



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Draycott and Rodney Stoke Church of England Voluntary Aided First School

School Lane, Draycott, Cheddar, Somerset, BS27 3SD

Previous SIAS grade: Good

Current SIAMS grade: Satisfactory

Diocese: Bath and Wells

Local authority: Somerset

Dates of inspection: 26 April 2016

Date of last inspection: 28 April 2011

School's unique reference number: 123832

Headteacher: Mike Jory

Inspector's name and number: Daphne Spitzer NS No 37

School context

Draycott and Rodney Stoke Church of England First School serves the villages of Draycott and Rodney Stoke and is located close to the village of Cheddar. There are 67 children on roll plus 20 pre-school children taught in the Early years Foundation class. Almost all children are from white British heritage families. The numbers with special educational needs and/or physical disabilities are close to the national average. Those eligible to be in receipt of the pupil premium are well below the national average. The school is part of the Mendip Edge Federation of four local schools formed in January 2014. The Headteacher was appointed in September 2014 and shares the headship of the one other church school in the federation, Shipham Church of England First School. There is a vacancy in the parish ministry.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Draycott and Rodney Stoke VA Church of England Primary School as a Church of England school are satisfactory

- The caring relationships between children based on the school's implicit Christian value of friendship promote children's personal development
- The quality of spiritual awareness promoted by collective worship and regular church worship has a positive impact on children's personal and spiritual development
- The good partnerships between the school and church communities enrich the lives of all involved

Areas to improve

- Develop and embed a core set of distinctive Christian values, introduced in collective worship and monitor and evaluate their impact on children's academic achievement, personal development and spiritual development using the whole school community
- Provide opportunities for children to plan as well as lead and evaluate the impact of collective worship on a regular basis so that they develop a sense of ownership and increase their understanding of this important aspect of the school's distinctive

Christian character

- Develop systematic and rigorous monitoring in religious education to ensure that learners develop higher level skills of enquiry, analysis and reflection and assess and track individual progress in order to raise attainment

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

Draycott and Rodney Stoke Church of England Primary School is a friendly and welcoming school community. The school's Christian ethos has a positive impact on children's behaviour and personal development as well as attendance. Relationships between children are good. This is evident in the way children of all ages play together and support each other in class. Although some children recognise the key Christian value of forgiveness as being important in maintaining friendships, some found this hard to articulate. Neither do children recognise Christian values linked to learning such as perseverance so opportunities are missed to promote academic achievement. Children find it hard to identify and talk about distinctive Christian values, in general, because they have not been promoted on a sufficiently regular basis to make an impact on the children. As a result, the school's distinctive Christian character is not yet fully developed. Displays around school effectively highlight the importance of religious education (RE) and the school's close connections with the two local churches. Pilgrim prayer boxes given to Year 4 children participating in the recent diocesan Leavers' Day in Wells Cathedral have had an impact as seen by the way they have been used for personal prayer at home. These are examples of the good impact of spiritual development in the life of the school. Opportunities within the school curriculum in general and RE in particular provide children with a developing understanding of Christianity as a global faith as well as open and respectful attitudes towards people of other faiths who live in this country.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is satisfactory

Collective worship is an important time in the day at Draycott and Rodney Stoke for the whole school community. This is because children enjoy the opportunities presented to participate and are keen to contribute. This is evident in the weekly worship at the adjoining church led by the lay Reader where children feel they are more involved because they have greater opportunity to act out bible stories. Guided reflection at the end of worship reinforces the Christian message noted of helping and serving others as Christ did. Themes for worship are varied but do not explicitly promote distinctive Christian values. As a result, valuable opportunities are lost to promote the school's Christian character. For instance, the theme of using our wonderful hands well was linked indirectly to God's creation and the Christian value of creativity; since the link was not made explicit, the message could have been missed by children. Bible stories are used effectively in worship, enjoyed and well understood by children. However they are used as the main focus instead of as a means of rooting Christian values in Biblical teaching. A bowl of pebbles surrounding the candle representing Christ, set on the worship table, promotes spiritual awareness very well. Children say that the pebbles represent 'all our hearts'. This is a good example of the way worship encourages a sense of a spiritual church school family. Although liturgical greetings and responses are not in regular use in school worship children gain an understanding of Anglican worship from the celebration of festivals in church. Collective worship is beginning to offer children an understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Opportunities for personal prayer and reflection are provided in classrooms by prayer corners which are well used by children. Although a prayer is said at lunchtime, a quiet time for prayer or reflection together, for example, at the end of the day, is not in general practice in classes. As a result, opportunities to develop a sense of personal spirituality are underdeveloped. The leadership of worship is satisfactory. The headteacher shares his planning with staff and clergy ensuring themes are widely understood. Governors monitor and evaluate collective worship with the headteacher, by observations and talking to children. Although children take increasingly leading roles in church festival services, in school

their involvement in planning and leading worship is limited. The school refers to collective worship as assembly which diminishes its status as promoting the school's distinctive Christian character at the heart of the school day.

The effectiveness of the religious education is satisfactory

Standards in RE for the majority of children are close to national expectations. Teaching is at least satisfactory as is progress made across the key stages. However this cannot be verified as children's attainment data is not collected in year groups or tracked at an individual level. Instead data has been collected as a whole school group. Nevertheless data obtained does show that boys' attainment is lower than that of girls and the subject leader is addressing this issue. Children enjoy RE and have positive attitudes towards their learning. This is because teaching tasks are lively and engaging often involving interactive group activities. However collaborative group work which promotes skills such as enquiry, analysis and evaluation is not yet widely in use. The curriculum promotes spiritual development well. For instance, this is evident in the way children listen to each other's points of view and handle special religious artefacts with respect, as well as children identifying well with others' feelings. The diocesan scheme of work is used well and adapted to meet children's needs. The subject is led effectively. For example, professional development has been undertaken to address current national initiatives and teaching and learning monitored. Greater emphasis has been placed on recording learning in books and marking recently introduced to highlight next stages in children's learning. Monitoring of the subject by the subject leader and governors has identified the need to enrich the curriculum by visiting places of worship of other faiths. The Headteacher, as subject leader, is committed to raising the prominence of RE within the school's curriculum.

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

The headteacher has made progress in building on the school's good Christian ethos since his appointment. The school successfully lives out its implicit Christian vision of placing itself at the heart of the local community. However the need to develop and embed distinctive Christian values in all aspects of daily life at school has not been addressed. As a result, issues from the previous inspection have not been fully met, consequently the school has not made progress in developing its distinctive Christian character. Parents are very supportive of the school's Christian foundation. They are very appreciative of the school's caring and supportive staff and value the impact of the school's Christian ethos on their children's behaviour and attitudes. Governors are committed to promoting the school's distinctive Christian character, evident in the work of the foundation governors' monitoring and evaluation of RE and collective worship. Although their work is effective, since they have not attended recent relevant diocesan training they are unable to fully support and challenge the Headteacher in addressing current expectations. Although parents feel included in the life of the school they are not formally invited to give their views on the church as a church school; this would ensure that their views contribute to the church school's self-evaluation. The church community's contribution to the life of the school, particularly in the current absence of a parish priest, enhances and enriches the school's distinctive Christian character. The school's presence at the parish Mothering Sunday service was very well attended by parents as well as the local community. In a similar way the Remembrance Day service which included the local British Legion had a strong spiritual impact on all present. These are good examples of the strength of the school's partnership with the church.

SIAMS report April 2016, Draycott and Rodney Stoke Church of England VA First School, Draycott, Somerset, BS27 3SD