



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

### All Saints' Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Highlands Drive, Maldon,  
CM9 6HY

**Previous SIAMS grade: Good**

**Current inspection grade: Outstanding**

**Diocese: Chelmsford**

Local authority: Essex

Date of inspection: 13<sup>th</sup> February 2015

Date of last inspection: November 2010

School's unique reference number: 115130

Co-Headteachers: Michele Williams and Phil Brown

Inspector's name and number: Rosemary Privett 321

#### School context

All Saints' is a large urban primary school. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals and for whom additional income due to social disadvantage (pupil premium) is received are below average. There are significantly fewer pupils from ethnic minority groups or who speak English as an additional language than the average. Since the previous inspection the school buildings have been expanded so that it is now situated on one site. A co-headteacher was appointed in 2012.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of All Saints' as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The strong Christian leadership which means Christian principles are effectively shared, deeply embedded and underpin the work of staff and governors.
- Robust and rigorous self-evaluation accurately pinpoints the schools strengths and enables it to plan new developments effectively
- The outstanding leadership of religious education [RE] which results in the subject giving strong support to the school's Christian character

#### Areas to improve

- Increase the frequency of pupil involvement in planning and leading worship so that it develops pupils' leadership skills across more age groups
- Ensure that the school environment is enhanced so that it effectively helps pupils link the school's Christian values to their biblical roots

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

The school's mission statement, 'Every Child Shines,' effectively shapes and determines priorities. Explicit Christian values permeate all aspects of school life ensuring pupils are loved, motivated and feel respected. Consequently, they learn in a safe and secure environment where their well-being is of paramount importance. Pupils have the willingness to listen to guidance, recognise personal shortcomings and understand what it is to forgive and be forgiven. This creates an extremely positive climate for learning which leads to high academic standards and progress above national expectations. Christian values are effectively shared across the school including through RE and worship. However, the visual environment is not well used to support pupils in understanding the link between Christian values and their biblical origins. As a result pupils are not able to fully articulate these links. Relationships at all levels are excellent exemplifying Christian values. These values also underpin the support given to vulnerable groups who make good progress academically and in terms of their behaviour. This is testimony to the high quality of teaching, pastoral care and Christ-like compassion given to all. As an expression of the school's values pupils demonstrate responsibility towards others. This helps them develop a strong sense of social awareness which drives significant fund-raising activities. Staff training has developed a shared view of what is meant by 'awe and wonder.' As a result spiritual and moral development is now one of the key drivers underpinning the school curriculum. Teachers are skilled in prompting pupils to reflect deeply. Pupils' responses in display work and orally are a rich source of evidence for how they can express their thoughts and feelings about 'big questions.' RE gives excellent support to the school's Christian character. Through creative teaching approaches, RE engages and challenges pupils, making a significant contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Through teaching about other faiths RE also leads the way in developing very positive attitudes to diversity and difference. A programme of visits to religious communities and places of worship have been developed, financed from the governors' fund. Links with a school in a very different area has also been initiated. Parents speak positively about the impact of these initiatives in enabling their children to develop an understanding of those from different faiths and cultures.

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

Worship is central to school life. It is valued by adults and pupils alike. Pupils enjoy it because themes are relevant. They are given time to reflect and make meaning for themselves. In this way it supports their spiritual development well. The contributions of the orchestra hold pupils' attention and create an atmosphere conducive to worship. Staff say that they benefit personally from time to reflect within a busy day. A staff member said, 'planning and delivering worship makes you evaluate your own faith and beliefs.' The worship is distinctively Christian in character. It often begins with words such as 'Peace be with you,' and the lighting of a candle representing Jesus as 'light of the world'. Through these simple actions pupils are developing an understanding of some aspects of Anglican practice. Worship is well led. Careful planning by the coordinator places an emphasis on the major festivals of the church year, stories from the Bible and Jesus' teachings. Worship themes expand on key Christian beliefs and the school's core Christian values. Reference to God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit is made on occasions but children find it difficult to explain its significance. The vicar effectively supports the school's worshipping life and is a welcome visitor. Other local organisations also support worship. Through these visits pupils experience a wide range of worship styles ensuring that it is both distinctive and inclusive. Pupils lead special acts of worship in the church and assist in acts of worship in school. Although older pupils sometimes plan and lead acts of worship younger pupils do not. Major Christian festivals are celebrated in the parish church and valued by all. Through worship, pupils understand the importance of prayer and readily engage in opportunities to do so. They value the prayer request board in the hall and use it to offer

personal prayers, 'for the people and things that are important to us and God.' The impact of worship is effectively monitored and evaluated ensuring that plans are reviewed in the light of regular discussion and feedback from pupils, staff and governors.

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

The strong and practical leadership of the co-headteachers and deputy headteacher ensures that a distinctive vision rooted in its core Christian values is promoted. Through their nurturing ethos they ensure that this is a highly effective school, which effectively promotes pupils' spiritual development and academic achievement. Staff and parents strongly support this vision. Senior leaders, including governors, demonstrate a determination for the on-going development of the school as a Church school. Since the previous inspection the school has developed rigorous and robust monitoring and evaluation procedures. They know their school well. Feedback is regularly sought from pupils, staff and parents. Questionnaires and surveys are used to help focus development. Actions taken are clearly linked to what needs to improve so that the thread of the school's distinctive Christian character runs through all its development priorities. An example of this is the way in which recent targets have been linked to developing both the role of the RE coordinator and improving worship provision. As a result, RE and collective worship meet statutory requirements and have developed considerably in recent years. Preparation for future Christian leadership is encouraged through the co-headship arrangement, teamwork and participation in training provided by the diocese. This has resulted in greater understanding of the Christian character of the school. The vicar has a positive influence on the school's life and work. Together with the foundation governors he fosters positive links with the parish enabling the school's vision to be shared and widely understood. Leaders and governors, also show a very high degree of pastoral concern for all members of the school community. This is illustrated well by the response to tragic situations which have occurred involving staff and parents.

SIAMS report. February 2015 All Saints CE VC Primary Maldon CM9 6HY