



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Crawford's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Green Road
Haughley
Stowmarket
Suffolk
IP14 3QZ

Previous SIAMS grade: Satisfactory

Current inspection grade: Good

Diocese: St Edmundsbury & Ipswich

Local authority: Suffolk

Date of inspection: 8 February 2016

Date of last inspection: 6 December 2010

School's unique reference number: 124733

Headteacher: Emma Jones

Inspector's name and number: David Bunkell 815

School context

The school is currently celebrating its 150th anniversary, having been founded in February 1866 by Revd William Crawford. Since the previous church school inspection the local authority's reorganisation of schools has almost been completed, and for the first time for several decades, this academic year children aged 11 are now once again amongst its 72 pupils. A new headteacher was appointed in 2013. In October 2015 Ofsted judged all aspects of the school to be good following a period when the school was deemed to require improvement.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Crawford's Primary School as a Church of England school are good

- Christian values and ethos are at the centre of many aspects of school life.
- All pupils are supported regardless of their educational or behavioural needs, within the context of endurance and forgiveness.
- Mutually beneficial links with the local church and other community groups are strong.

Areas to improve

- Develop a new approach for governors to monitor and evaluate the Christian distinctiveness of the school, including collective worship (CW), to make best use of every opportunity for the school's Christian character to develop.
- Seek further ways in which pupils may actively participate in evaluating, planning and leading CW, to give it even more relevance to them.
- Provide further opportunities or places for pupils to pray or reflect, to help develop their individual spiritual journeys.

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

The Christian nature of the school is at once apparent from the worship table and area for reflection in the entrance, and from the large cross on the wall, made up of many individual images of pupils' hands. Pupils said how this shows that the school is a peaceful place, in which 'God and Jesus are important'. 'Crawford's Cogs' are a means to help pupils develop lifelong learning skills, and the individual cogs incorporate Christian values and help pupils to appreciate that learning is not just the acquisition of facts but also to do with stopping to think and wonder. This holistic approach helps pupils to develop a sense of spirituality. An ethos of caring and nurturing enables pupils of all abilities and backgrounds to achieve, and supports the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils whether they are Christian, of other faiths or of none. Relationships between pupils are generally good, and younger pupils are often helped and encouraged by older children. Adults are excellent role models, and older pupils who remember times of turbulence in the school's recent past repeatedly spoke movingly of their gratitude to current staff. They said how compassionate the adults are, and that they help them to improve their behaviour, but show forgiveness on the rare occasions when there are lapses. It is apparent that all the pupils are very well known as individuals, and are recognised to be God's children. Pupils make links between Bible stories and their own behaviour, such as trying to emulate the trust, perseverance and compassion of Noah. In addition to participation in the annual act of remembrance, pupils have benefited from thoughtful conversations with older members of the local branch of the Royal British Legion, and are fully involved in raising flags in the churchyard to help celebrate events or anniversaries throughout the year. The extension of the age-range of the school by the addition of two more cohorts has enabled the older pupils to take on further caring responsibilities, such as now being able to organise and run the school council without adult help. The deliberations of the school council help maintain and build on the school's Christian character, for example by deciding which local and international charities to support. The current Year 6 pupils have been the oldest in the school for three years, and have appreciated the additional responsibilities they have been encouraged to take on. Pupils are aware of diversity within global faith communities, and at the time of the Chinese New Year understood that the festivities in China include religious observation. Religious education (RE) has an important place in the curriculum, and pupils said how they particularly enjoy using art and drama as part of their study of RE.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

The daily acts of collective worship (CW) are valued by pupils and staff, because they provide a time of reflection and directly enhance the spiritual development of all pupils. All teachers and some support staff participate in leading CW, which emphasises the shared responsibility for nurturing an understanding of theological concepts and beliefs. One pupil described CW as a special time where 'we can learn to be a better person'. CW always starts calmly. The fact that it is a distinctive time set aside from the rest of the day is reinforced by a greeting and response, and then pupils coming forward to place a cross, prayer book and peace lily on the worship table, making clear that this is the start of a religious period. CW is distinctly Christian, based on the current theme for the half-term, with a Bible story at the start of each week to set the tone for successive days. At the time of the inspection the theme was 'peace', and pupils listened attentively to the account of Jesus calming a storm, having first considered a series of photographs of boats on the Norfolk Broads and on the Sea of Galilee. Following a time for reflection a relevant worship song was sung enthusiastically, and prayers were said. As the mid-morning break came next, pupils were asked to aspire to be peaceful in their relationships with one another once they were outside. Pupils have opportunities to write prayers, and these are occasionally used as part of CW. In conversation pupils said that they would value more opportunities for their own prayers to be used, or for them to plan and lead CW. Pupils enjoy the chance to bring the artefacts to the worship table, and they particularly enjoy the regular 'Open the Book' sessions when members of the local church tell Bible

stories and enable pupils to dress up and act. They also mentioned the frequent CW sessions taken by the vicar and the curate and how these 'make you think of God and Jesus and try to do some of those things'. As the church is adjacent to the school it is used frequently for CW, when some members of the congregation also attend, strengthening the concept of a joint Christian community at the heart of the village. The use of the church helps develop pupils' personal spirituality, and it was described by a pupil as a very special and holy place where all are made welcome and consequently feel at peace. Pupils could express a basic understanding of the theological concept of God as the Trinity, and were able to reason well when discussing whether Christmas or Easter is the most important Christian festival. In the week that included Ash Wednesday they were able to explain the significance of Lent. Following a recommendation of the previous inspection to monitor and evaluate CW, governors have done so informally, but acknowledge that a more formal process would be beneficial to help bring improvement. An embryonic scheme is in place for the school council to consider CW each week and to make written comments.

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

Leaders live out a vision that is clearly based on Christian values. They are determined to enrich pupils' understanding and experiences of the part faith plays in ordinary life. This approach has enabled the rapid progress and consequent higher standards of achievement recognised by Ofsted last term. Self-evaluation of the Christian character of the school is thorough and honest, and governors play an important part in this process through informal meetings in addition to formal reviews of policies and procedures. The current vision and values of the school have been the focus of governor, staff and parent meetings to enable all in the school community to have ownership of the ethos. The well-being of all in the school is enhanced by a newly-formed governors' committee which at its inaugural meeting has begun to consider matters of worship and well-being, and a termly prayer meeting takes place. Partnerships with the local church are particularly strong, taking full advantage of the fact that it is so close. One pupil described it as a privilege that they are able to visit the church so often. The weekly church pew-sheet includes news about the school, as does a monthly village magazine. Prayers for the school had been said in church at the time of this inspection. Members of the congregation recently led a 'creative day' for pupils, enabling churchgoers to be more involved with the school and for pupils to gain an understanding of how faith is an essential part of everyday life for many adults. All staff who teach RE have appreciated the training provided by the diocese, and a revised long-term plan for RE has been adopted, based on diocesan materials. Links are strong with the local branch of the Royal British Legion, helping to build strong Christian and community partnerships. Parents are often welcomed into school and to the CW sessions in the church, and are attending in increasing numbers. In conversation parents invariably praised the staff, and said that the Christian ethos is always clear, and helps promote their children's development as compassionate and tolerant young people. Senior staff and governors are planning well for the continued success of the school, ever mindful of inevitable changes that may lie ahead. The school's arrangements for RE and CW amply satisfy statutory requirements.

SIAMS report February 2016 Crawford's CEVC Primary School, IPI4 3QZ