

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Rougham CEVC Primary School

Church Road Rougham Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP30 9JJ

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| Current SIAMS inspection grade | Good |
| Diocese | St Edmundsbury & Ipswich |
| Previous SIAS inspection grade | Outstanding |
| Local authority | Suffolk |
| Date/s of inspection | 3 May 2017 |
| Date of last inspection | 12 March 2012 |
| Type of school and unique reference number | VC Primary 124756 |
| Headteacher | Diane Grimes |
| Inspector's name and number | Gill Hipwell 480 |

School context

The school roll stands at 196 pupils, which is average for this area of Suffolk. A former 'soft federation' has ended, resulting in some staffing reorganisation. The headteacher has been in post for two years and on the staff for 16 years in total. The current year 6 will be the third to sit the Key Stage 2 tests since the original first school was re-designated as a primary school. Proportions of pupils with additional needs are below national averages. Relationships with local churches are strong. An Ofsted inspection in January 2017 judged the school to be inadequate.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Rougham as a Church of England school are good

- High quality relationships built on trust, responsibility and respect support individuals to face difficulties with confidence and a belief that success is always possible.
- Sustained and consistent embedding of Christian values into the wider curriculum has enabled pupils to develop a deep and secure understanding of the relevance and importance of these values in their lives.
- Mutually beneficial partnerships with the local churches make a clear statement that the school is part of a wider Christian family.
- Collective worship in school and in church is consistently rooted in the gospels and focused on the school's core Christian values.

Areas to improve

- Sharpen the wording of the vision so that it is clearly and distinctively Christian. Make it known to all, so that it plays a role in affirming and celebrating the deeply embedded Christian character of the school.
- Review key policies to ensure that they reflect the actual practice of the school, in particular, the strength and depth of the Christian ethos.
- Ensure that appropriate challenge and support is consistent across all groups and in all subjects so that good progress is consolidated.
- Take steps to ensure that public statements, such as the website and external signage, are representative of the commitment of the school to its ethos, daily practice and Christian foundation.

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

Pupils unselfconsciously use the language of Christian values in everyday conversation. They say that they 'use values for life in our lessons' and that 'we do everything about that value'. They speak with understanding of service, both through charitable giving and through taking responsibility in school and at home. Members of the school council are articulate about their role, which is wide ranging, and say that their thoughts and ideas are taken seriously. Disappointing Key Stage 2 results in 2016 led to closer scrutiny of individual progress and proactive intervention. All strategies are carefully monitored to ensure that staff and pupils feel supported as well as challenged. There is a strong focus on shared responsibility for each other's wellbeing. School progress data shows that interventions are making an impact for most groups and outcomes for 2017 are likely to be good, although there are still a few pockets of slower progress where additional support is in place. Pupils say that they feel 'challenged' in class and there is 'lots of help if we struggle'. Year 6 pupils say that they feel 'calm' about the imminent tests and 'well prepared'. Relationships across the school are very strong. Everyone knows that they are valued and this gives pupils the confidence to try new things and to respond to challenges. Pupils say that arguments are rare and that forgiveness is important 'or the world would be a sad place'. They know that there is a designated member of staff to go to should there be any issues. The school environment encourages reflection and plays a significant role in supporting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural [SMSC] development. They talk about the 'charity board', saying that it reminds them of their 'responsibility for the world' and the Lent tree which is 'about doing, not giving up'. Recently established links with a Christian school for disabled children in Kenya has resulted in exchanges of letters and some fundraising; first-hand accounts from the Baptist minister has widened pupils' cultural understanding. One child explained how he saves his pocket money and gives '£20 each birthday to the homeless'. Pupils talk about a range of areas both inside and outside where 'you go to be calm' or 'sit and think about the positive'. They appreciate the sensory garden and the reflective areas in each classroom, especially the prayer books that they have created and which are regularly used. Religious education [RE] makes an important contribution to the Christian character of the school. It is well planned and taught and allows pupils to explore faith in action through the study of Christianity and other major religions. There is dedicated time for exploring Christian values and relating them to the fruits of the spirit. Christian festivals are integrated into cross-curricular study. Pupils enjoy RE, saying that it encourages them to 'love, respect and believe'. They like that 'there isn't one answer'.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

A strong focus on Christian values in worship supports and underpins the ethos of the school. Pupils say that they value this time of day and that it encourages them to think about what they believe and how they behave. Messages are delivered by a range of leaders in a variety of styles in school and in church with the centrality of the person of Jesus as a constant. Pupils enjoy worship in church weekly, saying that it is 'a special place' where they feel welcome. Church also comes into school, with regular Open the Book sessions playing a key role in developing biblical literacy. Pupils are supported to plan and lead smaller acts of worship, sometimes related to current affairs but always following the values theme and maintaining a strong Christian focus. Reflection is an important aspect of worship and pupils say that thinking time helps them to 'decide how to be'. This attitude to reflection has a positive influence on the use of quiet areas around the site. Worship is always a special time of the day. Sometimes there is music from pupils as the school is gathered and this is both appreciated and respected. A mature attitude to prayer means that pupils are willing to lead the school in thinking of others. Classes have books of prayers written by pupils and these are used regularly and appropriately to extend pupils' understanding of the purpose of personal and shared prayer. Pupils have an understanding of Jesus both as the son of God and as God himself. Older pupils have studied the Trinity in RE and can speak with appropriate understanding of this in the context of worship. Younger pupils know that God can be seen in three ways, one of which is the Holy Spirit. Regular monitoring of worship informs its development and care is taken to include all the different leaders. There is a written governor report half-termly and other verbal feedback. Pupil views are sought by the headteacher.

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

Leaders, including governors and church members, do share a Christian vision for the school, although this is not the vision that appears on the website and there is clearly no agreed form of words. Their focus is on providing the best possible education for each child whilst 'growing people full of Christian values' and to this end they have consistently put into place structures to ensure that Christian values are embedded in all aspects of school practice. Governors understand the importance of monitoring the Christian ethos and visit to look at behaviour and relationships. Evaluation of evidence leads to action, for example the appointment of a new teaching assistant with specific responsibility for behaviour management. Whilst understanding the necessity of ensuring rapid improvement in academic outcomes, leaders do not allow this to over-ride their core values. Governors say they are committed to the wellbeing of staff and pupils and therefore they scrutinise all new post-Ofsted action plans to

satisfy themselves that they reflect the ethos of the school. Other paperwork does not, in general, reflect either the Christian values of the school or its Christian practice sufficiently clearly. Pride in the school's Christian foundation is not apparent in external signage and the website does not convey the Christian joy that is apparent in the school. Staff and governors are supported by a prayerful church family and the whole parent body as they address the concerns raised by the Ofsted inspection. Strong relationships and cohesive teamwork are enabling them to make good progress whilst ensuring the wellbeing of all. Expected outcomes are good for most groups and targeted intervention is having a positive impact where progress is slower. Parents are universally supportive of the ethos of the school, which they identify as 'warm' and 'welcoming'. Christian families say that their 'faith is encouraged' and non-Christian families agree that 'the values always come first', with one parent saying that her young child 'understands values beyond himself'. All parents spoken to by the inspector were in agreement that their children are challenged in school and make good progress. 'As a family, we feel so privileged to have our children here'. Arrangements for securing Christian leadership, both now and in the future, are carefully considered. All staff and governors have accessed diocesan training focused on distinctiveness and all have a role in monitoring the impact of the school's ethos on pupils. All teachers of religious education have attended diocesan training and shared information with their peers. Leadership in RE is good and resourced well because governors place a high value on the subject. The RE leader has begun to look at the requirements of the RE Quality Mark [REQM] as a way of further developing strengths in the subject. The parish church and local Baptist church are key partners. Pupils benefit from regular contact with clergy and the school encourages participation in Messy Church and holiday clubs. Pupils have raised funds for the parish church and the Baptist minister has facilitated their engagement with a school in Kenya. Work with other church schools and attendance at diocesan events brings a wider perspective on the expression of Christian distinctiveness.

RE and collective worship meet statutory requirements.

SIAMS report May 2017 Rougham CEVC School IP30 9JJ