

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

<b>Southminster Church of England Primary School</b>	
Burnham Road, Southminster, Essex, CM0 7ES	
<b>Current SIAMS inspection grade</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>
<b>Diocese / Methodist District</b> [delete as appropriate]	<b>Chelmsford</b>
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Date of academy conversion	1 November 2013
Name of multi-academy trust	Diocese of Chelmsford Vine Schools Trust
Date/s of inspection	16 June 2017
Date of last inspection	12 June 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	135268
Executive Headteacher Head of School	Pauline Ward Ola Laniyan
Inspector's name and number	Caroline L'Estrange 784

### School context

Southminster is an average-sized primary school with 170 pupils and has been a member of the Diocese of Chelmsford Vine Schools Trust since November 2013. It has been through a time of significant change and transition since the previous denominational inspection, with all teaching staff and leadership being new to the school. The executive headteacher has been substantive since September 2016 and the head of school since November 2016. Ofsted found the school to be inadequate in October 2016. The percentage of disadvantaged pupils is similar to the national average. Almost all the pupils are White British.

### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Southminster Primary School as a Church of England school are satisfactory

- The school is now led with vision and drive, with a transparent desire for all pupils to have the highest quality experience possible, grounded in faith.
- Leaders comprehensively know and understand the school's areas for development, and have a strong and accurate plan to improve outcomes and experiences for all stakeholders, rooted in compassion but with a clear recognition that change has to be implemented.
- Pupils talk about their school with recognition of how adults are working to improve their school experience.

### Areas to improve

- To embed the school's Christian values so that all stakeholders can articulate how these make a difference to all areas of school life.
- To ensure that strategic, robust and systematic monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of the school's Christian character and collective worship, involves all stakeholders, and drives forward developments as a church school.
- To develop more involvement from pupils in the planning and delivery of collective worship in order to deepen engagement and refine practice.
- To develop a common understanding of spirituality across the school community in order to inform and improve provision of opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual development.

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

Following a period of instability and associated poor quality of provision attainment for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 and 2 fell below national expectations. The level of attainment in RE was also below national expectations. There are now clear strategies in place to tackle underachievement which have been introduced over the course of this academic year. These are already showing positive signs of impact. Consequently, there are signs of improvement in both the attainment and progress of pupils. A distinctive vision with Christian values are at the core of these strategies. They promote both the academic attainment and progress and pupils and promote their personal development and wellbeing. The school's ethos statement 'Working together, we achieve, we believe, we care by being deeply Christian, serving the common good' is at the forefront of school developments. This is the basis on which all decisions are made. All stakeholders are working earnestly together to improve both learning experiences and outcomes for pupils. Attendance is on an upward trend but remains below the national average. There is a well expressed focus on all pupils being able to experience all that they are entitled. This is because 'they are part of God's plan and can make a difference to the world ... but they have to be able to access the gifts available to them'. Behaviour across the school is generally good but a few pupils have challenging behaviour. Planned strategies have been put in place to support these pupils, based on the school values, especially of forgiveness and truthfulness. Exclusions have been used appropriately to ensure health and safety within the school community. Pastoral care for pupils is a high priority and pupils' individual needs are being met. As another expression of its Christian ethos the relationships between staff and pupils are good. A Year 6 pupil said 'we have had lots of teachers ... our new teacher has done so much ... we have a chance now ... helped us to see a completely new side of the whole class'. As a result of the school's care, support and appropriate challenge, pupils are happy and feel safe and secure. Pupils say 'we know things will get sorted now'. RE and worship are used to develop pupils' understanding of diversity and respect for those of other faiths. Pupils understand the importance of RE and worship in helping them explore areas of spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) significance. Pupils comment that 'it is important to learn about other religions to help you relate to other people and to understand them'. The head of school has raised the profile of SMSC through a range of cross-curricular experiences, which the pupils enjoy. However, this is a fairly new initiative and so impact is limited. The pupils' SMSC development is satisfactory. Leaders express their own individual perspectives on spirituality. However, no explicit and coherent common understanding is clearly promoted across the school community. Consequently, systematic reflection, review and ongoing development of provision for pupils' spiritual development are under-developed.

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

The daily worship programme is varied and plays an important role in starting the school day in a focussed and positive way. Pupils report that they 'use it to help them in the day'. The worship programme is Christian in nature and also inclusive of other faiths or none. It addresses the school's Christian values and gives time to develop an understanding of each. This supports pupils' moral development well. Pupils have a developing understanding of prayer and that it is 'a chance to speak to God'. They know that there are different types of prayer including when you 'thank God for the world or ask for forgiveness or when you ask for help, miracles – unbelievable things happen,' as expressed by a Year 3 pupil. There are prayer areas in each classroom, with prayers written by the pupils and a 'prayer jar' in which the pupils put a stone when they offer a prayer. The pupils talk about these areas with interest and say that they are not used by all pupils, just some. The worship programme appropriately helps pupils to appreciate something of the significance of the Lord's Prayer for Christians. Collective worship includes Bible stories, but pupils do not readily link these with their school values or with their own beliefs and values. Pupils make reference to God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit but their understanding is limited. Through practices such as lighting a candle at the beginning of worship, having the Bible, a cross and a candle as focal points for worship, pupils are developing an age-appropriate understanding of Anglican practice. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of different Anglican elements of worship such as lighting a candle to represent 'Jesus as the light that no darkness can quench' and opening worship with a sentence followed by a response. The school uses different coloured cloths to signify different times of the Christian calendar in keeping with church practice, although this is yet to impact on the pupils' understanding of the significance and rhythm of the Christian year. Worship is planned by the executive headteacher and all teachers take turns in leading worship. This contributes well to helping the school community recognise the significance of worship to its life and work. Worship is led on a weekly basis by the local vicar or a member of the parish team. This expresses the good links between church and school and helps to provide variety which is a strength of the programme. Pupils contribute to worship through their prayers and interaction, but are not effectively engaged in the planning or leadership of worship. The evaluation of worship is not rigorous enough and therefore does not impact positively on planning and refining the programme. The school has rightly identified this and embryonic plans are in place for a systematic approach to engage all stakeholders, including governors, in its evaluation and development.

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

The senior leadership team of executive head, head of school and executive board are relentless in their drive and commitment to ensure that the pupils' experiences in all aspects of school life improve in quality and at a rapid pace. The positive impact of the implementation to changes to policy and practice is beginning to be felt throughout the school. The impact of these changes has been noted by parents who highly value the improved consistency and quality in all areas of school life that their children now experience. It is recognised that these are 'relatively early days' in this new leadership structure and consequently evidence of impact is minimal. Leaders have an accurate picture of their school and what is required to strengthen its Christian effectiveness and distinctiveness. Since the previous denominational inspection there have been considerable changes in school governance. The chair of the executive board is a consultant from the Diocese of Chelmsford. High standards of behaviour, warmth in relationships, sensitivity in ensuring all pupils are included and the celebration of success are all expected by the leadership team and are being established. The school's Christian values were decided upon through a re-visioning event with stakeholders. This included St Cedd's Primary School, with whom Southminster is in partnership, having the same executive headteacher. This event resulted in an agreed set of values for both schools, with a clear understanding of what they mean for church schools. These values are not fully articulated by all stakeholders. Whilst working together in the trust is relatively new there is evidence that it is beginning to impact positively. For example, it provides staff with shared professional development opportunities and gives them chances to share ideas and approaches to teaching and learning. The involvement of the local vicar as both a member of the executive board and leading worship is valued by all stakeholders. Parents comment that 'he always knows what is going on ... the children know him so well and have a positive relationship' with him. He has been very supportive of the school's recent iSing Pop project, bringing Christian songs to the local community. The leadership of the school is rooted in the school's status as a church school. Staff are supported in attending diocesan and trust training to develop their work in a church school. There is some evidence that they are beginning to implement aspects of this training to the benefit of the pupils and to the school. However developments in this area are not embedded. Leaders know this and have rightly formed plans to improve the evaluation of the impact of the school's Christian character on school life and work. These plans have come to fruition currently.

SIAMS report (June 2017) Southminster Primary School, Southminster, CM0 7ES