

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Swannington Church of England Primary School

Main Street Swannington Leicestershire LE67 8QJ

Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese	Leicester
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Date of academy conversion	1 May 2017
Name of multi-academy trust	Oval Learning Trust
Date of inspection	19 May 2017
Date of last inspection	June 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Academy URN 144310
Headteacher	Andrew Mawdsley
Inspector's name and number	Marian Driver No. 116

School context

Swannington is a small village school with a rising number on roll (79). A new classroom is currently being built to expand 3 classes to 4. The intake is mainly White British with 4% of Black, Asian and Ethnic Minorities and 4% Traveller children. The school is an area of low deprivation. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is slightly below average. Since the last inspection there have been changes to staffing and leadership. The current Headteacher was appointed in April 2013. The school joined the 'Oval Learning Trust' and converted to academy status on 1 May 2017.

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

- Inspired leadership from the Headteacher drives the agreed Christian vision and values resulting in a united staff team who provide role models of a distinctive Christian community.
- Based on its Christian foundation, pupils' wellbeing has a high priority. This clearly influences their personal development and academic achievement resulting, as the school motto says, in 'Happy children Successful learners'.
- Very close links with parents and the local community have created a fellowship which has mutual benefit and reflects a church school at the heart of the community.
- Links with the parish and other churches provide pupils with a variety of Christian worship models.

Areas to improve

- Make Christian values explicit so that pupils can confidently explain the links to biblical teaching.
- Improve the school's self evaluation of RE and CW, to identify strategies for improvement.
- Create communication systems to enable informed dialogue between school leaders and governors.

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

Swannington is a warm, welcoming school where individuals work together to create a harmonious Christian community. Relationships are strong and positive. The Christian character of the school is clearly communicated to the wider school community and is highly valued by parents. Staff and pupils shared their ideas to review the

Christian vision and decided on Christian values of forgiveness, respect, friendship and belonging, and enjoyment. These values are owned by the pupils and are reflected well in the supportive relationships and the exemplary behaviour of pupils. As one pupil said, 'When we are helping others we may have to make a different choice to do a good deed.' The whole school community is committed to these Christian values which link to whole school values of happiness, responsibility and safe, life long, learning. A development point from the last inspection to articulate further the school's values as distinctively Christian has been addressed but has not yet been fully embedded. The secure and supportive learning environment created by the distinctive Christian vision ensures that academic standards are high in all key stages and good progress is made throughout the school. Disadvantaged pupils all make expected progress in mathematics. The school succeeds in supporting vulnerable children who may join the school at different times of the year. Attendance is good (96%). Pupils are proud of their school and delight in the variety of extra curricular activities offered.

RE makes a good contribution to pupils' understanding of diversity and difference in God's world. It contributes well to the school's Christian ethos. As one pupil reflected, 'RE helps you think about God and others.' Opportunities for questioning and deep thinking take place in class discussions and contribute well to spiritual development. Parents talk about the calm, inviting atmosphere where their children quickly gain confidence and feel they are treated as individuals. Pupils are known by all adults who recognise their personal gifts and talents.

A 'focus day' investigating Christianity in India, Australia and Kenya with a programme of outside speakers has resulted in a greater awareness of Christianity in a global sense. As a result of the curate's talk to pupils about his diocesan visit to Tanzania, the school is setting up a link with a school in Tanzania. Therefore a development point from the last inspection to improve children's awareness of Christianity as a global faith has been addressed. Pupils understand the meaning of the word 'respect' and show a genuine appreciation for other faiths and cultures. A visiting Sikh speaker shared aspects of his religion and resources, helping pupils to have a greater understanding of other faiths in the world. Pupils have visited a synagogue. A faith trail, visiting a gudwara, a mosque and a synagogue is taking place this month.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

All members of the school community meet together and take part in daily collective worship. This is recognised as a unifying experience for all members of the school. Pupils say, 'We learn about God. Nothing is impossible.' Staff and governors regularly lead worship based on diocesan themes and relevant biblical teaching. A number of groups from the local church community regularly lead and share in worship. Pupils relate well to the lively dramatic 'Open the Book' team from a local church and know many of the Bible stories told. Pupils' biblical knowledge is good and they answer questions well. A Christian puppeteer, Youth for Christ and the local curate and rector provide a variety of approaches to worship which are enjoyed by the school community. Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of Jesus for Christians. The use of Christian applications on tablets has extended Christian knowledge.

A monthly 'After School Church Club' has recently started and is proving popular. Class focus groups and 'thinking time' give an opportunity to explore worship themes more deeply and make links between Bible stories and own lives. Class reflection journals give pupils opportunities to answer related questions and demonstrate that pupils make links between Bible stories and their own lives. Pupils in Y5/6 take leadership roles in planning and evaluating worship, supported by the rector. Pupils' evaluations show how much these times are enjoyed. Pupils say, 'I liked it when they gave out tokens saying, 'Happy Easter' at the end of worship.' The lack of evidence of self evaluation from governors, staff and parents limits the improvement and development of worship time.

Pupils write their own prayers which are put on prayer trees and used during worship time in class. Prayers are used at lunchtime and at the end of the school day. Some pupils, supported by the curate took part in writing a school prayer. Pupils told me, 'We're a church school so we do prayers and talk to God.' A range of activities encourage reflection and creativity. Pupils say how they use their senses, watch birds, grow herbs and take photographs in the sensory garden. The pond and outside reflection gazebo provide calm places to observe the natural world. Examples of pupils' designs can be seen in the imaginative art work and photography displayed around the school, all contributing to pupils' spiritual development. Parents, governors and church members join the school for church services. The rector uses the known children's Christian songs and plans worship with the children for special services in church. Using the lighting of three candles at worship time has enabled the pupils to have an understanding of the Christian belief that God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Pupils can explain the visual model which helps them to think of God the Father represented by the Bible, Jesus represented by the cross and the Holy Spirit by the moving flame of the candle. During Lent, pupils enjoyed the challenge of the '40 Acts' encouraging greater generosity of time. They were encouraged to live lives of kindness. They recalled some of the kind gestures completed within their families. Each staff member enjoyed receiving a jam jar of personal 'Thank You' post its from the pupils. Pupils develop a good understanding of Anglican elements of worship using Christian responses regularly at the beginning of worship and by the regular use of the Lord's prayer.

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

The headteacher's vision to create an inclusive Christian community is shared effectively with all stakeholders so that everyone works together to achieve the best for each pupil. Changes in leadership and staffing have led to improved academic performance of the pupils and a rise in pupil numbers. The energetic drive and commitment of the headteacher has resulted in a more distinctive Christian vision and a values-led curriculum. Governors and church leaders are actively involved in the daily life of the school and contribute to the effectiveness and continued development of the Christian ethos. However, a development point from the last inspection to embed evaluation and monitoring of collective worship across the school has only partially been addressed. Governors take part in class visits but opportunities to discuss focussed questions relating to the effectiveness of the school as a church school is not part of regular discussions with senior leaders or the agenda of governor meetings. Staff, governors and parents feel that the school is 'at the heart of the village' where all are invited to events. Villagers benefit from the receipt of harvest baskets and by taking an active part in the crib and stable service. A development point from the last inspection to explore ways in which the school's Christian ethos can be further used to promote the school in nearby communities has been addressed. On the day of inspection a SPACE (Swannington Primary and Community Expansion) fundraising day was held to raise money for the building of the new classroom. Parents say that the Christian values help their children and, 'give them a genuine desire to enjoy and love their learning and be happy.' 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. Staff believe that Swannington stands out from other schools in many ways. Staff help and support each other so much. They feel valued, thanked and part of a happy Christian community. Parents know that their views are welcomed and appreciated. The headteacher is outside every morning and staff are found to be very approachable. Both the curate and the rector work enthusiastically with the pupils and are known personally by them. The experienced and enthusiastic RE leader takes advantage of training offered by the diocese and is part of a network with local schools. These experiences enable her to cascade training and support the teaching of RE. Governors ensure that RE and worship meet statutory requirements for a voluntary controlled school and are supportive of both areas.

SIAMS report May 2017 Swannington CE Primary LE67 8QJ