



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

St Meriadoc Church of England Infant Academy

Rectory Road

Camborne

Cornwall TR14 7DW

Previous SIAS grade: Not previously inspected as an academy

Current SIAMS grade: Outstanding

Diocese: Truro

Local authority: Cornwall

Dates of inspection: 17 June 2015

Date of last inspection: NA

School's unique reference number: 112007

Headteacher: Linda Stephens

Inspector's name and number: Andrew Rickett 201

School context

St Meriadoc is slightly smaller than the average size nursery and infant school with 242 children on roll. Children come from diverse socio-economic backgrounds from around the Camborne area. Nearly all children are from a white British heritage. The number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is in line with the national average as is the number entitled to receive support from the pupil premium. Attendance is in line with national expectations. The school converted to academy status on April 1 2014 and became a member of a mixed multi-academy trust with three other schools overseen by Truro diocese.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Meriadoc as a Church of England school are outstanding

- Christian values are an integral part of the life of the school and make a significant impact on the children's spiritual awareness.
- Religious education is exciting and delivered through high quality teaching and learning
- A clear focus by leaders and managers on putting children first means that the Christian ethos has meaning and purpose for their wellbeing and academic progress.

Areas to improve

- Embed the recently identified core Christian values into the existing opportunities for children to explore spirituality across the curriculum.
- Identify a clearer focus to collective worship themes so that they can be more effectively shared and better understood by all members of the school community.
- Enhance the impact of religious education (RE) by creating lesson outcomes that offer greater challenge to the children's learning.

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

The Christian ethos of the school is lived out on a daily basis through the high quality of care and kindness that lies at the heart of relationships between all members of the school community. Children are cherished by adults in school who have their best interest at the centre of provision for learning and wellbeing. This very effective ethos has been further enhanced through the identification of five core values which have Biblical teaching at their heart. Love, faith, perseverance, respect and forgiveness are known by children and adults and have become part of the everyday language of the school. The values are used to support the children's learning and their personal development. For example, children receiving support for their reading are encouraged to persevere to make progress and improve. Clear links between the values and the school's approach to behaviour means that children understand how forgiveness brings hope and a fresh start. Through their impact on learning and personal development, these Christian values make a significant impact on the children's academic progress which data suggests that, by the time they leave the school, is above national expectations. The school has made good progress in developing its understanding of spirituality and in providing explicit opportunities for children to develop their spiritual awareness. Regular lessons in philosophy help children to learn how to explore and reflect on abstract concepts. Explicit links between the core values and opportunities for spiritual development, and how together they impact on children's wellbeing, have yet to be explored. Relationships throughout the school are based on love and respect for each other. As one parent explained, 'it is the core Christian values that bring the whole school community together'. The growing links with a school in Sri Lanka is a good example of the efforts the school is making to create meaningful relationships with different cultures both abroad and in Britain. Children talk with respect and appreciation of the need to learn about other faiths and cultures to help them understand the world in which they live.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Belief in God and Jesus is recognised by children as a key aspect of being a church school and one that they celebrate through prayer in acts of worship and at other times in the school day. Children equally express their views that not everyone in the school has to have that belief but, as a church school, need to show respect for those that do. Collective worship is therefore both inclusive and explicitly Christian. Collective worship has improved since the previous inspection. It is now more consistently led by all staff and has a clear emphasis on Bible teaching. Staff have greater confidence in leading acts of worship and this has encouraged them to be more creative in their delivery. Worship planning has identified a range of themes that cover Bible stories and the celebration of Christian festivals. Sometimes, these themes lack a specific focus or explicit links to the core values and in this way messages given are not always fully shared among all members of the school community. The place of prayer has become more firmly established as a part of everyday life in the school. Class prayer areas have been introduced and they are being used effectively by children. They say that these areas help them to stop and reflect during the day about work or friendships. Children articulate how prayer can help them to be better in their work. For example, children explained how praying to God can cheer them up if they are not doing very well with their reading. These young children are developing their understanding of the nature of the Trinity. They know that God and Jesus are both same but different and eagerly debate their views on where both are now – in heaven or here on earth? Children have greater opportunities to be involved in participating in worship and their views have been gathered to inform future improvements.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

Standards in RE are at least in line with national expectations for most children by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 2. A significant number of children exceed national averages. Standards in RE compare favourably with other core subjects and are above the average for schools in the local authority. This represents good progress across the school.

The quality of marking of children's work in their books is excellent and informs assessment and tracking of progress. High quality comments from teachers in response to children's work specifically refer to skills and knowledge in RE and are used consistently across the school. Children have a clear grasp of the purpose of marking in RE and understand that it is there to encourage them to do better. Assessment is very effective in tracking children's progress and data is used to identify achievement of different groups of children. Teaching is of a high quality and delivered by staff who are confident to adapt the way the syllabus is delivered to better meet the needs and abilities of the children. This is evident in the very positive responses from children and the enthusiasm with which they engage in their learning. The creation of lesson outcomes that provide learning opportunities which challenge children's thinking has made RE exciting but this has not yet been fully explored so that children's understanding is at an even greater depth. Children have many opportunities to learn in an interactive way and share their thoughts and ideas openly and with an assurance that their views will be listened to with respect. Children have a secure knowledge of Christianity and other world faiths and are beginning to make links between them to help understand concepts such as prayer. Religious education makes a valuable contribution to the children's moral and social development with the many opportunities to discuss the implications of Bible stories to their own lives. Links to acts of worship and the core Christian values help children to appreciate that learning in RE is supporting the Christian ethos and contributing to their wellbeing. Leadership of RE is excellent. The handover from an experienced subject leader to a new one is supportive and recognises the need for professional development as well as the benefit of a new pair of eyes looking at the subject.

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

The conversion to academy in 2014 to join a Trust with both church and community schools, together with a majority of new teaching staff appointed since the previous inspection, provided the school with the opportunity to look again at its Christian ethos and evaluate how effectively it impacted on the lives of the children. The resulting identification of core values, alongside opportunities to discuss ideas in a range of meetings between staff and governance, has strengthened the school community's understanding of the meaning of being a church school and has given it greater purpose. This is reflected in the depth at which both children and adults in the school community articulate what the ethos means to them. The headteacher reflects the Christian vision by leading from example. She is fully supported by the staff and leaders and managers. They have responded to this deeper understanding by successfully adapting systems that monitor and evaluate the impact of the Christian character. Self-evaluation is effective and areas for further improvement have been accurately identified. The consistency of understanding of what it means to be a church school is still developing as some of the directors are relatively new appointments. Regular staff training in RE and attendance at training from the diocese ensures that staff are kept informed about latest developments. The school meets the statutory requirements for RE and collective worship. Links with local churches are meaningful and mutually beneficial. The school has good relationships with two churches which help to give children a better understanding of differences in Anglican traditions and practice. The vicar and lay reader are regular visitors to the school and lead acts of worship. Parents say that they like that the school provides opportunities for their children to experience church services and promotes acceptance of others regardless of faith or background.

SIAMS report June 2015 St Meriadoc CE Infant Academy Camborne TR14 7DW

