Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

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| Southborough Church of England Primary School | | | | | |
| **Address** | Broomhill Park Road, Southborough, Kent TN4 0JY | | | | |
| **Date of inspection** | | 20 June 2019 | **Status of school** | VC primary | |
| **Diocese** | | Rochester | | **URN** | 118712 |

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| **Overall Judgement** | **Grade** | **good** |
| How effective is the school’s distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels,  in enabling pupils and adults to flourish? | | |
| **Additional Judgement** | | |
| **The impact of collective worship** | **Grade** | **good** |

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| **School context**  Southborough is a primary school with 570 pupils on roll. The school has a low level of religious and cultural diversity and few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is in line with national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is below national averages. The school has expanded from having two forms of entry to having three forms of entry over the last six years. |
| **The school’s Christian vision**  Giving Inspiring Flourishing together (G I F T)  Our school is a beacon of light in our community. The light of Jesus **inspires** us to use our **gifts** with integrity so that we can shine and **flourish together**. We encourage, nurture and respect each other as we grow in our learning and our living. Together we shine brightly. |
| **Key findings**   * The wellbeing of pupils, their families and of staff is taken exceptionally seriously so that all can shine. * Displays around the school are of a very high standard. Many of these relate to the school’s Christian vision and values, but not all of those relating to the wider curriculum do so where appropriate. * The school offers excellent cultural opportunities to all of its pupils, including to the most vulnerable. This expands pupils’ horizons and enables pupils to grow together. * Religious education (RE) provides a safe space for pupils to share and develop their own views. However, marking and feedback is inconsistent across the school. This means that some pupils are not always helped to have an understanding of how to progress. * The weekly singing worship is inspirational, exuberant and joyful. This contributes very well to pupils’ spiritual growth. However, pupils would like to have more opportunities to lead whole school acts of worship. |
| **Areas for development**   * Increase pupil involvement in, and leadership of, whole school collective worship so that they feel greater ownership of this aspect of school life. * Ensure that the impact of the Christian vision on policies is obvious so that everyone understands its centrality. * Ensure that pupils are consistently helped to gain a good understanding of how to progress in RE through accurate and consistent marking. |

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| How effective is the school’s distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?  **Inspection findings**  Governors and senior staff have developed the school’s Christian vision and they have shared this with all stakeholders. This vision is an articulation of the way in which the school aims to be a beacon in the local community. It aims to show that the school helps all of its members to flourish together. The school has expanded considerably since the previous denominational inspection and so the vision’s focus on working together helps to maintain a sense of being a close community. This addresses a development point from the previous inspection. The vision is summarised by the acronym ‘GIFT’ which is known by all stakeholders. This is easy for pupils to remember and helps them to refer to the vision. However, not everyone is fully aware of the distinctive Christian basis to the vision. Policies are often prefaced by the Christian vision, but it is not always clear what the impact of this is on practice. Several members of staff have accessed appropriate and helpful training including that offered on the new SIAMS framework and by the Church of England Professional Qualification for Headship (CEPQH). This helps them to grow as future Church school leaders. All teachers are supported in their understanding of working in a Church school. This starts with an effective induction process and continues with good support for RE and for leading collective worship. Teachers are often promoted within the school. Teaching assistants who wish to become teachers are able to train through the training partnership with a local Church secondary school. Therefore, staff are often able to progress professionally within a Church school environment.  The broad curriculum values each individual’s gifts. Pupil wellbeing is central, and the curriculum is tailored to address individual needs, enabling them to flourish. However, pupils in Year 6 in 2018 did not all make progress in line with national averages. Governors and leaders have focused on ways to address this, so that all pupils can flourish academically. There are indications that this is having a positive impact. Pupils are encouraged to listen to others, to reflect on their learning, and to apply this to their own lives. As a result, pupils are highly respectful towards those with differing views. Pupils’ spiritual development is aided by experiences of awe and wonder. This includes a Year 6 residential visit to Madrid, which offers very high quality cultural and spiritual experiences. All pupils are enabled and supported to participate in this if they so wish. Pupils are invited to offer prayers in worship and by using prayer trees, and many choose to do so. Pupils are keen to ‘shine brightly’ and to enable others to do so. They understand the vision of ‘GIFT’ to mean that they are stronger together and that everyone matters. This understanding goes beyond the school and results in compassion and a desire to help those who are disadvantaged. As a result, pupils have requested, and been enabled, to fundraise for members of their own community who are suffering. Pupils actively support links with Kenya and the Phillipines, for example, by donating their school uniforms. This has strengthened their awareness of the world beyond Southborough. Most pupils are tolerant and accepting of those who are different, including those with special needs. Behaviour is good, and pupils are courteous and polite. This is supported well by the school’s Christian values of forgiveness, compassion, hope, peace, perseverance and joy. These values help pupils to reflect on their attitudes and on their behaviour. The mental health of all members of the school community is a priority. Staff, pupils and parents have received training in mental health. This is part of the exceptional support for wellbeing in the school. The wellbeing manager is pro-active and effective in seeking support for pupils and their families. The support for staff goes well beyond that in many other schools. As a result, teachers are able to flourish professionally and personally, and in turn, to offer support and care for pupils. Pupils of all faiths and of none are treated with dignity and respect. Those who are withdrawn from collective worship are offered opportunities to reflect and to learn separately from the main act of worship. Pupils respect the differences in beliefs held by members of their community. Pupils from non-traditional family situations are helped to cherish themselves and everyone feels part of the Southborough school community. As a result, attendance is high and pupils feel safe at school.  Religious education enables pupils to reflect on ‘big questions’ and to develop their own views. They feel safe to express their opinions, knowing that these will be respected. Many pupils have a good knowledge of Christian beliefs and practices and those of other major world religions. However, marking in RE across the school does not consistently address misconceptions and errors in pupils’ knowledge and understanding.  Pupils gather in a variety of settings to worship together. Worship is invitational and pupils are respectful as a result. A group of ‘leading lights’ from Years 3 and 4, leads aspects of worship and helps to plan acts of worship. These pupils also help to monitor and evaluate collective worship. Pupils experience Anglican traditions, for example, a liturgically coloured candle is lit, and pupils are taught about the Church’s seasons. The relationship with the local church is strong. Clergy lead school worship weekly and the vicar provides theological expertise as a governor. The church supports the school community by providing, for example, a Friday café and by welcoming families into the church for school festival services. Pupils lead acts of worship in smaller settings throughout the week, but older pupils particularly would like to be more actively involved in leading the weekly whole school acts of worship. Once a week there is a ‘singing worship’. This is exuberant, inspirational and joyful. Pupils look forward to this and find it genuinely uplifting. They say it helps them to think about God and they appreciate being actively involved throughout this time. This experience helps them to flourish together. | |
| Headteacher | Emma Savage |
| Inspector’s name and number | Anne Southgate 820 |