



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

<b>Lincoln St Faith &amp; St Martin Church of England Voluntary Controlled Junior School</b>	Hampton Street Lincoln LN1 1LW
<b>Current SIAMS inspection grade</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Lincoln</b>
Previous SIAMS inspection grade:	Outstanding
Local authority/date of academy conversion	Lincolnshire
Date of inspection	28 September 2016
Date of last inspection	16 November 2011
School's unique reference number	120561
Headteacher	Martin Kyle
Inspector's name and number	Anne Platt 807

### School context

St Faith and St Martin Junior School is smaller than the average-sized primary school with 228 pupils on roll. Pupils are from a diverse community with a range of socio-economic backgrounds. The majority of pupils are white British with some representation of other ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is in line with the national average. The number entitled to receive the pupil premium is above average. The current headteacher took up post in April 2015. Most pupils have attended St Faith's Infant school with whom the school shares an ethos and values committee.

### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Faith and St Martin as a Church of England school are outstanding

- Close collaborative relationships between the school, church, and St Faith's infant school enable the nurturing community to work together for the benefit of the pupils.
- The high priority placed on collective worship and religious education (RE) makes a significant contribution to the pupil's well-being and spiritual development.
- The commitment of the headteacher, effectively supported by staff and governors, has ensured strong Christian values underpin all aspects of school life.
- Pupils are able to express their views and opinions on matters of faith and belief within a respectful school environment.

### Areas to improve

- Widen the range of gospel stories studied to deepen pupil's knowledge of the life and teachings of Jesus.
- Ensure all pupils have an understanding of Christianity as a global faith so that they better understand diversity beyond their own community.

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

The Christian character is outstanding because St Faith and St Martin is a welcoming school where six **explicitly** Christian core values are deeply embedded in the daily lives of all learners. These values were chosen by the school community and are rooted in Christian teaching, promoted in an inclusive way. As a result, values have a very positive impact on the behaviour of pupils and on relationships at all levels. Pupils have ownership of the values and describe them as, 'the laws by which we live our lives.' Termly 'values champions' are chosen because they live out perseverance, responsibility, creativity, hope, patience, respect and honesty. A parent shared how her child applied the values at home and corrected her parents if they did not. Links made between the values and the school's vision, 'we are a team that achieve amazing things every day,' enable pupils to apply values to their learning behaviours. Aspirations are high and the school's holistic approach and values led curriculum mean that the needs of learners are well met. This has a positive impact on the progress of all. Vulnerable learners are nurtured and supported. As a result all pupils feel valued as pupils of God which has contributed to the increasing rates of progress and the steady rise in attendance.

Relationships are a particular strength of the school. Pupils and staff show genuine care and kindness towards each other. This is demonstrated through their charity work which is sometimes pupil led. During 'Sports Relief' pupils and staff replicated the journey from Land's End to John O' Groats on exercise bikes. The original journey had been undertaken by a grandparent in the last century to raise money for the school and was discovered through photographic research. In contrast, money raised for the Nepal earthquake victims involved all pupils wearing white ribbons in humble remembrance of those affected. One pupil stated, 'as Christians it is our duty to help others and be aware of those who aren't as fortunate as us.' These acts demonstrate a commitment to social justice which reflects the school's strong moral ethos. Pupils spoke with animation of their role in reviewing the school logo which includes St Faith, St Martin and the cross linked by three overlapping shapes representing the Trinity. Pupils demonstrate an impressive knowledge of their school saints and explain their relevance as role models, inspiring how they live their lives.

Since the last inspection the school has made excellent progress in developing personal discovery and quiet reflection through use of the school building and grounds. The outdoor reflection area and quiet terrace provide places to be still, reflect and pray. Areas of reflection in each classroom display the value for the term and reinforce the collective worship theme. One pupil described the use of pebbles in the reflective areas gathered from special holiday places: 'In times of difficulty we can feel their smoothness and remember happy times and be calm.' The use of these areas contributes to the highly effective spiritual development of the pupils.

Staff encourage pupils to explore moral, social and cultural issues which can be demonstrated in their religious education (RE). Pupils respond well to 'big questions' in a spirit of mutual tolerance and respect, which affirms all, regardless of their faith or background. When discussing whether Christians should be vegetarians based on biblical study one pupil rationalised, 'we could wait for animals to die humanely before eating them.' This approach to RE helps pupils to deepen their thoughts whilst exploring abstract concepts. Pupils clearly enjoy RE in which they demonstrate respect for other faith traditions and an understanding of Christianity. However, their knowledge of Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith is not fully developed.

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

Acts of worship are outstanding because thorough planning reflects Anglican traditions through singing, Christian teaching, reflection and prayer. Worship provides a special time when pupils come together in an atmosphere of trust to share their feelings and respond to the stories they hear about Jesus. Staff, pupils, and parents talk about the positive impact worship has on their lives. 'Sharing stories, thoughts and ideas linked to the Bible has inspired me to discuss key issues in greater depth with my class and colleagues,' said one teacher. This reflects the strong influence that collective worship has upon the spiritual development of all the school. The use of three candles in worship and areas of reflection provide a strong visual reminder of the Trinity. This, and celebrating Pentecost in

church, has enabled children to discuss, with a depth of maturity, a growing appreciation of the Trinity. The Holy Spirit was described by one pupil as, 'the part of God that leads you from temptation and evil.' Prayer is very much at the heart of this school. Pupils understand the purpose of prayer and pray with reverence.

The wide range of visitors who contribute to collective worship includes representatives from Anglican, Methodist and Catholic communities. Their contribution is valued by parents, pupils and staff by enriching pupils' understanding of different Christian traditions. When services are held at the local church, parents say there is 'standing room only' which reflects the important place worship holds in the hearts of the school community. The establishment of a collective worship council has given pupils opportunities to shape developments in worship and thus own the direction in which it travels. Pupils are actively involved in leading and planning acts of worship with representations from many different groups including 'seekers' 'eco-reps' 'safety officers' and school council.

Collective worship is monitored by pupils, staff and governors on a regular basis to evaluate its impact. An innovation from this feedback has been the introduction of weekly class worship where themes are explored through deeper thinking in smaller classroom groups. Themes for the term are based on Christian festivals in the church year, a key Bible story, a core Christian value and topical events. This has enabled pupils to develop their understanding of Christian life and the centrality of Jesus to worship. However, pupils lack depth of knowledge on key events in the life of Christ, an area also identified by the school for improvement.

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

School leaders, inspired by the excellent headteacher, consistently and confidently live out a vision deeply rooted in distinctively Christian values. The vision is founded on a belief that the church is central to the school's role in serving the needs of the pupils and the local community. This is clearly demonstrated in the level of Christian care which is shown to all pupils and their families. Since the last inspection, excellent collaborative partnerships have developed between the school, church, and St Faith's infant school. They support one another to ensure that all pupils can achieve their potential and have marketed the group as the 'St Faith family.' This creates a community with a strong commitment to live out its Christian vision. Links are further strengthened through newsletters and a values twitter account where external links to each organisation are promoted and retweeted.

The establishment of an ethos and values committee, which includes members of both infant and junior schools and church community, enables developments in church school distinctiveness to have a high profile. The impact of actions taken by the committee is thoroughly monitored through headteacher reports and at governors' meetings where church school distinctiveness is a regular agenda item. School self-evaluation is robust and enables all leaders to gain a clear view of the impact of the Christian distinctiveness on pupils. This has led to a more deeply rooted Christian ethos which is understood and lived out by everyone in the daily life of the school. The school also benefits from a successful partnership with the diocese which has further strengthened the effectiveness of the school's leadership and made a significant contribution to building future leaders. The vicar and members of the church community are well known in the school and make an important contribution to collective worship. Parents are actively involved in school life and speak warmly of its role as the focal point of the local Christian community.

Highly effective leadership of RE and collective worship has meant that both these areas make a major contribution to the Christian distinctiveness of the school and spiritual development of the pupils. Arrangements for RE and collective worship meet statutory requirements.