



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

St Augustine of Canterbury Church of England Primary School

St Augustine's Road

Belvedere

Kent

DA17 5HP

Previous SIAMS grade: Good

Current inspection grade: Outstanding

Diocese: Rochester

Local authority: n/a

Date of inspection: 24 June 2015

Date of last inspection (as voluntary aided school): 30 March 2010

School's unique reference number: 3032023

Head of School: Mark Alexander-Smale Executive Headteacher: Beverley Gardner

Inspector's name and number: Pamela Draycott 161

School context

St Augustine of Canterbury is an average-sized primary school which is part of the Trinitas Academy Trust. The school's population reflects the area's ethnic and cultural diversity. Many pupils come from various Christian backgrounds. Around 20% of pupils attend church regularly outside of their involvement through school. The percentage of pupils for whom pupil premium funding is received due to social disadvantage is above average as is the percentage who speak English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils with some sort of special educational need is below average.

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

- The positive impact of membership of the Trinitas Academy Trust on improving standards and on enhancing the school's Christian ethos and values
- The positive attitude towards learning and excellent behaviour of pupils who have high aspirations and want to do well
- The long-standing, positive involvement of the parish priest in school life which supports links with the church well

Areas to improve

- Improve the consistency of assessment in religious education (RE) so that all pupils know how well they are achieving and the steps they need to take to improve their work further

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

Standards attained by pupils are rapidly improving and are now mainly above or well above average. Likewise, pupils' progress, including that of more vulnerable children, is now at least good and improving. A detailed tracking system supports pupil learning very well. It enables senior leaders to monitor pupils' progress effectively. It enables teachers and teaching assistants to provide timely and targeted intervention and caring support. The focus on improving aspiration and standards is rightly recognised as an expression of St Augustine of Canterbury's mission as a church sponsored academy. This is based on ensuring that all pupils 'can grow and achieve their full potential as children of God'. The Christian foundation of the school is celebrated and affirmed appropriately and is the starting point for school improvement. Pupils know, and endeavour to live out, the school's distinctive and explicit Christian values of compassion, forgiveness, trust, endurance and thankfulness which are outlined in 'the St Augustine code'. They can link these to Christian belief and teaching well. One Year 4 pupil said, 'they are Christian values because they are what God is like and God wants us to be like him'. These values are embedded in the school's daily life. They form the basis for school leaders as they work with colleagues to bring about further school improvement. The school's Christian values impact explicitly on the behaviour of pupils which is excellent. Respectful and strong relationships are also evident at all levels. Pupils are happy and feel safe in school knowing that their personal wellbeing and learning is central to the school's Christian service. There is a friendly, purposeful and calm learning environment which supports pupils' learning well. Pupils are encouraged to be active, curious learners. This means that they are eager to come to school, work together and support each other. Consequently, attendance is slightly above average and learning is progressing well. Pupils respond in a range of appropriate and thoughtful ways to the wide range of opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development which is shaped by the school's Christian ethos. RE reinforces school values well and clearly contributes to pupils' learning about religious diversity in God's world.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Worship takes place daily following a programme linked to the Diocesan scheme and appropriately adapted to meet school and pupil needs. A weekly school Mass forms part of the programme. Major Christian festivals as well as Harvest and a Year 6 leavers' service are held in the parish church. These worship opportunities now enrich the experience of pupils and staff significantly. The head of school, supported by other senior leaders, the RE co-ordinator and the parish priest, thoroughly plans worship. This demonstrates its importance in school life. The cycle of the Christian year, the life and teaching of Jesus and the school's Christian values play an important part in the programme. One pupil reflected, 'It (worship) helps me think and behave because I make sure I have the message stuck in my head'. Pupils and parents have positive attitudes towards worship which is valued and enjoyed. As a Year 6 pupils said, 'Worship is important because it helps you to think about God and Jesus and to praise God and to think about yourself and other people'. Parents praise the way in which worship in school supports their children's spiritual and religious development. All staff attend worship and teachers lead an act of worship each term which enhances its 'community feel'. The weekly Mass is an important and valued part of the programme. This reflects the parish church's practice. Pupils have an appropriate, age-related understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. They participate well in worship through writing and saying prayers, singing and taking part in class-led worship. Elements of Anglican worship such as opening and closing sentences, with responses and saying the Lord's Prayer are well established. Pupils know the words of the

Mass and understand its significance for Christians. Displays in the hall, linked to the recently changed names of each class, enhance the learning environment. Each year group is named after a 'fruit of the spirit' (Galatians 5:22-23). Pupils really appreciate this change. They refer confidently to how it makes them think and behave. Worship is specifically Christian whilst being inclusive of those of other faiths and of none. Pupils have a role in monitoring worship but their role in planning worship is underdeveloped.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

The current RE co-ordinator took on her responsibilities in September 2014. She is working well with partners within the Trinitas group to refresh and update the content of and approaches used in the RE curriculum. However, the full impact of that work has still to be felt. The school broadly follows the Diocesan scheme of work. This leads to a good balance in helping pupils to develop knowledge and understanding of religious issues as well as applying their learning to their own lives. Pupils achieve in line with their varying abilities and most make appropriate progress. Pupils have a secure knowledge of aspects of Christianity covered through the syllabus and focused on as part of the worship programme. Pupils' understanding of expressions of Christianity around the world is less well developed. They have an appropriate knowledge of aspects of other faiths covered. They particularly enjoy comparing and contrasting beliefs and practices across different religions. Pupils enjoy taking part in RE discussions as a whole class or in smaller groups and in pairs. They listen thoughtfully and respectfully to their teacher and to other pupils in the class. The quality of their oral responses is not always reflected sufficiently in their written work. Whilst teachers mark pupils work regularly, pupils do not consistently know how well they are doing in RE and what they need to do to improve. Opportunities for self and peer assessment to aid learning are not widely used.

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

Pupils make very good progress based on effective, strategic, Christian leadership which is focused appropriately on improving standards. The chief executive, executive headteacher and head of school have a confident and shared vision based on Christian service to the pupils and to their families. The school's involvement in partnership with Trinitas has developed since the previous inspection. It has been a very effective catalyst for development and improvement as a church school and in securing a long term vision for development. Staff training is enhanced through Trinitas involvement and through relevant support from the Diocese. Parents speak extremely highly of the 'Trinitas family'. They particularly praise the work of senior leaders and of the parish priest in 'moving the school forward'. Self-evaluation as a church school is accurate and key issues for further improvement have been rightly identified. Consequently, senior staff, local governors and the board have a clear understanding of strengths and areas for development in the school. Long-standing and positive links are enjoyed with the parish priest and with other Christian groups in the area. Parents really value the school as a caring and explicitly Christian community which is inclusive of all. The parents' forum is an effective mechanism for ensuring parents' views and expertise is drawn upon as part of school development. Since September 2013, the school has made good progress in addressing issues from the previous inspection (2010). Arrangements for worship and RE meet statutory requirements showing the school's commitment to their importance within their church sponsored academy.

SIAMS report June 2015. St Augustine of Canterbury Church of England Primary School, St Augustine's Road, Belvedere, Kent, DA17 5HP

