

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

<b>Paulerspury Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School</b>	High Street Paulerspury Towcester Northants NN12 7NA
<b>Current SIAMS inspection grade</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Peterborough</b>
Previous SIAMS inspection grade:	Good
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Name of multi-academy trust/ federation	N/A
Date/s of inspection	5 October 2016
Date of last inspection	October 2011
School's unique reference number	121986
Headteacher	Nicholas Edwards
Inspector's name and number	John Weaver 402

### School context

There are 115 pupils on roll at this rural school. A number of them come from outside the school's catchment area because the parents have chosen the school for its Christian ethos. The number of pupils with special educational needs or a disability is below the national average. Similarly, the numbers in receipt of free school meals and the pupil premium funding are below the national average. The head teacher has been in post for almost 2 years, although he was a member of staff when he was first appointed interim head.

### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Paulerspury Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary school as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The explicit Christian witness of the headteacher and staff has a powerful impact on the school's Christian distinctiveness and values.
- The governing body actively ensures the promotion of the school's Christian ethos and holds the leadership to account for its impact.
- The strong impact of Christian values such as care, forgiveness, perseverance and trust lead to excellent behaviour and relationships which enable the pupils to always achieve their best.
- Pupils' spiritual awareness is well-nurtured, and through encouragement they value prayer and thinking about the difficult questions of life.

### Areas to improve

- Give the pupils greater regular opportunities to participate in the planning and leadership of acts of collective worship to promote further opportunities for their spiritual growth.
- Deepen the pupils' theological understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit within their experience of Christian worship.

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

Distinctive Christian values are at the core of this school. They all have a clear biblical link. Pupils can therefore identify stories from the Bible that exemplify particular values. Parents appreciate the opportunity to work alongside their children on the 'values worksheet'. They speak approvingly of this leading to 'in-depth discussions round the dinner table'. Through discussion of values such as perseverance and courage the pupils have developed great confidence. This enables them to always try to do their very best. Outcomes for the majority of pupils are high. A number of pupils have had notable successes in academic and social achievement from low starting points. This is directly attributable to the love, care, compassion and encouragement of everyone in the school supporting the Christian ethos. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development is excellent, due to prayer, reflection and discussion being an integral part of each school day. 'Prayer space' activities, organised by members of St. James's Church, have increased spiritual awareness. Each classroom also has an area for prayer and reflection which is regularly used. All the adults and pupils live out the values every day in school and outside. This directly leads to excellent behaviour and high-quality relationships. The pupils know how to make good choices in how to behave, and what to do if any issues do occur. Attendance is above the national average. The few pupils whose attendance is patchy are supported by the school in ways fully in keeping with its Christian foundation. There have been no exclusions. Religious education (RE) makes a good contribution to the Christian character of the school. Pupils say that they enjoy RE lessons and are stimulated by them. Through encouragement they discuss difficult issues through a variety of perspectives. Visits to places of worship have given them a wide perspective on other cultures and faiths. Pupils' understanding of Christianity as a multi-cultural world religion is enhanced through the diocese's links with Kenya and the school's support for a child from Peru. These enable them to experience Christianity in action in other countries.

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

'Assembly' in this school is clearly worship. Parents give examples of how worship has impacted on their children, including those of no faith, and on themselves. Pupils value the opportunities they are regularly given to take part in worship in practical ways. They participate and respond well, take what they learn to heart and apply it to their lives. Drama and songs with actions are popular ways in which leaders embed the meaning of the act of worship. The 'Values for Life' scheme is the source of worship planning. This ensures that it is firmly based on biblical material and distinctively Christian teaching. Regular follow-up in lessons underpins pupils' understanding at their own level. Because of this, pupils have a clear understanding of the person of Jesus, who he is, and what he taught. However, their knowledge and understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit is under-developed. Prayer is an important part of school life and worship. Children's personal spirituality is developed by encouraging them to write their own prayers. They do this with increasing fluency. The 'messy church' leaders from St. James's Church organise after-school sessions regularly, and those who attend gain from the different form of worship. 'Experience' events are held in the church during school time, most recently 'Experience Harvest'. The practical nature of the experience events engages all the pupils very well. It enhances their understanding of key Christian festivals. The theological link with which each experience ends makes a strong link with biblical teaching. The teaching in worship emphasises Christianity in action. This means that the pupils often take the lead in fund-raising activities to help others. Collective worship planning, monitoring and evaluation by staff and foundation governors, is effective. Collective worship is not outstanding because pupils do not have regular responsibility for planning and leading worship. However, they evaluate the impact of acts of worship daily in an effective and mature way, often with a suggestion for improvement.

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

Both the areas to improve in the previous inspection have been thoroughly addressed. A programme to monitor, assess, evaluate and develop collective worship is part of the regular cycle of school improvement strategies. This has been effective in raising the quality of collective worship from the satisfactory judgment in the previous inspection. Pupil evaluations of acts of worship are impressive in their thoughtfulness. Similarly, a clear action plan for monitoring RE has been developed. Assessment is fully in place, and through this the subject leader drives improvements successfully. Arrangements for RE and collective worship meet statutory requirements. The head teacher, staff and governors clearly live out their commitment to a school securely founded on eleven Christian

values. This is exemplified by their commitment to the whole child. Each individual child is enabled and encouraged to achieve the best they can from their own starting point. Support for emotional and social needs enables pupils to blossom. Parents are fully supportive of the emphasis on well-being driven by the school's Christian values. Leaders have a clear understanding of the school's performance. Their self-evaluation is accurate, but on the modest side. This is because they are firmly committed to school improvement and know the future steps they want to take. Leaders use professional development strategically to enhance the skills of the staff, using courses organised by the diocese. This ensures that their performance and enthusiasm increase through the knowledge that they are valued. Evidence shows that the quality of teaching has increased across the school. Members of staff are well prepared for the future leadership of church schools. There is a very effective partnership between St. James's Church, the village United Reformed chapel and the diocese. This ensures that all contribute to the benefit of the school and of the church. An example is the influence of 'messy church'. Through its leaders' involvement with the school, pupils and parents who would not normally go to church are drawn into its life. Leaders ensure that the school's Christian vision impacts on the whole curriculum, thus making a strong contribution to pupils' SMSC development.

SIAMS report October 2016 Paulerspury CEVC Primary school, Northamptonshire NN12 7NA