting to others and to influence the content of collective worship.
- Develop further opportunities for children to encounter Christianity as a world-wide faith in order to extend their understanding of the global nature of the Christian faith.

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

St Faith's is a distinctively Christian church school where all members of the school community work together to ensure that the core Christian values of respect, compassion, trust, justice, friendship and community underpin both the academic success and the personal development and wellbeing of all learners. Each value is explored in depth and children as well as adults learn to identify these values in each other thus making a valuable contribution to the

excellent quality of relationships throughout the school. As one Reception child commented, 'We put names in our community garden when someone (another child) has helped us.' The behaviour of the children is exemplary and there is a strong sense of everyone feeling part of 'our St Faith's family.' Following the recent growth in numbers, staff continue to value each child as an individual child of God and parents comment that senior leaders and administrative staff 'know all the children in the school. They know the family context and are interested in each child.' The school's Christian character informs the approach of senior leaders to issues of attendance and exclusion. Staff work hard with families to support the achievement of the best attendance possible for their children. In the past, there have been a number of fixed-term exclusions which have been dealt with sensitively in order to ensure that, by working with the families involved, the best outcomes have been achieved by these pupils who were enabled to remain within the school community. An extensive nurture programme, based on the latest research and good practice, ensures that children who need it receive appropriate emotional and behavioural support to enable them to be 'ready to learn' in the classroom. This contributes towards ensuring that Early Years Foundation Stage pupils make good progress from low starting points and an increasing proportion achieve a good level of development by the end of the Foundation Stage. There is good teaching in all classes with teachers and teaching assistants working effectively together to plan work and support pupils who are falling behind. School data indicates that the majority in both Year 1 and Year 2 are on track to make expected progress from their Early Years Foundation Stage starting points in all core subjects.

There is a highly developed understanding of spirituality shared across the school community so that pupils have an increasingly wide variety of opportunities to develop their personal spirituality throughout the school day and parents speak of 'an atmosphere of faith' pervading the school. There are high quality interactive reflection areas in each classroom and children appreciate being able to use these within the learning environment. For example, a Reception child explaining each item on the reflection table, including 'prayer bear' and the prayer basket 'where we can put our prayers.' The school serves an increasingly diverse community and school leaders recognise the need to further develop learners' understanding of the diversity of religious belief and practice within the local community and to increase pupils' awareness that Christianity is a multicultural world faith.

Religious education (RE) is well-managed and led and plays an important role in the development of pupils' speaking and listening skills through engaging learning activities. Religious education, which is based on the Locally Agreed Syllabus, contributes significantly to the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; providing a context in which children relate their learning in RE to the everyday practicalities of living out the school's Christian values.

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

Collective worship is central to the life of the school. All members of the school community engage enthusiastically in worship time which is fully inclusive. Office staff feel very much part of the school community and comment on the importance they place on attending collective worship whenever possible. Children have good opportunities to plan, lead and evaluate collective worship. Class-based worship has extended the opportunities to lead and a recently established Worship Committee (blessed by the Bishop) provides opportunities for pupils' views to be heard and acted upon, for example in the development of a new outdoor reflection area and in writing prayers for the Ash Wednesday service with the Junior School in the local church. Collective worship provides a strong focus on developing children's understanding of the school's Christian values and linking them specifically to biblical teaching. There is a key Bible story each half-term which explores the Christian value; for example, as a Year 2 child commented, 'Jesus' special friends helped each other' and 'we show service to people by helping each other.' Teaching about the Trinity is becoming embedded through collective worship and RE, using the imagery of an apple to help convey an understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, three in one. Each classroom has a model apple in their reflection area and children articulate their understanding in age-appropriate ways; speaking of the three parts of the apple being 'like God having three parts but still being one God.' The vicar contributes significantly to the planning and delivery of collective worship, and this has made an impact on teaching in collective worship. Worship in general has become more closely linked to Anglican liturgical practices and to the church calendar so that children gain an understanding of, for example, the significance of purple in preparing for Lent and that lighting a candle 'means that collective worship has started and we think about Jesus and God.' Different expressions of prayer take place throughout the school day and in the wider life of the school, for example at governor's meetings. These contribute to the range of experiences which provide opportunities for personal spiritual development; children comment that, 'At playtime we can pray' in the central reflection area and 'I can share my feelings with God' in classroom reflection areas.

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

School leaders confidently articulate an explicit Christian vision and values rooted in biblical teaching. Effective evaluation and monitoring by senior leaders and a highly committed governing body ensures that this vision has an

impact on the standards of achievement, distinctively Christian character of the school and the wellbeing of the whole school community. Governors provide appropriate challenge to senior leaders concerning pupil achievement as well as providing significant support to ensure staff development and wellbeing. There are highly effective strategies in place to ensure the continuing professional development of staff and appropriate training for governors, including having a 'shadow' chair of governors, which contributes to the development of future leadership provision. Senior leaders and governors work effectively with other schools locally to secure further improvements in church school distinctiveness. A joint Ethos and Values Committee meets regularly and this closer co-operation between Infant and Junior Schools helps ensure a seamless transition and experience for children between the two schools. A Year 3 teacher from the Junior School, for example, explained how she is impressed by the confident way in which St Faith's children reflect on their experiences. Excellent relationships are evident between the school, the church and the wider community which are illustrated by the active involvement of school and church in annual community events such as 'West End Lights' and the Carholme Community Gala. Parents comment that the multi-agency approach (including the church through the vicar and the Mother's Union) to supporting families encourages 'people wanting to help each other.' Parents contribute fully to the life of the school, attending family collective worship in large numbers and appreciating the way in which the school 'values the home as part of the children's learning journey.' Engagement with the diocese ensures that staff receive appropriate training and that the children have opportunities to attend diocesan events thus strengthening their understanding of the wider church family. The development points from the previous inspection have been successfully addressed and the school meets the statutory requirements for RE and collective worship.

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