

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Temple Ewell Church of England Primary Academy

3-4 Brookside, Temple Ewell, Dover CT16 3DT	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Canterbury
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Date of academy conversion	September 2016
Name of multi academy trust	Aquila multi academy trust
Date of inspection	9 March 2018
Date of last inspection	12 February 2013
Type of school and unique reference number	Primary Academy VC equivalent 139436
Head of School	Angela Matthews
Executive headteacher	Jo Hygate
Inspector's name and number	Virginia Corbyn 86

School context

Temple Ewell is a smaller than average village school on the outskirts of Dover, with 147 pupils in 5 mixed aged classes. The pupils are predominantly White British and come from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds. 19% of children are in receipt of pupil premium funding for social disadvantage and 12% have special education needs. The school became a sponsored academy in February 2014 and later joined the Canterbury Diocese multi academy trust (Aquila) in September 2016. The school shares an executive headteacher with Kingsdown and Ringwould CE primary school. The local incumbent retired in July 2017 and has yet to be replaced.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Temple Ewell as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The strong core Christian values which drive the school are the means by which very strong outcomes have been secured for all pupils.
- Pupils are able to reflect spiritually and practically on their behaviour and attitudes in ways which build supportive and positive relationships throughout the whole school community.
- There are high expectations in religious education (RE) which have led to increased levels of pupil engagement and enjoyment, well supported by the 'Understanding Christianity' resources.
- Collective worship provides clear messages with strong biblical underpinning about the ways in which acceptance, forgiveness and trust are key components of learning and of living.
- The creation of a cohesive and committed staff team, who live out the Christian values of the school day by day, means that pupils thrive and succeed.
- Support from Kingsdown and Ringwould CE primary school and from the Canterbury Diocesan multi-academy trust has played a key part in enabling the school to improve rapidly since the previous denominational inspection.

Areas to improve

- Embed the approach of 'the 'Understanding Christianity' resources so that ongoing improvements in RE continue to deepen the thinking of all pupils in relation to big questions and concepts.
- Develop the strategic role of the local governing body (LGB) in self-evaluating the school in ways that enable its members to explicitly articulate the impact of its distinctively Christian vision and values.

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

Since the previous denominational inspection, the school has used its five core Christian values of forgiveness, acceptance, inspiration, trust and hope to drive significant improvement in all areas of school life. In particular, pupils' excellent behaviour means that they learn well and treat each other with care and consideration. This is modelled very clearly by all staff in the school. They create a strong sense of acceptance and inclusion for all pupils and their families, especially for those with particular needs and challenges. This is underpinned by nurture groups and early intervention as soon as these needs are identified. This strength of the school has been recognised through the prestigious Inclusion Quality Mark, Flagship School award. One parent said, 'The school wants the best for our children – they invest in them'. The basis of forgiveness in relationships at all levels ensures that a fresh start is always available which inspires trust and builds positivity in learning and in behaviour. As a result, pupils know that each day is a chance to start again no matter what has happened before. A broad and balanced curriculum and a rich offering beyond the curriculum mean that all pupils can 'taste success' as the executive headteacher explained. This then breeds a sense of hope and aspiration. A pupil said, 'I have to use our value of acceptance when work is hard but I also use inspiration a lot to help me'. They know that their Christian values come from the Bible and can explain why those are good stories to exemplify those values.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a thread which permeates all that is done in school. There is a strong culture of quiet, personal reflection in the school with areas in the classroom and elsewhere for pupils to seek out peace and quiet. The spiritual garden is popular with pupils and is well cared for by the spiritual council whose views were taken into account in its creation. Pupils have a developing understanding of prayers which are for giving thanks and for saying sorry. There are opportunities for offering these in a special school prayer book and in their classroom reflection areas. In addition, pupils can choose to visit the church in the lunch hour on a Wednesday to pray. Pupils and parents commented on how special this is for those pupils who have a particular concern to express to God. Social development is best demonstrated in the 'unique' way in which all are known and cared for. This means that, in the words of one parent, 'all are known by name, even the youngest children know the names of their older friends from their start in the school'. There is careful planning to promote cultural understanding across the curriculum, in the knowledge that the school population is not particularly diverse. The importance of acceptance and inclusion are apparent in the way that, 'we have to accept that not everyone is the same as us but that is just like the woman at the well in the Bible'. The RE curriculum contributes to a clear understanding of difference and diversity because pupils know that 'other people worship God in different ways'. The introduction of the 'Understanding Christianity' resource materials as the basis for teaching and learning in RE means that pupils are beginning to explore Christian concepts in increasing depth. They are developing the ability to discuss different perspectives within biblical texts and express their own ideas confidently. They have a good knowledge of a range of Bible stories and this makes a good contribution to the distinctive Christian character of the school.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Pupils show a great deal of reverence and respect during collective worship. It enhances pupils' understanding of the school's Christian values as underpinned by biblical teaching which can then be seen in action within the everyday life of the school. A pupil said that, 'Worship inspires us for the rest of the day and its challenges'. Reflection time is provided to ensure that pupils can relate the values to their own lives and offer their own prayers. This has given the community important support in difficult times, such as when there is serious illness and bereavement. Worship is well planned by the worship co-ordinator, supplemented for the needs of the school where necessary. Attitudes to collective worship are very positive and this is shown by pupils' willingness to contribute in various ways. These include the leading of prayers and helping the leader with various practical tasks. The spiritual council, consisting of pupils from each year group, take leadership roles in special services for the major Christian festivals held in church and in some Key Stage acts of worship. They have a clear voice in the monitoring and evaluation of their worship. Examples of their views being acted upon include introducing the sharing of the Peace with each other and letting younger pupils do some of the Bible readings. There is a growing understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit across the school, in both worship and RE. Pupils are very clear that Jesus is the best example of someone who shows their Christian values in action. Anglican liturgy and practices used within worship give a familiar shape to worship which helps pupils to focus for this important part of the school day. Although the local incumbent recently retired and has not been replaced, church leaders from the Methodist and Baptist churches and other local Anglican clergy lead worship regularly. This means that pupils experience a range of approaches and experiences within worship. Governors monitor and evaluate worship regularly alongside the spiritual council. Church services are very well supported by parents, one of whom said that, 'it is important that our children know that the church is there for them now and in the future'.

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

Very effective leadership and commitment from all staff has resulted in rapid improvement for Temple Ewell as a church school over the past five years. The head of school, very well supported by an executive headteacher, has a clear Christian vision for the school. This puts wanting the best for all those in her care at the heart of her day to day practice. The daily application of a set of core Christian values, well matched to the needs of the school, means that attainment has been raised and that outcomes are strong for all pupils. Pupils with special education needs and disadvantaged pupils are being tracked effectively and supported well so that they make at least expected progress, and often better, from their starting points. The school's biblically based values underpin the learning environment which means that pupils are able to take responsibility for their own learning and find inspiration and hope when they meet challenges. Teachers show a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities within a church school, articulating how the strong ethos of the school has supported them in having to bring about rapid improvements. Their sense of working very closely as a small team in a small school means that they understand the importance of being held to account through clear monitoring and regular professional meetings. RE is very well led and managed. The introduction of a new syllabus for RE has been thoughtfully implemented although it is too early to evaluate its full impact. High and clear expectations have been set for RE, resulting in improved levels of enjoyment and engagement from pupils. Governors' support of the school is through regular monitoring and evaluation of the day to day activities of the school. There is limited strategic evaluation of the school in terms of the impact of its Christian vision and values by the LGB. Statutory requirements for RE and collective worship are fully met. The recommendations from the previous denominational report have been addressed.

Parents and families are confident that the school addresses the individual needs of their children. One parent said that this school helps the children 'to be better people for life'. The school has received very good support from the Diocese in moving out of special measures to a judgement of outstanding under the OfSTED framework in February 2017. This has been done by maintaining and strengthening the Christian ethos of the school over a period of difficulty and change. Strong links with the local church have been important in maintaining the school's Christian distinctiveness and in continuing to hold together school, church and community. The recently retired incumbent was described as the 'steady rock' of the school and that important relationship is being maintained in his absence. Interaction with the local community is regular and relevant. Recently, a faith in action week helped to deepen pupils' understanding of the impact of the faith on real situations in the world around them. Mutually beneficial partnerships with other schools within the MAT and with Kingsdown and Ringwould school mean that staff have been able to access training and, more latterly, to lead training for others. This was summarised by a staff member stating, 'I feel very valued because I am given responsibility and my importance is recognised'.

SIAMS report March 2018 Temple Ewell primary academy (VC), Dover CT16 3DT