

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

### St Martin's CE Primary School

Lake Lane  
Liskeard  
Cornwall  
PL14 3DE

**Previous SIAMS grade:** Satisfactory

**Current inspection grade:** Outstanding

**Diocese:** Truro

Local authority: Cornwall

Dates of inspection: 26<sup>th</sup> February 2015

Date of last inspection: 5<sup>th</sup> December 2011

School's unique reference number: 112033

Headteacher: Julie Beach

Inspector's name and number: Patricia Morris 626

### School context

St Martin's CE Primary school is a larger than average primary school with an attached nursery. There are 300 children on roll. The school is part of St Barnabas Multi Academy Trust with five other church schools. There is a Child Development Centre on site. Over the past five years there has been a high percentage of staff mobility. The majority of children are of white British origin. The number of children with special educational needs is higher than the national average. The proportion of children eligible for pupil premium is higher than the national average.

### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St. Martin's as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The deeply embedded explicit Christian values make a significant contribution to children's learning and personal development.
- The vision, passion and commitment of the headteacher, fully supported by staff and governors, in ensuring the positive impact of the school's Christian ethos.
- Strong relationships based on Christian values in which all children are nurtured and valued as individuals.
- The excellent quality of experiences and displays, based on Christian values, which enrich the learning environment.

### **Areas to improve**

- Extend children's experiences to further develop their understanding of Christianity as a world faith.
- Provide opportunities for governors to be more involved in the monitoring and evaluation of religious education and its impact on the Christian distinctiveness of the school.

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

St. Martin's, as a distinctive church school, is outstanding at meeting the needs of all the children. Relationships are founded on Christian values ensuring that everyone is treated as unique and special. The Christian character of the school is clearly evident and permeates every aspect of school life. Christian values based on Values for Life are explicit and firmly embedded across the school. The core values have been established to underpin independence and resilience. One of the values is creativity and this has been successfully used as a basis for finding out how each child learns and achieves resulting in improved attainment and increasingly improving progress that is now at least in line with the national average. Children understand these core values and can be seen acting them out just as staff can be seen modelling them. They talk enthusiastically about each values and how they are used in their own lives. For example, the children identify the values in practice and recommend peers for a certificate or to be named in the Golden Book that is read out weekly. Values are evident in each classroom in the form of questions that are referred to during lessons. This results in a significant impact on the children's learning and excellent behaviour. The Christian character of the school is given a very high profile and clearly shapes the school's approach to inclusion. The recently set up nurture group is one example of this commitment and care. Relationships across the school are excellent. This can be seen in the excellent way staff interact with the children, with praise and encouragement, constantly referring to the school's core values. One child talked about school being 'like one big family and the adults are our second mum or dad. You can trust them.' The excellent Christian ethos is apparent throughout the school with many signs and symbols that the children talk about knowledgeably. A mosaic cross, to which every child contributed, is on the wall outside the school, surrounded by pictures of Bible stories, and reflected on the entrance carpet. Another carpet that leads through the corridors depicts the journey through God's world with different colours representing water, earth and desert. Every classroom promotes the values in their own special way through thinking trees or reflection areas. Classes are named after inspirational people who are also used to promote the Christian values along with quotes to inspire the children. Vibrant and interactive displays linked to religious education (RE) and worship themes abound around the school. Children talk enthusiastically about their significance and their own involvement in creating them. There are many opportunities to engage in high quality experiences that contribute to the children's spiritual development both indoors and outdoors for example a special garden and sensory area. Children have a developing understanding of Christianity as a multi cultural world faith through RE, visitors and special celebration days and staff are actively looking for opportunities to extend

children's experiences in this area. They show a high degree of respect for diversity in other religions. Children are challenged by RE and it makes a significant contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as well as playing a major role in supporting the Christian character of the school. The school motto of 'Coming together in God's love, to learn, to work, to love, to grow' is certainly apparent in the life of the school.

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

Collective worship is highly valued and a very important part of life in the school. Core Christian values are clearly identified and effectively used to support worship resulting in a positive impact on all children. It is planned thoroughly with a comprehensive programme throughout the year. Children are able to identify the colour of the altar cloth linked with the current season of the church year. They talked about the current Lent cloth by saying 'purple is a colour of mourning and reflection'. Worship engages children and the impact is reflected in their enthusiastic contributions and the way in which they listen. Excellent links are made between stories from the Bible and the school's core values and are clearly rooted in the teachings of Jesus. Children are able to identify a variety of Christian festivals and seasons of the church year. Themes inspire reflection times and challenge children to take responsibility for their own behaviour as well as their responsibilities for others. Children have an excellent understanding of prayer being used as a form of communication to God to say thank you or for sharing a worry. They have many opportunities to write their own prayers and share them in special worship times and in class assemblies. As a result prayer is clearly valued and has a central part in school life. There is a focus on God as father, son and holy spirit and this is supported well through RE teaching. Children take responsibility for leading worship and have many opportunities to do so. There are a variety of leaders for worship throughout the week including staff, clergy, the Open the Book visitors and the children's own Light the Candle group. Excellent systems for monitoring and evaluating worship take place and the action plan for worship identifies the embedding of a timeline for a more systematic approach.

### **The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding**

Standards of attainment are at least in line with national expectations. Attainment is high and progress in the children's understanding of Christianity can be seen across year groups and in the differentiation in lessons. Children are inspired by RE and learn exceptionally well. Lessons are consistently of a high standard and well supported by the use of religious vocabulary and artefacts to enhance lessons. The excellent questioning challenges and encourages children to think about the bigger picture and make links with their own lives resulting in a positive impact on their learning. All classrooms have a Bible area linked to the current RE unit of work. Stories from the Bible are used to reflect the school's core values with children being given wide and varied opportunities to consider their importance. The pace of lessons is excellent with time being given for reflection and opportunities for the children to ask questions. Well focused support staff consistently enable all children to access the learning. The RE co-ordinator's high level of expertise is used to support staff by working alongside them and by holding inset sessions. This has resulted in a positive impact on the teaching of RE and the subject knowledge of staff. The co-ordinator is confident in identifying areas for development and there is a

strong focus on staff training. Rigorous monitoring and evaluation by the headteacher and the RE co-ordinator takes place through lesson observations, and work scrutiny results in effective differentiation in lessons. For example, in one lesson children were encouraged to write questions on post it notes throughout the lesson and these were then discussed at the end of the session enabling the learning to evolve from children's own thinking. Governors are not yet involved in these aspects of monitoring and evaluating but this has been recognised as an area for development. A well focused action plan contributes to improvement within the subject. Links with the school's core values have been identified within units of work as have spiritual development opportunities. Staff work hard to include opportunities for children to understand and to make links between different beliefs and a range of faiths. A wider exploration of the diversity of beliefs in the modern world would further develop this aspect.

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

The headteacher, ably supported by governors and staff, promotes a vision that is deeply rooted in distinctive Christian values. Her hard work and passion make a huge contribution to driving the school forward. Staff can describe the strong impact of the Christian vision on the lives and achievements of the children who are seen to act it out. There are excellent relationships between all members of the school community. The school works effectively with the Diocese for training and support. Links with the local church are strong with visits to the church as part of RE and at special times of the Christian year. The foundation governors run an extremely popular after school Friday club where activities include children listening to and discussing Bible stories. Governors have a thorough understanding of the school's performance and appreciate that the values have a positive impact on behaviour and standards. All areas from the previous report have been addressed, ensuring excellent progress. The school development plan clearly promotes Christian values. Self-evaluation strongly identifies the impact of these values on the lives of the children and is secure in ensuring continued improvement and high standards. Parents feel welcome in the school and praise it's family feel and the fact that everybody really cares which they say is reflected in all conversations with staff. The development of all staff and governors as leaders of a church school is thoughtfully planned to benefit the leadership of the school. High priority is given to RE and worship and this contributes to the effectiveness of the school.

SIAMS report February 2015 St Martin's CE Primary School, Liskeard, Cornwall. PL14  
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