

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Trinity St. Mary's Church Of England (Voluntary Aided) Primary School

Trinity Square
South Woodham Ferrers
Chelmsford
Essex
CM3 5JX

Diocese: Chelmsford

Local authority: Essex

Dates of inspection: 26th June 2012

Date of last inspection: 31st January 2007

School's unique reference number: 115200

Headteacher: Christina Gooday

Inspector's name and number: John Baker (SIAS Inspection no. 11)

School context

Trinity St Mary's is slightly smaller than the average primary school and currently has 203 pupils on roll. Almost all of the pupils are white british. The school is on the same site as St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School. Both schools adjoin Holy Trinity Church which is jointly owned by the Catholic Church, the Church of England and the Methodist Church. In the afternoons there is on-site pre-school provision for children aged three and four.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Trinity St. Mary's Church of England (VA) Primary School as a church school are outstanding

The school's strong Christian ethos, summed up in the school motto and prayer: 'Many hearts make a school', permeates everything that it does. It ensures that the school meets the needs of all its pupils at the highest level, enabling them to become independent and creative learners. This prepares them very well for their future role in the local and wider community.

Established strengths

- The school's very close and supportive partnership links with the parish church and with the adjoining Catholic primary school of St. Joseph's which pupils, staff, governors and others value highly.
- The overall high quality of collective worship and religious education, which pupils thoroughly enjoy and respond to so positively, and which significantly enrich the life of the school.
- The very effective Christian leadership of the school provided by the Headteacher, ably supported by her staff team, incumbent, foundation and other governors, which is grounded firmly in Christian values and supported strongly by parents and carers.

Focus for development

- To develop further the school's assessment for learning in religious education (RE) in order to enable more effective reporting of pupils' progress and attainment to take place.

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

The school's key Christian values are palpable and permeate every aspect of the school's provision. As a consequence, pupils feel supported and are highly motivated. They achieve well and their behaviour is exemplary. These values – being kind, helpful, caring, polite, working hard and 'doing our best' – are reflected in the 'Golden Code of Conduct'. Excellent opportunities are provided through the curriculum and teaching and learning for the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. A particularly strong example of this is seen in the Reception class, where children explore their feelings through personal, social and health education. Closely and effectively supported by the teacher and support staff, they talk about what they like and, for some children, why they like it. 'I like the church...it makes me feel safe.' Preparing pupils to become responsible citizens is explicitly

seen through the school's charitable work, particularly with Fairtrade. This work reinforces the school's and pupils' understanding of the wider world and those in need. Relationships between pupils are outstanding. It is seen in the very effective support provided through the 'Buddy Groups'. Extremely positive relationships are also modelled by the staff and other adults. This ensures that everyone is respected and equally valued. The adjoining church building, wall displays, Christian symbols, particularly the cross on the wall in each classroom and The Lord's Prayer, the Peace Garden and Prayer Table, and prayers said at lunchtime and at the end of the school day, provide further opportunities to nurture pupils' spiritual and personal development, enabling them to flourish as individuals.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Pupils' attitudes to collective worship are outstanding. They enjoy assemblies and take an active part through singing Christian songs, times of reflection, prayers and readings from the Bible. Evaluations by pupils, staff and governors confirm the quality of this aspect of provision. Recorded music is used very effectively to enhance the quality of the collective worship as is the use of information and communication technology (ICT). The school's collective worship group, made up of a small group of older pupils, contributes at a significant level to this aspect of provision through, for example, choosing the worship theme for the term and working with a member of the clergy and Headteacher to help plan the worship. One act of worship focused on the life of David Beckham and his charitable work with children and closed with the song composed by Gary Barlow and Andrew Lloyd Webber for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. This was an uplifting and moving experience for all present and strongly promoted pupils' and others' spiritual development. The involvement of the incumbent provides good opportunities to introduce the pupils to aspects of Anglican worship, strongly reinforced by the easy access to the adjoining church building. As a result, pupils learn about the main Christian festivals, events and colours from the church calendar and this reinforces the school's Anglican foundation and its Christian values. The joint act of worship with St Joseph's RC Primary School once a week, together with the involvement of ministers from other Christian denominations and from the Jewish community, helps pupils to be aware of differing ways of worship and different religions. The school plans to develop further pupils' awareness of the world-wide Anglican Church and this is identified in its collective worship action plan.

The effectiveness of Religious Education is outstanding

Teaching and learning in religious education (RE) is outstanding and its impact in promoting the school's Christian character is very strong. Assessing pupils' learning in RE is carried out half-termly and pupils' work shows that their progress in RE ranges from good to outstanding across all ability groups. Standards of attainment in RE are good throughout the school and compare well with other core subjects. Excellent use is made of ICT, drama, music and artefacts during RE lessons and pupils' attitude to RE is outstanding, partly because of this but mainly through good to outstanding teaching. Pupils learn about the symbols used in Christian baptism and can reflect on their meaning. For example, one year 2 pupil said when he looked at a lighted baptismal candle: 'It makes me feel that Jesus is next to me'. In another lesson on Saul, pupils reflect on how God might have felt because of Saul's behaviour. Words such as 'betrayed', 'angry' and 'disappointed' were used by the pupils, exhibiting real insight into the story. Pupils visit the parish church regularly and the Cathedral in Chelmsford as part of their RE lessons and a group of older pupils have visited the Hindu Mandir or Temple in Neasden. This has enabled pupils to empathise with those of a different religion and contributes positively to community cohesion. Judaism and Islam are also taught within the RE curriculum. Good monitoring of RE is undertaken by the Headteacher, who is the subject leader, and by governors, and a comprehensive curriculum framework is in place, drawing on the Diocesan syllabus in RE. Actions to tackle necessary improvements identified at the last Church of England inspection have been effective in raising the overall quality of RE significantly.

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

The school's senior leadership team is strongly committed to its Christian values and actively shares them with others. This is seen in the ecumenical meeting with different local church denominations, including the Salvation Army and the Free Evangelical Church, where values were shared and discussed. This has contributed greatly to strengthening its partnership links with the wider community. Moreover, since its foundation, the school has worked very closely with St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School. A recent review of its values and mission statement involved the whole school community. Buddy groups, staff, governing body and the parent forum were actively involved. The values were shared openly and explicitly and confirmed by all. Governors monitor the school's distinctive Christian character through regular visits to the school and have been actively involved in the self-review of the school as an Anglican church school. The school works directly with Holy Trinity Church for special services, such as the Christmas carol service, bazaar and Education Sunday. Parents value very highly the school's 'family atmosphere' and its Christian foundation and the impact this has on their children's development and well-being. As one parent said: 'The staff really care about the children'. The incumbent, although only recently appointed, has already made the school her top priority and is a regular visitor, supporting the Headteacher in the school's mission. The school has links with India and these will provide a focus for developing further its links with the world-wide church.

SIAS report June 2012 Trinity St. Mary's Church of England (VA) Primary School, CM3 5JX