



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Austrey Church of England Primary School

St Nicholas Close, Austrey
CV9 3EQ

Previous SIAMS grade: Outstanding

Current inspection grade: Good

Diocese: Birmingham

Local authority: N/A

Dates of inspection: 9 March 2016

Date of last inspection: 12 November 2010

School's unique reference number: 125624

Headteacher: Lee Kilkenny

Incumbent: Revd Stephen Banks

Inspector's name and number: Marianne Phillips 586

School context

Austrey Church of England Primary school is situated in the village of Austrey. It is a smaller than average school with 81 pupils on roll. It draws its pupils from inside the village and from further afield. The majority of these pupils are from White British backgrounds. The school became part of the Heartwood Multi Academy Trust (MAT) in September 2013. The headteacher has been in post since September 2015. There are very strong links with the parish church of St Nicholas and with the other 3 Church of England schools who are part of the Academy Trust.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Austrey as a Church of England school are good

- The nurturing care that draws guidance from the life and example of Jesus.
- The strong sense of community and family that supports the whole child.
- The impact of the headteacher as a spiritual leader who encourages all to use Christian values to shape their lives and relationships.
- The focus on religious education (RE) and SMSC to prepare pupils for their place as young citizens in a multi-cultural world.
- The work of the governors and strong links with the church.

Areas to improve

- Encourage pupil leadership of worship.
- Develop a whole school approach to assessment in RE based upon learning outcomes.

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

Austrey is a good church school. It proclaims its distinctive Christian character through the ways it promotes its Christian values of love, kindness, respect and tolerance. Children, regardless of back ground, faith or ability, thrive. Parents appreciate the nurturing approaches in place, which unite a school family to care and support each other. Christian values underpin

daily life and reflect the teaching of Jesus. Relationships are strong and show that “every child matters to God”. Inclusive practices celebrate diversity and equality. The curriculum is rich, offering exciting learning opportunities, during and after school. One excellent example of this was the ‘WOW day’ when the 4 schools in the MAT worked together to study Islam, Sikhism, Judaism and Christianity focusing upon the question “*what would I believe if I was a Muslim, etc?*” The work generated was creatively displayed. Visits and visitors are a feature of the school. Children are keen learners appreciating their teachers and these learning experiences. They are happy and feel safe and protected. As the school council shared, “*our behaviour is very good; our teachers make us feel comfy because they care*”. They are proud of their work and are currently helping the teachers to review the behaviour policy. Prayer is important to them, evidenced by the wide variety displayed in the interactive classroom reflection areas and around school. They all understand the importance of being a church school and are confident that “*Jesus is God’s son; He is the light of the world and He watches over us*”. Pupils enter the school displaying skills that are broadly in line with national expectations. The new tracking system, implemented by the headteacher, highlights pupils that are not making enough progress. Support enables each individual to make sufficient progress, so that by the time they leave they are at least in line or above national targets. Vulnerable pupils have additional support to help them accelerate their rate of progress, to narrow the gap between them and their peers. The governors work closely with teachers to fulfil their monitoring role. There are links with Malawi and the school is celebrating the 50th anniversary of the diocesan partnership this year. Further links are planned as part of their work to develop a better understanding of Christian and other faiths globally and locally.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Worship is central to the life of the school, engaging the school community, often exhibiting a sense of celebration with enthusiastic singing and signing of songs such as ‘Blessed is the King who comes’. The pupils have fun whilst worshipping and a spiritual harmony is created that everyone feels part of. It is regularly led by the minister and the ‘All Souls Team’, who seek to make everyone feel involved, with the dramatic enactment of Palm Sunday, where everyone having a part to play, being a recent example. Pupils respond “and also with you” when the headteacher shares the ‘peace’. Through prayer pupils regularly are called to reflect on “*God’s loving plan to save us and the love of Jesus for us*”. Worship provides experiences for the pupils through which they learn about Anglican tradition and grow spiritually through prayer and reflection. Pupils sometimes lead class worship and would like more opportunities to lead all aspects of worship. School leaders are considering ways to support them in this as a priority. Pupils behave excellently in worship and are often asked to share their views of worship through discussions with governors and teachers. These and other formal systems ensure that governors have a clear understanding of the quality of worship and RE. Parents attend worship and they enjoy these experiences, both in school and at church. They shared that “*the school is providing a framework to help their children understand Christianity and faith, to build their own beliefs upon*”. In these ways worship is effective in nurturing the spiritual development of the pupils.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

Standards in RE are good, closely aligned to achievement in other core subjects. The pupils’ learning is in line with Diocesan (National) expectations with many pupils exceeding these targets. RE is consistently planned to include creative, enquiry based approaches to encourage pupils to think and reflect on a range of religions. Questions are asked to challenge higher order thinking in response to biblical and Christian teaching. Pupils are encouraged to reflect upon Christian, social and moral values to shape their thinking and engage fully with challenges, such as, to consider how Jesus would support the current migration issues in Europe. At the beginning of the term, a member of the senior management team took on the responsibility for RE. A priority for the future development of the subject is to implement a whole school approach to assessment, using learning outcomes, as a focus for the judgements made. The school follows guidance from the Warwickshire framework and the diocese. Training is regularly accessed to support the work of the teachers and governors of the school. RE is monitored

through observation by the deputy and RE link governors. Opportunities to moderate judgements are facilitated through the network created by the MAT. RE links closely with worship, SMSC and PSHE to develop skills in learning from and about religion. It enables pupils to explore faith issues that are important in shaping their future lives. Other examples include their studies on 'democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of faith and belief'. They reflect on Christian values linked with British values to support their development as young citizens of the future.

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

The headteacher is positively influencing the life of the school. He provides strong, spiritual leadership, living out the Christian values in his interaction with others. Parents and pupils enthusiastically share their appreciation for his commitment to the school and his open door approach. The leadership team and governors promote a vision for the school, which is summed up in the statement from Matthew 7 verse 12: "*Treat others as you would want to be treated*". Jesus is the role model central to the relationships which exist between members of the school family. School leaders and governors are knowledgeable about the school strengths, their pupils and the families they serve. They have a clear understanding of the school's performance and the work of the 'Standard's Committee' reflects upon pupil outcomes to shape actions which are driving improvement. There is no complacency just a strong desire to "*support the pupils to be the best they can be*". Parents feel that the school links closely with the community and is highly respected. Learning is fun, yet challenging and results in very good attendance. Teachers and governors train and network with other schools through the MAT and the support of the diocese. The developmental points from the previous inspection have been met. Core Christian values, vision and prayer are explicitly reinforced through everything they do. They are respected and appreciated by stakeholders for the difference they make to their children, their families and their lives.

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