

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

### St Margaret's at Troy Town Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

King Street, Rochester, Kent, ME1 1YF

<b>Current SIAMS inspection grade</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>
<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Rochester</b>
Previous SIAS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local authority	Medway
Date of inspection	17 March 2017
Date of last inspection	February 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Controlled - 118708
Headteacher	Matthew Newman
Inspector's name and number	Pamela Draycott (161)

#### School context

This average-sized primary school with nursery provision serves an ethnically, socially and economically diverse area. The percentage for whom extra funding is received, due to social disadvantage, is above the national average, as it is for those who speak English as an additional language. The percentage with a special educational need or disability (SEND) is broadly average. The majority of pupils are White British with almost 40 percent coming from a range of other ethnic groups. Around 10 percent identify as coming from Christian backgrounds with almost as many Muslim families represented.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Margaret's at Troy Town Primary School as a Church of England school are satisfactory

- There is a good awareness of the importance and influence of the school's values and their impact on school life. These are underpinned by biblical teaching and reflected well in the supportive relationships and the very good behaviour of pupils.
- Based on its Christian foundation, pupils' wellbeing has a high priority and clearly influences their personal development.
- The worship programme is of central importance and contributes very effectively to its spiritual life by exploring school values and Christian teaching very well.
- The provision of opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development is good resulting in positive responses from pupils.

#### Areas to improve

- In keeping with the school's Christian vision, improve academic outcomes and progress in the core subjects, especially in Key Stage 2, so that all pupils make rapid and sustained progress.
- Improve the accuracy and consequent rigour of the school's self-evaluation of its Christian

foundation so that it can consistently drive forward and lead developments as the school moves into its next phase of development.

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

The school's core values of respect, trust, friendship and perseverance are directly linked with appropriate biblical references. They are well demonstrated across the school. For example, its behaviour policy is clearly linked to them and consistently applied. This results in very good behaviour and strong relationships being in evidence. 'We all get on together and follow our values. They help us respect and care about each other and help us think about what is the right thing to do,' was an explanation given by a Year 6 pupil. Pupils are supportive of one another and generally work well together in groups and individually. The school's Christian ethos is impacting positively in relation to pupils' personal development and wellbeing. This has a high priority and is well supported by good pastoral structures. These are caring and reflect the school's Christian foundation well. Most pupils are happy in school which contributes to attendance being around the national average. Pupils enter the school below or well below national expectations and most leave having made satisfactory and sometimes good progress. However, whilst test results are slightly above the national average, there has been a downward trend in the attainment and achievement of pupils in core areas of the curriculum. There is a gap between the attainment and progress of more disadvantaged pupils and their peers and girls have generally outperformed boys. This means that the school is not consistently supporting and challenging all pupils to achieve their full academic potential. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development is well catered for and pupils respond well to the opportunities provided. The curriculum is broad and balanced. Within lessons, a range of activities appropriately encourages reflection and creativity and a number of extra-curricular activities contribute well to SMSC development. Pupils take responsibility for themselves and others. For example, Year 6 pupils help Foundation Stage children over the lunchtime period and Year 5 pupils support Year 1 with their learning about and experience of Easter. Religious education (RE), delivered in line with the locally agreed syllabus, makes a good contribution to pupils' SMSC development and to the school's distinctive Christian character. For example, pupils develop respect for a range of religious beliefs and practices through RE. 'RE helps you to understand and respect people, some with the same beliefs and some with different beliefs', as a Year 3 pupil said. Pupils' understanding of Christianity, and indeed Anglicanism, as a world-wide, multi-cultural faith is developing well, especially through recent changes to the RE curriculum which are yet to be embedded.

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

Worship is very well planned and delivered and plays a central role in the school's daily life. It is explicitly Christian in nature whilst being inclusive of the range of religious and non-religious perspectives represented across the school community. Pupils and staff have positive attitudes towards the worship opportunities provided. An example of this is the fact that all teaching staff take part in leading worship regularly with their class. Pupils take responsibility for worship through the 'Leading Lights' programme. The pupils who lead this programme come from Christian and other faith backgrounds. They take their role extremely seriously. The programme is having a very positive impact on the school's development of worship. Pupils are engaged well in planning and leading worship. Their role in evaluating its impact is less secure. Pupils enjoy worship because they feel included and involved. Many find it inspirational and engage deeply with it. Worship addresses the school's core Christian values and aspects of the Christian year well. More complex Christian beliefs are less well developed. However, the school has rightly recognised this, and is currently addressing it through an appropriate focus on exploring aspects of the Christian belief in God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. They are also addressing the significance and meaning of the Lord's Prayer. This is beginning to impact positively on pupils' developing appreciation and understanding of these key aspects of Christian teaching. There are appropriate, mutually supportive links between the

worship programme and the RE curriculum which are also improving the depth of pupils' understanding. A strong relationship exists between the school and the church which effectively supports the spiritual growth of members of the school community. The vicar, who is vice-chair of the governing body, is a regular visitor and leader of worship. Pupils are familiar with aspects of traditional Anglican practice such as lighting a candle and different seasons of the Christian year. A termly visit from the Family Trust, a Christian group working locally to support schools, further enhances the programme. Very good displays in the school hall celebrate the school's Christian values and they support prayer and reflection which are key features of worship. 'Prayer is speaking to God. You can ask God to help you live out being a good friend or persevering with your work or something like that,' as a Year 4 pupil commented. Prayer practices nurtured in worship are well extended into the whole of school life. This means that there are regular opportunities for pupils to pray during the day. Some staff and parents pray for the school in a termly prayer group.

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

There has undoubtedly been a concerted approach to the importance of the school's values and their Christian foundation in recent years. This has led to strong pastoral systems being in place and is impacting positively on pupils' personal development and wellbeing. However, overall their academic progress is not as well served. This has resulted in, for example, a three year downward trend in attainment, with the Year 6 tests for 2016, showing a significant percentage decrease. The school has responded to these results with a more focused approach to tracking attainment and progress. Its impact has yet to be verified through external statutory testing. The governing body is very well led by a chair and vice chair who are deeply committed to improving the academic outcomes for pupils. This is expressly recognised as an important aspect of the school's Christian service to its community. With this in mind, governors are working closely with the local authority and Diocese to support and hold senior leaders and staff to account. Examples of this include a rigorous staff appraisal system and setting challenging targets for pupils' progress, as well as appropriate support and training for staff. Developed plans are in place for the school to become a member of a diocesan multi-academy trust (MAT) as part of its ongoing development and improvement as a church school. Governors have secured very good leadership and management for RE and for the co-ordination of worship. They also support the development of staff working within the church school sector. The RE subject leader is supporting the introduction of new RE materials well in preparation for their full implementation in September 2017. Both RE and worship are appropriately resourced and statutory requirements are met.

The school's 'SIAMS committee' is made up of governors, senior staff and the RE and worship co-ordinator. It meets regularly to address the school's Christian foundation, review RE and focus on the worship programme. It is through this committee that the school's self-evaluation of its distinctiveness and effectiveness as a church school is primarily addressed. This self-evaluation is detailed and reflects the school well in terms of identifying activities and approaches. However, the consequent judgements made are overly generous and do not identify explicitly how the school's Christian character impacts positively on pupils academic attainment and progress. Parents are supportive of the school and recognise the 'family feel and care' provided for their children. They see this as a clear expression of the school's Christian ethos and underpinning. A helpful partnership between school and church is in evidence. Examples of this include visits from the priest to school and the school to church as well as the incumbent's involvement with the governance of the school. These are clear expressions of their shared mission of service to the community. The school also has good links with other primary schools in the vicinity, which provide some opportunities for moderating teacher judgements about pupils' progress.

SIAMS report (March 2017) St Margaret's at Troy Town CE (VC), Rochester, Kent, ME1 1YF