



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Long Melford Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Cordell Road
Long Melford
Suffolk
CO10 9ED

Previous SIAS grade: Outstanding

Current SIAMS inspection grade: Satisfactory

Diocese: St Edmundsbury and Ipswich

Local authority: Suffolk

Dates of inspection: 23rd June 2016

Date of last inspection: March 2011

School's unique reference number: 124707

Interim Headteacher: Janet Tringham

Inspector's name and number: Elizabeth Pitcher 448

School context

As a result of the Suffolk organisation review Long Melford became an all-through primary in 2013 and currently has 214 pupils on roll from Nursery to Year 6. The levels of attainment are below those expected nationally and the number of pupils with learning difficulties is almost 11%. Although these vulnerable learners make progress, they are not all reaching their potential. There has been a period of turbulence in leadership since the last SIAS inspection and the school was placed in special measures in June 2015, after which an Interim Executive Board was put into place with one member taking specific responsibility for church school ethos and SIAMS. There have been significant changes to staffing through this recent period. Since then, the current interim leadership

team of interim headteacher and associate headteacher, who was appointed in the absence of a deputy, is providing stability and introducing a number of rigorous initiatives. Although these initiatives are not yet embedded, there are early indications of improvement. The newly appointed substantive headteacher takes up post when Long Melford becomes a diocesan sponsored academy at the start of September 2016, with the remit to continue to uphold the strong Christian ethos of this positive learning community. During recent challenges close links have been maintained with the diocese who have provided in-school support and external training. Following a period of interregnum, the incumbent has been welcomed into the school and links with the church community are re-establishing.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Long Melford as a Church of England school are satisfactory

- Collective worship (CW) is important to school life and makes a positive contribution to the Christian ethos and pupils' understanding of the meaning and purpose of prayer.
- The church school ethos is captured through Christian displays, areas for personal reflection and pupils' prayers, leading to a sense of cohesion and shared understanding which is reflected in pupils' ability to articulate their views on the Christian faith.
- Christian values underpin the management of pupils' behaviour.
- Parents speak highly of the school, as a church school, and appreciate the underpinning values and principles which are reflected in the care shown to their children, despite challenging circumstances.

Areas to improve

- To formalise the monitoring and evaluation of CW and religious education (RE) and the impact of each on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, including regular pupil voice opportunities.
- To provide opportunities for pupils to plan and lead collective worship for greater impact on their personal understanding of worship.
- To ensure smooth transitions for the whole school community through the process of change in ensuring the school's distinctive Christian character, by meeting the needs of all pupils.
- To embed the links with the church community in order to create a stable and ongoing partnership.

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

High quality relationships, based on Christian values and a sense of self-worth, are fostered throughout the school. This has led to confident, articulate pupils who care enthusiastically about their learning environment and about each other. The values of trust and respect between pupils and adults make a positive contribution to pupils' personal development and to well-being for all. The full impact of the newly introduced initiatives for improvement in the learning and academic success for all pupils has not yet been embedded throughout the school because they are still at an early stage of development. However, there are already clear signs of improved attendance, as a result of introducing weekly attendance certificates and giving individual recognition for improved attendance. Opportunities in religious education (RE) for social, moral, spiritual and cultural development are promoted and links are starting to be made between RE and other subjects. Pupils have a growing awareness of and respect for diverse communities and show care and concern for others through their positive responses to fundraising and charities.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship (CW) is an important element of the life of Long Melford. The inspector found from talking to pupils that the impact of worship is powerful because it transforms attitudes, behaviour and actions by promoting explicit Christian values which contribute to pupils' growing spiritual awareness. The values explored through biblical stories help pupils understand these as 'important values' which are distinctly Christian and which impact positively on their daily lives together. There is growing awareness of the Trinity, as a result of specific teaching within worship and this is often referred to with the lighting of three candles. Some pupils are able to articulate the idea of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit at an age-appropriate level. The Values for Life programme ensures a systematic approach to planning worship, reflecting the main festivals of the Church year and key Christian values, set within a variety of worship styles. Most pupils enjoy worshipping together, and most enthusiastically respond to the opportunities to lead prayer and participate by acting-out Bible stories, which brings to life key Christian messages. The incumbent is becoming increasingly involved in the life of the school and is committed to leading worship on a monthly basis. Prayer and reflection have high profile beyond CW because of the reflection and worship spaces around the school, where one pupil said they can 'take time out on a busy day' to be quiet and still. Corporate prayer at the end of the day, the saying of grace before lunch and the saying of The Lord's Prayer have become embedded into the daily routine. As a result, pupils have a good understanding of the purposes of prayer. One pupil uses the prominent ribbon cross and says a prayer, as he ties on his ribbon and another describes prayer as a time to 'talk to God, when things are going to be difficult'. Pupils say they value the worship spaces in their own classroom, as an extension of whole school worship. As a result of the consistent focus on Christian values, pupils are encouraged to take action in the service of others through fundraising ventures, such as Children in Need and sacrificial giving of the Shoebox Appeal. Pupils and their parents are regularly welcomed into the church to celebrate Christian festivals throughout the year and the Remembrance commemoration is a valued school and community event. There are

stronger links between Values for Life and the Social Emotional Aspects of Learning Programme (SEAL) themes since the previous SIAS inspection.

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

The interim headteacher has a clear understanding of the actions she has needed to take in order to continue to develop the school as a church school. This is set to continue when the substantive headteacher takes up post. The interim headteacher, supported by the associate headteacher, has continued to maintain the church school ethos, while addressing issues of progress and attainment with a specific focus on vulnerable learners. The church school ethos is valued by staff and parents, who recognise this as especially important during the uncertainties and challenges of recent months. The interim headteacher has successfully worked with the school community to improve behaviour and attendance. She has supported the RE and CW leader who has also benefitted from guidance from the Diocesan School Effectiveness Officer. This has served to enhance the impact of a number of aspects of Christian distinctiveness with regards to acts of worship and RE. One of the development points from the previous SIAS inspection, relating to pupils planning and leading worship is not yet developed. The partnership with the local incumbent as a part of the collective worship team is making a positive contribution to the lives of the pupils and there are good plans in place to encourage closer church community participation. This is addressing the previous development point. There is to be a new governing body from September. The monitoring and evaluating of the impact of CW and the Christian ethos on learning and well-being is yet to be established. The school meets the statutory requirements for collective worship and religious education.

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