

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

St Leonard's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary

Syerscote Lane
Wigginton, Tamworth, Staffordshire.
B79 9DX

Previous SIAMS grade: Good

Diocese: Lichfield

Local authority: Staffordshire

Dates of inspection: 7 July 2015

Date of last inspection: 19 April 2010

School's unique reference number: 124345

Headteacher: Viv Wild

Inspector's name and number: Marianne Phillips 586

School context

St Leonard's is a smaller than average primary school situated in the village of Wigginton, on the outskirts of Tamworth. There are 123 pupils on roll, 90% of which, live outside of the village and travel in to the school daily. Mobility of pupils is high. About a quarter of the pupils have been identified as having additional needs and 10% are eligible for free school meals and support from pupil premium funding. The school has grown steadily and numbers are predicted to rise further in September. Strong links have been established between the school and the local parish church of St Leonard's.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Leonard's as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The Christian commitment and witness of the headteacher that unites and supports this school family;
- The strong support from the foundation governors and the vicar that is helping to drive the school's efforts to be distinctive;
- The explicit focus upon key Christian values that underpin daily life and relationships in school and in the community, at large;
- The shared Christian vision that is understood and articulated by all stakeholders.

Areas to improve

- Formalise the existing systems that are used by governors to monitor the quality of worship and religious education (RE) to drive Christian distinctiveness;
- Develop the role of the new RE coordinator; release her to undertake a timetable of monitoring and coaching that is supported by the assistant headteacher.

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

This outstanding church school holds a very prominent place in the village and is very supportive of village life. It is strongly led by the Christian witness of the headteacher, who is committed to developing the 'whole child', rooted in the belief that each individual is "*created in God's image and likeness*". As a result pupils of all abilities flourish. Those with emotional and

behavioural difficulties, often take advantage of the comfort and security of the 'nurture room' developed to create a sense of calm and peace, which pupils say is, "*accessible and important to many children in the school family*". The warm, caring relationships which are evident are underpinned by explicit Christian values. To emphasise the importance of these pupils from all year groups have made prayer stones representing the individual Christian values and these are used everywhere to support prayer and reflection; in the spiritual garden, the hall and in classroom reflection areas. Yellow prayer ribbons also feature prominently, as the whole school is praying for one of their pupils, who has been diagnosed with leukaemia. As one child explained, "*our Christian values are very important and they help us in our daily lives inside and outside school*". Pupils are confident, happy and caring, and sure of the love of Jesus. As one explained, "*this school has helped me feel lucky that I have God in my life*". The outstanding behaviour of the pupils is encouraged through the 'Golden Rules' displayed around the school, and good pupil choices are rewarded through 'Golden Time'. Parents explain, "the 'Golden Rules' work so well we have introduced them at home". Pupils are mature and responsible and are clear that, "*if we ever fall out we try to become friends again by talking through what has happened and thinking of our value of forgiveness*". Members of the school council share that they support the younger children through the 'buddy system', helping them to make good choices and this results in classrooms that are harmonious places of learning. The four gospel writers, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, are highlighted around school, as are numerous biblical teachings. Vibrant displays call on Jesus to "*help me share, be generous, forgive, care and say thank you*" - others on the Trinity and the strength of God's family. The governors explained that, "*visitors often comment upon the atmosphere and ethos of the school as something they would like to experience in their own schools*". As well as being distinctive the school is inclusive and welcoming. Parents confirm their children enjoy school and feel safe and protected. They chose the school for its Christian teaching. The school leaders are effective in ensuring pupils of all abilities progress and achieve. Tracking systems monitor the development of individuals, particularly those who join the school with attainment below age related expectations. Assessment strategies are used as a tool to target individuals and provide support to accelerate their rate of progress.' Pupil Premium' funding is used to good effect and, by the time they leave the school, attainment of pupils is in line with or exceeding national averages. The curriculum is enriched with extra-curricular opportunities. The 'Jesus and Me' (JAM) club is a church based club, activities from which are often linked with the after school club. This is one of many strong links which exist between church and school and reflects the numerous ways in which the level of Christian care and commitment of this school, through the work it does, is making a difference to the lives of its pupils.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

The outstanding act of worship observed, was led by the headteacher. The pupils were called to set up the table for worship. They created a spiritual focus lighting the candles to represent love, peace, faith and hope. As they responded to the poem read by the headteacher, the candles of love, peace and faith were extinguished and then restored through 'hope'. The enthusiastic singing to 'Here I am to Worship', then merged with a piece of music called 'Hope' and a time of reflection and prayer where the pupils were called upon to reflect upon their hopes for the future. The way the worship closed with each member assembled touching and blessing their neighbour was spiritually powerful. Parents, pupils and other adults present shared how much the worship had moved them spiritually. They enjoy worship and feel it is important and central to the daily life of the school. The monthly visits to the church for worship enable pupils to experience the rhythm of the church calendar and help them learn about Anglican tradition. Pupils regularly lead worship and enjoy doing so. They are keen to share how they have been given the responsibility to, "*choose, research and plan themes for worship*" on a regular basis and want to continue to do so in the future. Themed weeks are used as a focus to expand and explore other faiths and cultures and the school leaders have this as a priority for future development, organising visits and visitors to broaden pupils' experiences of worship. The quality of worship is monitored informally by foundation and

parent governors. Formalising these systems to ensure consistent, quality experiences in worship is the next step.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

The RE coordinator was appointed to her role in January 2015. She is a highly skilled teacher as was evidenced through observing the outstanding RE lesson she taught Year 6 pupils. During this lesson pupils were working at a high level, confidently using increasingly wide religious vocabulary and were learning about and applying their ideas to answer questions, relating to the conversion of Saul. An inquiry style allowed them to investigate whether they had ever felt strongly enough about anything to change their views about it. Also reflection was used well as space to consider the ability God has to intervene and change lives. Shortly after taking up her post she undertook an audit to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the provision for RE. Observing teaching across the school she judged it to be predominantly good with some outstanding features. In addition, the findings led the school to focus upon improving the quality of assessment and developing inquiry based styles as a whole school approach to teaching RE. To support this all staff had training in philosophy and ways to encourage pupils' thinking. RE planning follows the guidance from Lichfield Diocesan handbook and the Staffordshire syllabus. The school is well supported by the diocesan adviser. RE books show a systematic approach to judging progress using red and green papers to record pupils understanding and knowledge before and after a unit studied. Achievement is at least in line with other core subjects and sometimes better. The formal approaches employed in January are to be structured to develop a timetable of monitoring for the RE coordinator to undertake to highlight on-going strengths and to target and support areas of weakness through coaching and team teaching alongside the assistant headteacher. This is a good idea ensuring RE provision continues to develop and the coordinator's role becomes fully embedded to drive standards in this very important aspect of the curriculum.

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

The headteacher is outstanding as a spiritual leader. Her Christian witness impacts daily on the lives of the staff, pupils and parents, as she lives out the Christian values underpinning this school. She knows the school and is confident about its many strengths that enable pupils to learn and develop academically, spiritually, morally and socially. The focus on the individual, enables pupils of all backgrounds and abilities to be supported and have their needs met. Self-evaluation is embedded and in this time of change, strategic plans are being developed to ensure any areas needing development are addressed. All stakeholders questioned celebrate the work of the school, confirming how much they appreciate the ways, in which, their children are supported and flourish. Relationships are strong and the school family is guided by the headteacher through the teachings of Jesus and the Bible. A sense of shared purpose and belief permeates the school. The pupils are excited about learning and support the school's vision to be an outstanding Church school. Attendance is high because pupils want to come to school. Christian values, vision and prayer are central to daily life uniting this school family underpinning everything it does. Teachers and governors have opportunity to train and network with other organisations, such as the 'Belgrave Learning Network Community', to which the headteacher belongs. Other members of this group regularly visit the school and comment upon its Christian distinctiveness and explicit Christian teaching. Through this and other links with the wider community the school leader is witnessing and demonstrating the difference belief and faith can make. The links between the church, school and community are very strong and mutually supportive proclaiming the distinctiveness of this church school.

SIAMS report July 2015 St Leonard's CE VA Wigginton, Tamworth B79 9DX