

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Mistley Norman Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary school	
Remercie Road, Mistley, Manningtree, Essex, CO11 1LS	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese / Methodist District	Chelmsford
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Date of academy conversion	February 2015
Name of multi-academy trust	Vine School Trust
Date of inspection	24 January 2017
Date of last inspection	March 2011
Type of school and unique reference number	141658
Headteacher	Karen Jones
Inspector's name and number	Andrew Binnell: 665

School context

Mistley Norman primary school is a smaller than average-sized school with 69 pupils on roll, the vast majority of whom are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) is broadly average. The school has three mixed age classes. Since the previous denominational inspection the school has been through a time of transition. From February 2015 the school has been part of a diocesan multi-academy trust. The headteacher also came into post in September 2016. The parish church of St Mary and St Michaels is currently without a vicar.

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

- The strong leadership of the headteacher, ably supported by other school leaders, members of the Trust and the governors, ensures that a Christian foundation increasingly shapes and drives forward school life and work.
- The school's explicit and inclusive Christian values are lived out by the whole school community regardless of background. This leads to strong relationships and supports pupils' very good behaviour.
- Overall progress in developments as a church school since the previous denominational inspection is good, based on an effective focus on addressing the key issue for improvement identified. This included strengthening further the school's Christian character and enhancing the school environment both inside and outside in order to enhance its distinctiveness as a church school.

Areas to improve

- Refresh the school vision so that it builds on current good practice in order to reflect and advance its effective working as part of the Vine School Trust
- Develop a greater range of opportunities to support cultural development across the school to further support the school's Christian and inclusive values.
- Improve pupils' factual knowledge and understanding of the range of religions studied through the religious

education (RE) curriculum delivered in line with the locally agreed syllabus.

- Strengthen the role of pupils in the planning, delivery and evaluation of collective worship.

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

Mistley Norman primary makes its school Christian values clear and explicit. The values of hope, fairness, respect, responsibility, compassion and perseverance are focused on appropriately to reflect the different ages of pupils. For example, the very youngest pupils explore values as, 'gifts from God' and these values are well linked to their learning. Its Christian values contribute effectively to the school being a calm and happy place where pupils can articulate the importance of these values with great maturity. This is well supported through both the worship programme and RE. As a result most members of the school recognise the distinct characteristics of the school's values and identify how they affect their daily lives and achievements. Parents and pupils share numerous examples of how these values have impacted on their daily lives. There is an array of displays which reflect the school's Christian character. In the school hall, for example, there is a display titled worship, 'Lord's Prayer' and a display that celebrates 'our learning.' These are regularly updated to keep them relevant. Pupils' outcomes are broadly in line with national averages throughout Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 with pupils reaching expected age related levels. However, higher attainers do not overall make as much progress as others. The school leadership team are now seeking to address this with some effective strategies in place. This is because they rightly recognise that the high attainment and progress of pupils is a key expression of the school's Christian mission as a church school. The living out of the school's Christian values in its daily life results in pupils feeling safe and learning well. Pupils do not worry about others' behaviour towards them, as they know any issues will be quickly resolved. They are polite and courteous at every opportunity. Pupils are very proud of their school and its Christian foundation. The behaviour of and respect for others, as demonstrated by both adults and pupils and reflects well its Christian foundation. As a result of this pupils want to be at school with evident improvements in pupils' attendance over time. Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development is good overall. Pupils show an awareness of a range of cultures and express tolerance to those of a range of faiths and none. However, exploring opportunities for cultural development is not as strong or as evident as spiritual, moral and social development opportunities. RE provides a range of opportunities to learn about Christianity, Hinduism, Islam and Judaism. However, knowledge and understanding of faiths other than Christianity is under-developed. Firm plans are in place to address this which includes a 'global week' planned for March 2017.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Well thought out acts of collective worship form an important part of the school day and have impact on the school as a whole and on the lives of the individuals within the community. Worship is well planned by a range of people in the school. This indicates the priority given to it within school life. It is delivered well and is expressly Christian in character. It is also inclusive and sensitive to all in the school community. There is a good balance of biblical material and Christian teaching addressed during worship which enables pupils to deepen their understanding of Jesus and his importance for Christians. All pupils, irrespective of faith or non-faith background, participate in the worship programme which supports the community feel of the school effectively. Through worship pupils develop a good understanding of principal Christian festivals. They also develop an appropriate understanding of the Christian concept of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Saying the Lord's Prayer, singing Christian hymns and songs and the use of candles are established practice. These support pupils' exploration of aspects of Anglican practice well as well as exemplify the good engagement of pupils in worship. Pupils have a firm understanding of the words and content of the Lord's Prayer and appreciate something of its significance to Christians. Pupils enjoy each act of worship but particularly enjoy the celebration assembly at the end of the school week. The programme effectively explores school values. A range of different people lead worship over the course of each term, including members of the local Christian community, teachers from the staff team, as well as the headteacher. Worship in school is enhanced by worship in St Mary's and St Michael's church at Harvest, Christmas, Easter and at the end of the academic year. Strengthening pupils' participation in school worship has been a focus for the school's new leadership team. Though improvements in pupils' participation are evident since the previous denominational inspection, pupils are not consistently engaged in planning, leading and evaluating worship. There are good plans in hand to strengthen these areas but as yet they are not embedded in school practice.

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

The leadership of the school is good. The headteacher's vision for developments as a church school is ably supported through the Vine School Trust, and by governors and her colleagues on the leadership team. Partnership with the Diocese is strong with regular visits to the school from its diocesan link adviser. This has helped the school to reflect accurately on itself as a church school. The headteacher and the RE leader have taken up places on key diocesan leadership training opportunities. This demonstrates the commitment of the school and the leaders themselves. It also plainly reflects their burning ambition to make Mistley Norman the best church school it can possibly be for its pupils and for its community. These ambitions have been translated into clear action points expressly supported by the Vine School Trust. The Trust provides high quality and practical advice and expertise. Foundation governors play a much more active role in evaluating the school than was the case at the time of the previous denominational inspection. Their role in supporting the school's self-evaluation as a church school in partnership with leaders and the Trust is focused and precise. This results in a detailed and accurate self-evaluation of the school as a church school. The school, under the effective leadership of the headteacher, has addressed the areas for improvement identified at the previous denominational inspection. Progress has accelerated under her leadership. All members of the staff team feel valued and respected. In turn they inspire high expectations through the modelling of expectations of behaviour and trust in pupils that are characteristic of the school. The leadership of the school and governors are reviewing the existing school Christian vision in order for it to reflect the school's context and its ambitions under its current leadership. The school's curriculum is broad and creative, with a good range of extra-curricular clubs and activities for all. These are popular with pupils and uptake is good. The governors have taken a more active role, in using their expertise to influence improvements. This includes, for example, one foundation governor leading worship at the school on a regular basis as part of the 'Open The Book' team. This group lead worship at the school on a fortnightly basis. This has been a very effective opportunity for her to see the school in worship. This support has been of great importance to the headteacher. The school is working exceptionally hard to reach out to its community. This can be demonstrated by the creation of a new Parent Teacher Association (PTA) in the autumn of 2016; 'messy church' moving to the school to encourage families to participate and hosting a very popular Christmas 2016 event for the village community. Parents see the school as a caring and inclusive community that puts their children at the heart of its work, based on its Christian values. Reflecting this, statutory requirements for RE and collective worship are met. The school provides effective professional, spiritual and personal development for staff and governors within the context of being a church school.

SIAMS report (January 2017) Mistley Norman CE (VC) Primary School, Manningtree, Essex, C011 1LS