

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Frant Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School	
Church Road, Frant, East Sussex, TN3 9DX	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese	Chichester
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Local authority	East Sussex
Name of federation	The Saxonbury Federation of Frant and Mark Cross CE Primary Schools
Date of inspection	13 March 2018
Date of last inspection	25 June 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Controlled 114505
Executive headteacher	Debbie Bennett
Head of school	Amanda Gander-Miller
Inspector's name and number	Richard Dyer 513

School context

Frant CE Primary School is a small rural primary school occupying purpose built accommodation since 2011. It has 106 pupils from Frant and surrounding rural area organised into four classes. The majority of children are from white British backgrounds. In 2015 the school federated with another local small primary school sharing the same Executive Headteacher and governing body. The executive headteacher retired in July 2017. Frant's head of school became interim executive head until January 2018 when this federation began formal collaboration with another local school federation. Both federations share the same new executive headteacher but retain their own federation's shared headteacher in the role of 'head of school' to both schools.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Frant CE Primary School as a Church of England school are good.

- The head of school's clear Christian vision solidly underpins the school's Christian distinctiveness and is fully supported by the whole school community.
- The school's caring and nurturing Christian ethos impacts deeply and positively on the excellent relationships within the school community and the school's provision and outcomes for the pupils.
- The strong partnerships the school has developed with the church and the federation school strongly promote the school's Christian distinctiveness and quality provision and outcomes for the pupils.

Areas to improve

- Make the links between the five school values and the Christian worship values more explicit so they are clearly understood and articulated by all members of the school community.
- Strengthen the impact of collective worship on learners by greater pupil involvement in the planning and delivering of worship.
- Develop pupils' understanding of diversity by establishing links with more culturally diverse communities in the wider world.

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

Frant CE Primary School has a strong Christian character and a caring, nurturing ethos based on a shared federation vision statement, and its own five school values which are rooted in Christian values. These are supported by Christian 'Worship Values' and associated biblical stories shared with the partner school. The school's distinctive Christian character is celebrated throughout the school with vibrant displays. These include the school's Christian values, colourful child made crosses in each classroom depicting bible stories, creative mosaics of a butterfly cross and the biblical story of the Mustard Seed, plus displays of Christianity around the world and the Trinity.

The school's ethos and values permeates the life of the school. They are shared and modelled by all members of the school staff who confidently articulate them, how they link together and their impact on the school's daily life. Pupils can clearly talk about the link between the school's values, the worship values and how the teachings of Jesus are the basis for how they should live their lives. For example, showing care and respect for each other, and forgiveness after wrongdoing. For some other stakeholders the link between the five school values and the worship values is less clear. Nevertheless they talk enthusiastically about the school's Christian ethos and its positive impact on the well-being and achievements of the pupils. Parents, for example, praise the school for its care and nurture in helping all children to flourish and grow, and the meaningful support given to any child and their family experiencing problems. The impact of the school's Christian ethos is seen in the significantly improved attendance, pupils' consistently good academic achievements, excellent provision for the pupils pastoral needs and well-being, the outstanding relationships among all members of the school community and excellent pupil behaviour.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) opportunities are promoted through all aspects of the school life. This includes its curriculum, religious education (RE), collective worship, and enrichment experiences such as cultural drumming workshops and visits to, for example, a television news studio. It is strongly promoted through pupil responsibilities such as Play Leaders, School Council and child led charity fund-raising. These impact on the development of the school's Christian distinctiveness by, for example, the School Council initiating improvements to the outdoor Reflection Area. SMSC is also promoted through extra-curricular activities and strong partnerships with the local church, community, and other schools, especially with its partner federation school. SMSC development through links with other national or global communities to promote understanding of and respect for diverse communities is less developed.

Religious education contributes significantly to the school's Christian character and promotes the school's values. For example, explicitly linking the school's values to Bible stories taught in RE, and the high levels of mature respect shown by pupils towards each other when considering opposing opinions in an RE discussion. Pupils clearly demonstrate and articulate their enjoyment of RE. SMSC is also promoted in RE by, for example, raising pupils' awareness and understanding of different faiths. Pupils are able to talk about their awareness of other faiths but their understanding of diversity is less developed.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship has recently been significantly revised and is considered a central and integral part of the life of the school. One child described it as "When you learn to build the foundations for living your life as a Christian". Worship takes place in school and the local church at key times in the church calendar. It is well planned to link explicitly to the Bible, coverage of the church year, and to reinforce the school's Christian values with one of the worship values chosen each term as the focus. Worship is led by staff, the rector and the church Youth Leader with pupils planning and leading worship twice a term. Parents are invited to, and keenly attend, weekly celebration worship in school and the Christian celebrations held in church.

The worship is distinctly Christian with the key elements of Christian worship and symbolism present (e.g. lighting the candle on the altar table). Pupils participate by regularly saying prayers, singing hymns and giving the response to the blessing at the end of worship. Worship is delivered in different ways to provide lively experiences that engage, and sometimes involve, the pupils. For example, two children building brick towers on a soft and hard surface to illustrate the parable of the wise and foolish builders. The Trinity is imaginatively explained in ways understandable to the children such as using three different coloured materials to create the tricoloured union flag. It is reinforced with effective 'Trinity' displays in the public atrium of the school and through the 'Understanding Christianity' materials used in RE. Consequently the pupils are able to confidently articulate an age-appropriate understanding of the Trinity. Pupils are positive about worship and enjoy it but greater pupil involvement in the planning and delivering of worship would strengthen its impact.

Prayer is an important and integral part of worship and the life of the school with all classes saying a prayer at other times of the day. Children learn a range of prayers including the school prayer and the Lord's Prayer. Opportunities for prayer extend into prayer and reflection areas in the classrooms and public atrium where pupils are encouraged to write and display their own prayers. These are sometimes included in the worship. Pupils speak confidently about the importance of prayer as a means of "Speaking to God" and how "The Bible is God speaking to us". Parents appreciate the prayer opportunities offered by the school and report how some children continue prayer at home. Opportunities for stillness and reflection are also an integral part of the worship. These extend into the prayer and reflection areas within the school and an outdoor designated Reflection Area soon to be further developed as a result of pupil feedback. These areas are regularly used by pupils and contribute significantly to their spiritual development.

Monitoring and evaluation of worship has been considerably strengthened since the previous inspection. Worship evaluations are undertaken by pupils and staff after worship and the governors ethos working party undertake termly monitoring visits. The impact of governor evaluations is seen in the explicit linking of the worship's Christian message to the worship story resulting in most pupils being able to articulate how this impacts on their everyday lives. Pupil evaluation is leading to improvements to the indoor and outdoor prayer and reflection areas.

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

The head of school has a clear Christian vision that solidly underpins the school's Christian distinctiveness which has developed significantly under her leadership. Her vision is shared by the school staff, the governing body and the new executive headteacher who all support her in promoting the school's values and developing an ethos of kindness, care, dignity and respect. The impact shows in the confident way pupils understand and articulate the school's Christian values and apply them in their daily lives resulting in their positive achievements and well-being, excellent behaviour and relationships, and good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The very recent formal collaboration with another federation and the appointment of the new executive headteacher for both federations has not yet impacted on the school as a church school.

Since federation in 2015 more robust systems to monitor and evaluate the school as a church school have been established resulting in positive developments in the school's Christian distinctiveness. Parent views are actively sought and good pupil voice opportunities are provided through the School Council and the daily worship evaluations posted in the atrium. The impact of pupil voice is seen in the development of further pupil voice feedback opportunities (e.g. a new 'suggestion box' in the library) and the future development of the prayer and reflection areas. The governors' ethos working party, created since federation, undertake termly monitoring visits which are reported and discussed at full governor meetings. The impact is seen in improvements to the effectiveness of worship and the Christian distinctiveness of the school's learning environment.

Improved monitoring and evaluation has resulted in school leaders having a good understanding of the school's performance, its distinctiveness as a church school and the school's strengths and areas for development. This has led to effective school development plans which include the development of RE, worship and the school's Christian distinctiveness. Governors attend appropriate training courses and there are effective links with other schools both inside and outside the federation for sharing expertise and development opportunities including developing subject and middle leadership. The school has close links with the diocese and advantage is taken of their support and development opportunities. The impact is seen in the development of the school's Christian distinctiveness the support given to the RE lead teacher, the effective development of the Understanding Christianity material in RE, and staff undertaking senior church leadership qualifications.

The school has various links and partnerships which all contribute effectively to school life, the promotion of its values and pupils SMSC development. There are strong links with the parish church which include the rector and church Youth Leader regularly leading worship and a church led Christian after school club. There are close links with parents and with the local community (e.g. a parish lunch held in school for community members and the parish nurse visiting the school). The school also has links with the local Nursery and secondary school, and particularly close links with its partner federation school and other schools in the wider locality. The school development plan clearly shows how the school aims to further develop all these links and the desired impact of doing so. Links with the wider national and global community are less developed.

Arrangements for RE and worship meet statutory requirements and both areas are well led and managed.