



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Warmingham Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

School Lane
Warmingham
Sandbach
CW11 3QN

Previous SIAMS grade: Outstanding

Current inspection grade: Outstanding

Diocese: Chester

Local authority: Cheshire East

Dates of inspection: 8 October 2015

Date of last inspection: 7 July 2010

School's unique reference number: 111345

Headteacher: Samantha Mellor

Inspector's name and number: Gillian Rhodes 657

School context

Warmingham CofE Primary School is a smaller than average rural school. Pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 are taught in three mixed age classes. Reception children have their own learning area. Almost all pupils are of white British heritage and the proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium is well below average. The percentage of pupils who have special educational needs and receive support through school action is above average. Pupil mobility is also higher than average. The headteacher has been in post as acting headteacher since January 2015 and substantive headteacher since March 2015, having previously been a middle leader at the school.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Warmingham CofE Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding

- A distinctively Christian vision for the school is articulated by all members of the school community and has significant impact on the daily lives and achievements of learners.
- Christian values underpin excellent relationships throughout the whole school community and mutually beneficial partnerships between school, home and church.
- The school's Christian ethos of inclusivity and care supports the whole school family.
- Children at the school take significant responsibility for their own conduct and for planning and leading worship.

Areas to improve

- Ensure that evaluation of learning from religious education (RE) focuses specifically on how well it develops pupils' understanding of the impact of religion on believers.
- Provide opportunities for higher ability pupils to respond in RE in greater depth and detail as they reflect on their own and others' lives and beliefs.

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

At Warmingham, all members of the school family are able to explain that distinctively Christian values are the foundation for everything which happens at the school. Displays around school highlight values of peace, service, love and trust and these are reflected in personal interactions. 'I trust all of the teachers to help me do my best' was a pupil comment in a recent questionnaire. Pupils, staff, governors and parents refer repeatedly to the school as a Christian family where 'we take care of each other'. Many songs and hymns in worship are signed so that all pupils can take part with enjoyment and understanding. In collective worship and RE links are made between Christian values and behaviour. The school's creative curriculum effectively promotes spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through art, music and drama and the consideration of 'big questions'. Pupils take part in a wide range of cultural events such as the recent 'I Sing Pop' recording and concert which focussed on music with a Christian message. The songs learned are now an integral part of worship. The concert was a landmark event in the strong partnership between school, home and church. Sport has a high profile at the school and the children value taking part in events and competitions. Their understanding of the Christian value of justice ensures that they enjoy their successes but accept defeat gracefully. The sports captain explained 'We do our best and try again next time and we're proud of this.' Learners are developing understanding of Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith primarily through links with a Christian school in the Solomon Islands. The visit by two representatives of the school to Warmingham is highlighted by pupils and parents as a significant event which broadened their horizons and deepened their understanding. The school's performance data demonstrates that attainment and progress are generally in line with national averages or above. The school was judged to be good by Ofsted in 2014. Pupils with special educational needs and pupils experiencing difficulties are quickly identified. Staff support these pupils effectively and they are included in all aspects of school life and learn well. Attendance at the school is high and there is no recent history of exclusions.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship has a central place in the life of the school and is highly valued by all members of the school community. Since the last inspection, parents have become accustomed to being involved in worship in school and in church. They value especially coming to worship led by their children. Members of the school council, eco council, school buddies team, groups and individual pupils regularly plan and lead worship. This develops both spiritual and moral understanding and self-confidence and life skills. A parent explained that the children of Warmingham 'go forward with confidence and understanding'. Collective worship is planned systematically to include the school's Christian values, Bible stories and Christian teaching. Collective worship enables pupils to identify the seasons of the Church's year and Christian festivals through worship in church and the use of liturgical colours on the worship table. The vicar of the village church of St Leonard's is closely involved in planning for and leading worship in school and clergy from other nearby churches also lead worship regularly. Worship takes place in the school, the village hall and the church but a wider variety of settings and worship leaders would enhance children's experiences of different Christian traditions. Children write and read their own prayers regularly. The school prayer is said daily and is signed so that all pupils can participate. As a result, children understand the purpose and value of prayer as a significant aspect of the school's life as a Christian community. The children and adults respond with a welcome to Jesus during the lighting of the worship candle. This supports a clear understanding of His central position within the Christian faith. The singing of a Trinity hymn as everyone leaves the worship setting highlights God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. A systematic programme for monitoring and evaluation of collective worship is carried out by staff, pupils, parents and governors. Areas for improvement are identified and this informs planning. As a result of the focus for evaluation on involvement in and quality of worship this is now inspiring, inclusive, lively and interactive and children thoroughly enjoy taking part.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

Evidence from the school's assessment of standards of teaching and learning in RE shows that attainment is in line with national expectations and that pupils make good progress from their starting points. They have good knowledge of Christianity and other world faiths. The school's monitoring and evaluation of RE shows that children are very enthusiastic and enjoy the wide range of creative learning experiences provided by teachers for pupils of all ages. Lessons provide opportunities for pupils to develop skills including enquiry, interpretation and reflection. Understanding by pupils of the impact of religion on believers is evident in observation of lessons but is not always demonstrated in evidence from monitoring and evaluation or in pupils' recorded work. Monitoring activities have focussed on enjoyment rather than the impact of learning from RE on pupils' understanding. The prompts Mirror, Window, Door have recently been introduced to support children's reflection on their own and others' beliefs and ideas. As a result, pupils' understanding of how religion impacts on the lives of believers is developing. Teaching of RE is good and the enquiry-led approach enables children to frame questions. Links are made between RE and the school's values and practices from the start of the children's lives in school. Reception children talked about working co-operatively in a team and this was linked to them being part of God's team at Warmingham. Drama, art, music and technology are all used in teaching and learning in RE and enrich enjoyment and develop a strong spiritual awareness. However, responses to learning from RE are often brief and higher ability pupils do not always have the opportunity to respond to questions and explain their responses, feelings and ideas in depth and detail. The role of the RE subject leader is carried out by the headteacher who is well informed about current developments in RE. She has identified the professional development needs of staff and taken steps to provide training and successfully boost staff confidence.

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

The recently appointed headteacher has a clear vision for Warmingham as a distinctively Christian school. In a short period of time she has strengthened the ethos developed by her predecessor and skilfully communicated to the whole school family that the school is a Christian community where all are welcome and all can succeed. This vision is rooted firmly in the school's Christian values which are consistently and confidently articulated as Fruits of the Spirit and lived out and promoted in the whole life of the school. The headteacher is ably supported in her vision by the school staff and by the governing body who require evidence of Christian distinctiveness in their termly reports from the headteacher. Self-evaluation strategies ensure that leaders have a good understanding of the school's performance in meeting the needs of learners and of the distinctiveness of the school as a Church of England school. The headteacher, governors and staff have reviewed the curriculum and ensured that it is informed by their distinctive Christian vision and that it contributes effectively to the excellent behaviour and attitudes of the pupils. A wide range of experiences and pupils' responsibility for many aspects of school life promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Children speak with pride and enthusiasm of how they are elected to be school councillors and take on other representative roles. They relish the opportunity to organise and take part in events in support of charities such as a Macmillan coffee morning, Jeans for Genes day and Operation Christmas Child. These events are effective in developing children's understanding of communities locally, nationally and across the world. Parents describe Warmingham as 'a big family' and a focal point for the community. The induction programme for new pupils and their parents helps them settle quickly. There is substantial mutual benefit for school, home and church through shared worship in Saturday Church and at times such as Easter and Christmas.

SIAMS report October 2015 Warmingham CofE VA Primary School, Sandbach CW11 3QN