

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

### Ilington Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Ilington  
Newton Abbot  
Devon  
TQ13 9RE

<b>Current SIAMS inspection grade</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Exeter</b>
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Date of academy conversion	April 2011
Name of multi-academy trust	South Dartmoor Multi Academy Trust
Date of inspection	23 May 2018
Date of last inspection	13 June 2013
Type of school and unique reference number	Primary 136919
Executive headteacher Head of school	Rachel Shaw Tammy Docking
Inspector's name and number	Patricia Morris 626

#### School context

Ilington is a smaller than average sized primary school with 55 children on roll. The school is located in a small rural village within Dartmoor National Park. Children attend from surrounding villages as well as further afield. The proportion of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average while the number of children supported by Pupil Premium is significantly below. The majority of children are of White British heritage. The school is the only church school in the South Dartmoor Multi Academy Trust (SDAMAT), which consists of five primary schools, one secondary and one studio school. Attendance is slightly below the national average.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Ilington as a Church of England school are outstanding

- Distinctively Christian values are deeply embedded and articulated by the whole school community, especially by children who show a deep understanding of values and fully realise the impact on their lives today, generating excellent behaviour and attitudes to learning.
- The dedicated leadership of the executive headteacher and the head of school, supported by an experienced and committed chair of governors and staff, ensure an exceptionally clear vision is continually moving the school forward as a church school.
- Excellent opportunities in the outdoor environment enable children to explore their sense of self, their relationships and values, and an appreciation of God's creation.
- Outstanding relationships within the local community are mutually beneficial and lead to enriching experiences for children.

#### Areas to improve

- Develop a more rigorous system to monitor and evaluate collective worship that involves all stakeholders and identifies 'next steps' in order to inform future planning and ensure that worship is constantly moving forward.
- Extend children's experiences of Christianity as a world faith by further developing global partnerships.

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

Six core Christian values of thankfulness, hope, friendship, forgiveness, justice and trust are made explicit and deeply embedded in the daily life of the school. Children have an excellent understanding of values and confidently articulate the impact they make on their behaviour and relationships, saying 'values steer us on the right path'. Vibrant displays endorse values in action and parents are encouraged to come in and write what the current value of trust means to them. Values make a significant contribution to the Christian character of the school because they underpin everything the school does. This ethos promotes an inclusive curriculum, which encourages children to believe in themselves and celebrate their achievements, generating a love of learning and producing increased progress and attainment. Values impact on all members of the school community with parents and church members initiating after school clubs that are strongly linked to values and contribute to children's spiritual development. Children's understanding of spirituality is extremely well developed through the powerful use of the 'Windows, Mirrors, Doors' resources, enabling them to gain a sense of responsibility to others and to introduce ways to impact on the wider world. For example, when studying natural disasters, they initiated a successful charity fund raising day for Shelterbox and, after watching a weekly 'Newsround' programme, they organised a 'Bounceathon' for Children in Need. Annual 'spiritual art weeks' are invaluable in supporting children's personal development. Drama, music and art workshops enable children to experience opportunities to reflect on life today and have a powerful impact on their understanding of their place in the world. Children speak enthusiastically about the high quality experiences in the outdoor environment that are seen in impressive displays around the school. Outdoor learning successfully encourages children to appreciate God's creation, have quiet times to reflect and work together to develop team-building skills. One child commented, 'we learn so much to help us grow as individuals from our outdoor learning' and this is evidenced through the many photos of building enclosures, working in the woods and going on a 'bear trail'. Children's moral development is extremely well supported, enabling them to put values into practice in real life situations. For example, children initiated an 'anti-bullying day', with each of the four houses exploring one aspect, one of which was how a bully could be helped, firmly demonstrating forgiveness, tolerance and justice. Children are aware that Christianity is a multi-cultural world faith and show respect for diversity. This is enriched through opportunities for residential trips to London or Bristol and units of work in religious education (RE), which encourage children to compare similarities and differences between Christianity and other faiths and cultures. Children are animated when talking about an innovative 'Hats of Faith' display celebrating the shared custom of head coverings in different faiths around the world. Religious education has a very high profile and helps to determine the Christian character of the school. It makes a significant contribution to children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Lessons are creative and engaging, ensuring that children are challenged and encouraged to extend their thinking through skilful questioning.

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

Collective worship has a high profile within the school community and is firmly underpinned by Christian values. The children's ethos group make a significant contribution to worship. They take responsibility for planning and leading worship each half term to reinforce the current value and organise 'house group worship' when they encourage the whole school to create a display based on a value. This provides children with a deeper understanding of values, raising aspirations and illustrating the impact they make on their lives today. Children see worship as a special time, saying, 'it brings us closer together' and 'it's a time when we can thank God for what he has done for us'. Prayer has a central role in worship and is said throughout the school day. Children have a good understanding of different types of prayer and are encouraged to write their own prayers. One prayer box contained prayers written in speech bubbles so that children really see prayer as a way of talking to God. They are enthusiastic when speaking about the school prayer tree, which they refer to as 'the tree of hope', and prayers indicate some mature thinking. Worship makes a very good contribution to children's spiritual development through reflection time and the use of personal reflection diaries. Children have a developing understanding of the Trinity, which is well supported in RE lessons. There is very good knowledge of many Christian festivals, most of which are celebrated in the local church. Children have complete ownership of these services. For example, a recent very powerful Easter service involving freeze frames was so effective that parents described it as 'a poignant experience'. There is a strong partnership with the church and local community. Church members are extremely active in the school, running the Living Word Library to encourage and inspire children to read Christian books and reading Bible stories to younger children. The vicar leads a service in church once a week and the school are now looking at further developing this relationship by proposing more involvement in planning and monitoring. Worship is thoughtfully planned by staff and well supported through a range of resources such as 'Values for Life'. Teachers take turns at leading worship one day a week and each has responsibility for a different aspect, providing a variety of styles so that children are fully engaged. Regular monitoring takes place by the ethos group, staff and governors, ensuring that worship is relevant and relates

to children's lives today. Leaders have identified that evaluation now needs to incorporate 'next steps' in order to inform future planning and ensure that worship is constantly moving forward.

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

The executive headteacher and head of school are highly effective in articulating, living out and promoting a vision based on distinctively Christian values. They provide strong leadership and are very well supported by committed and dedicated staff and an experienced and knowledgeable chair of governors. Governors value the excellent open relationship with school leaders. They endorse the strong united passion to continually move the school forward as a church school. Governors are fully informed and knowledgeable about the strengths and areas for development in the school. Self-evaluation is secured through regular visits, talking to children and robust monitoring. Weekly meetings with all heads of schools across the MAT are highly valued and are seen as an important part of the developing partnership. Leaders acknowledge that being part of the MAT is enabling schools to develop opportunities to share good practice and provides continuing professional development. Although Ilsington is the only church school within the MAT, their strong Christian ethos is having an impressive impact on all schools within the trust. For example, other primary schools have created their own values, which are leading to improved behaviour, and the secondary school now has a chaplain in post. There is a strong relationship between the school and church and the excellent links with the local community are invaluable and mutually beneficial, such as the expertise of local gardeners who run a club supporting children to grow vegetables and flowers. Children are very enthusiastic about a project they worked on with a local group who work with children to encourage an appreciation of traditional crafts. They were proud to show the results of their skills in weaving baskets and making wooden stools. Parents are extremely supportive of the school. They appreciate the open door policy and find all staff approachable and welcoming. They feel they are well informed and have opportunities to give their opinions, knowing they will be listened to. They acknowledge the many ways in which children are given responsibility such as school councillors, play leaders and lunch time helpers because 'children grow in confidence in an environment where they feel they really contribute to school life'. Parents confidently say 'the Christian ethos permeates the school, giving children a solid foundation for their future'. Opportunities to develop children's understanding of Christianity as a world faith have been supported in the past through various links with other countries and the school are now looking at new ways to deepen children's knowledge and understanding by further developing global partnerships in order to extend children's experiences. Religious education makes an excellent contribution to the Christian character of the school. Leadership in RE is given a very high priority and leads to highly effective practice. Both RE and collective worship meet statutory requirements.

SIAMS report May 2018 Ilsington Church of England VC Primary School Ilsington Newton Abbot Devon TQ13 9RE