

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Kneesall Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School	
School Lane, Kneesall, Newark, NG22 0AB	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Southwell and Nottingham
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Date of inspection	26 April 2018
Date of last inspection	23 May 2013
Type of school and unique reference number	Primary 122762
Headteacher	Sue Ilett-Coupe
Inspector's name and number	David Shannon 617

School context

Kneesall is a small primary school, set in a rural village close to Ollerton. There are 114 pupils on roll, the majority being of White British heritage. The proportion of children with special educational needs and/or a disability is small, as is the number of pupils eligible for free school meals. There are close ties with St Bartholomew's church, which is within walking distance. The present headteacher has worked at the school for 18½ years and was appointed executive headteacher of both Kneesall and St. Mary's Primary School, Edwinstowe in January 2018.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Kneesall as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The dedication, professionalism and Christian commitment of the headteacher drives the school forward, ensuring the highest standards in every aspect of school life.
- The values of the school are recognised as Christian by all pupils. Pupils connect the school values with the scripture passages from which they are drawn and display these values in their daily lives.
- The well-informed and engaged governing body supports and challenges the school's work, linking it effectively with its local community.
- Pupils participate with great enthusiasm in well organised collective worship, contributing to its evaluation and reflecting deeply on its messages.

Areas to improve

- Deepen the spiritual work of the school, by supporting and affirming the new collective worship coordinator, so that pupils' high level thinking is facilitated.
- Develop the work of the collective worship council, so that pupils' evaluations inform future planning, ensuring pupils feel shared ownership of school worship activities.

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

Christian values, such as thankfulness, are clearly evident in every aspect of the daily life of this excellent church school. They are prominently displayed in every classroom, both as reminders to pupils, but also through the display work which shows how pupils reflect upon them. They drive forward all the work of the school. These values ensure that the academic progress of children of all abilities, measured by end of key stage data, exceeds national expectations. Values such as taking pride in achievement, described on the school website, are evident in everything the school does. All pupils, including those attracting Pupil Premium support, achieve progress scores well above national averages. Pupils with complex special needs are fully included in the school's learning, worship and extra-curricular activities. This inclusivity ensures pupils display confidence, enthusiasm for in-depth learning and an exceptionally positive maturity in their approach to school life. Every pupil is recognised as a unique and special gift from God, so that relationships are a strength of the school. For example a pupil who transferred in Y5 said she had made firm friends quickly and naturally, so readily was she made welcome. Pupils take delight in positive comments, but enjoy equally affirming the success of others. Three pupils, accepting awards in a collective worship, readily applauded each other as they received their awards. The 'hundred squares awards' strongly reinforce positive attitudes, ensuring all pupils develop their God given talents. Pupils take important roles as school council representatives, collective worship councillors, sports and eco councillors. Class 3 especially ensure that no one is left without a friend at playtimes. The school offers many opportunities for pupils to display Christian values, aiming at following the example of Jesus. All but a handful participate on the councils, which are pupil led and have helped form a spiritual garden, lead activities for Red Nose day, and choose other charities. The pupils this year are supporting a breast cancer charity, following a bereavement which affected the school deeply.

Pupils feel they are missing out if not at school, so that attendance is excellent and exclusion non-existent. Good behaviour is promoted naturally and consistently; all agree that being a Kneesall pupil is a high calling. Pupils can articulate how learning in spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development has identified challenges they have sought to meet, as part of their Christian duty. Examples include integrating pupils new to the school, avoiding bullying of any kind, and striving to master difficult concepts in school work. Learning enables pupils to make informed decisions concerning their health, welfare and happiness. All recognise the importance of forgiveness and reconciliation, and acceptance of those with different faiths or none. The school's commitment to this is shown by their biennial visit to Leicester, where they visit a synagogue, a Hindu temple and a mosque. Pupils have many opportunities for educational outings and residential visits, so that they experience aspects of God's creation through carefully organised trips to Creswell Craggs, Yorkshire and Northumbria. From these visits, pupils express the need to care for creation, to preserve its awe and wonder through good stewardship. Older pupils are able to explain both similarities and differences between Christians and followers of Islam. Pupils were less secure in describing the role of denominations in Christianity, or of the rapid growth of Christianity in other parts of the world, contributing to an increase in global Christianity.

Religious education (RE) contributes strongly to the SMSC learning of every pupil. It is taught in an engaging and dynamic way, encouraging an appreciation of both symbols and reflection, enabling some pupils to pose and answer high level questions. Both at class and individual pupil level, work-books show how learning enhances attitudes and actions. For example, Year 5 and 6 are reflecting on the Holocaust, its causes and the challenges it poses to faith. This will be followed by a visit to the Holocaust centre at Laxton. Pupils in the Foundation Stage understand the story of the Good Samaritan, and empathise with the characters. They produce stimulating responses to the question, 'What would you have done?' Kneesall is an outstanding church school because it nurtures the God given talents of each child, but 'goes the extra mile' to draw out potential. As one governor wrote, 'Pupils blossom into respectful, confident young people with a strong sense of right and wrong'.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

All pupils are thoroughly engaged throughout acts of Christian worship, so that they show respect, participate readily, and reflect thoughtfully. The 'Growing Disciples' priest participates in a relevant and effective programme, which explains the school values in the light of the life and teachings of Jesus. For example, when hundred square awards are discussed, the headteacher carefully relates pupils' good conduct to examples from Jesus' life. Pupils know many Bible stories and can explain them with empathy, while reflecting on their own conduct. They understand both the humanity and divinity of Jesus, and can give examples of miracles and parables. For example, one pupil explained that Jesus' resurrection appearance and miracle with the fish, was to establish to the disciples that he was not a ghost. Both drama and dance are used within worship to bring Jesus' stories alive for a modern age. Singing is a core part of worship, with pupils identifying their favourite spiritual songs, and the impact upon them of their meaning. A pupil choir leads singing at a local holiday park, twice before Christmas, and at church, diocesan and community services. The choir is having a tangible impact on its community, which values the quality of the young people's meaningful

singing, carrying the message of Jesus to local and diocesan audiences. For example, choir members sing at a local theatre in a festival of song. Pupils know the story of some saints. For example, they know what St Peter did, and can name the four patron saints of the United Kingdom. Their knowledge of St. Bartholomew was hazy. Pupils understand how the example set by the saints can give an example for their daily lives. Pupils recognise that Jesus has a special significance for Christians. In addition to regular pupil participation, worship is led by the staff, or visitors from the diocese, thus broadening pupils understanding of what Christians believe. Pupils welcome the opportunity to attend St. Bartholomew's Church each half term, for harvest, Christmas, Easter, Pentecost and school leavers' services, in partnership with the local worshipping community, so that school worship is building bridges with the local area. The impact of this is to draw more adults into worship. Older pupils understand there are different types of service, contrasting the Eucharist with a baptismal or confirmation service. They are able to describe the Trinity, and how God's spirit might work through them, helping them to project Christian values into everyday life. All pupils understand the centrality of prayer in Christian worship, and are used to making prayer requests or writing prayers, some of which are displayed in the prayer corners of each classroom. An example was a thoughtful prayer for a teacher who was off school. Pupils pray irrespective of whether or not they come from a church background, and many encourage their parents to pray with them at home. They insist on waiting until all food is served, saying grace together, even when at a service station on the M1. Some pupils attend 'church mice', a lunch-time club, where a Bible story and relevant craft activity reinforce their deeper exploration of the Christian faith. A rota is arranged so all who wish to can attend, testifying to Kneesall pupils' readiness to explore faith by giving up playtime.

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

The qualities of the headteacher, clearly living out Christ's example of service and love, have driven the development of the school's distinctiveness since the last inspection. All staff actively promote Christian values, such as respect, acceptance and honesty, linking these with appropriate Bible stories to emphasise these are values displayed by Jesus and his followers. Professional development for all staff focuses on Christian distinctiveness, enabling all staff to reinforce the Christian ethos and preparing them for leadership roles in church schools. For example, recent RE staff training enabled all staff to use the Understanding Christianity resource to raise the profile of RE. The school is supported by the diocese through regular pastoral visits and professional development of staff new to church schools. Two staff, on arriving at Kneesall, were overjoyed with the care and attention they received, and how appropriate their induction training was to introduce them to the distinctive ethos of the school. Governors are united in the pursuit of academic excellence and high class personal development, so that each pupil is enabled and affirmed. Governors regularly attend the 'good book' worship, to encourage pupils who are receiving awards. These bronze, silver and gold stars are much valued, and pupils strive mightily to win them. The foundation governors are establishing a pattern of evaluation activities to assist the school leaders in future planning of worship and RE; they are diligent in their duty of holding school leaders to account. Formal evaluation of worship is carried out by the head, involving pupil response and some input from foundation governors. This evaluation informs future worship, such as shaping the worship for the leavers' service. There are well-focussed and costed development plans resulting from a recent cycle of evaluation, with a governor active in each curriculum area. They have appointed a coordinator of collective worship and RE, who will carry forward the embedding of the Understanding Christianity resource. Effective tracking of individual pupils, enables staff to set clear targets to raise standards in all subjects, including learning in RE. However, standards in RE already exceed local and national norms. Parents are full of praise for the school, especially appreciating how accessible the school leaders and class teachers are. This was confirmed by inspection evidence, when a parent described an issue being raised about a club for Y3, and within twenty minutes one had been set up for them. Partnership work with the priest at St Bartholomew's is well developed, including her pastoral involvement for bereavement counselling, and her running of 'church mice'. She offers a tangible link with local and diocesan worshipping communities, so that Kneesall children feel a vital part of the diocese. For example, parents explained during the inspection, 'The school ensures that St. Bartholomew's is a living church and the school/church partnership is a focal point of the village'. Parental questionnaires show that 99% of parents value highly the work done by the school; many attributed its success to its Christian distinctiveness. The school wholly fulfils statutory requirements for collective worship and RE. All areas have been addressed from the last inspection, as the school makes pupils aware of other faith views, thus widening their appreciation of other worshipping communities. The school has benefitted from involvement with the Minster School Teaching Alliance and its participation in the 3KANDO partnership with two other local church primaries. Kneesall school is discharging its responsibilities fully as a Church of England school and as an important part of the body of Christ.