

St. Mary's Church of England Primary School



**Normandy
Horsham
West Sussex
RH12 1JL**

Headteacher: Mr A Bird

Telephone: 01403 265999

Fax: 01403 252071

e-mail: office@st-marys-horsham.w-sussex.sch.uk

Report to PCC April 2019

Wow! My second PCC report. How time flies!

So, since last year we have had our SIAMS and Ofsted reports published.

In a nutshell SIAMS overall judgement was that we were outstanding stating:

- Christian values underpin school life and are dynamically communicated through all aspects of its work and lived out on a daily basis through its staff and children.
- A rigorous focus on self-evaluation underpins continuous improvement that fully recognises all pupils as God-given individuals and puts them at the centre of all the school does.
- The centrality of prayer and reflection shown through a diverse range of pupil experiences through the school year.
- Shared ownership and high priority given to the teaching of religious education (RE) shown in the passionate articulation of pupils about their learning.

While suggesting areas to improve:

- Fully embed the renewed approach to formalising and tracking progress in RE, so that it has a clear impact on future improvements and pupil progress in learning about other world faiths.
- To ensure that the school's self-evaluation processes and honest reflection on more recent changes, motivated by seeking to always be the best it can within the context of Christian love, leads to effective and sustained improvement for all pupils.

Ofsted stated:

Overall effectiveness - Good

Effectiveness of leadership and management - Good

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment - Good

Personal development, behaviour and welfare - Outstanding

Outcomes for pupils - Good

Early years provision – Good

- The headteacher, together with other leaders, has very quickly improved the school. His determination and resolve to provide the best learning experiences for pupils mean that they receive a good education.

- The governors work well with the headteacher. They share his vision and purpose to raise further the standards of education for all pupils. Consequently, the school is continually improving.
- Teaching is well planned and fully engages pupils in their learning. Pupils enjoy their lessons. They have very positive relationships with staff.
- Pupils study a wide range of interesting topics, covering many different subjects. The curriculum is effectively developing pupils' subject-specific skills and knowledge well.
- Pupils' outcomes are improving quickly. Leaders' work to improve standards in mathematics is effective. More pupils are achieving better outcomes in mathematics.
- Children in the early years receive a good standard of education. Strong links with parents ensure that there is a rich dialogue, between school and home, about children's learning.
- Personal, development, behaviour and welfare provision for pupils is outstanding. Highly respectful relationships between pupils, and between pupils and staff, are the norm.
- Parents support the school's leadership strongly. They are very happy with how the school is led, and with the quality of education their children receive.
- Leaders' higher expectations for teaching, learning and assessment have driven up standards in pupils' writing. Leaders need to continue this work so pupils make even stronger progress.
- Pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported. However, not all pupils make enough progress to help them catch up with others.

We were most disappointed that our EYFS team not given the outstanding grade (over a couple of really minor points). So I am delighted to announce that they have been summoned to the Sussex Teacher of the Year Awards (which will certainly be a good slice of recompense)!

Mrs Woods is about to commence maternity leave again, so we will welcome Mrs McKay back into Year R. We welcomed Miss Mardle back from maternity (now working on a part-time basis), working alongside Mrs Cole. They have both put in an awful lot of additional time above and beyond the call of duty in getting the classroom prepared and reorganized as well as giving up much time to get used to the new school systems and expectations.

Mr Tombling asked for a year's leave of absence (Mrs Anderson and Mrs Ralston have stood admirably in the breach, doing a very good job in Year 1). Mr T has continued his relationship with the school: overseeing our Forest School Provision, but now ably aided and abetted by Mrs Miles (of St. Mary's Nursery fame). We await Mr T's decision about return to work in the longer term ready to prepare for September.

On the support staff front, Mrs Stevens has opted to go part time, which does help our financial pressures a little (though not a lot). Which reminds me to say that I feel like I could do with being a magician to make the school work on the budget we are provided with (which has decreased by tens of thousands in both of my years here) – so please pray for miraculous funding or a change of the national funding formula in the very near future! In the meantime, the HSA have worked very hard to fundraise for us, but are spending this money on more basic items such as software licences to help maintain

standard in the classroom, rather than the exciting items they'd usually choose to enhance pupils' learning with.

Mrs O'Flaherty and Mrs Pearson have also joined our Midday Meals team.

Pupil numbers

St. Mary's continues to be a very popular school. We are completely full as I write, with waiting lists in most year groups and had a hundred applicants for our 30 places in reception.

The School Development Plan

The School Development Plan is once again a far reaching and detailed document (being rag-rolled and evaluated on a regular basis to ensure progress). We are beginning to develop this into a longer term three-year plan as we are able to broaden our vision from the 'firefighting' that we were initially doing following my arrival in terms of tackling the key priorities that the staff had raised with me. It now also includes the Premises and Learning Environment. On that front, I am delighted to say that the Diocese have awarded us a substantial pot of LCVAP funding (for capital projects), some of which has been spent on sorting out the Computing Suite Walls (which had become dangerous) some on subdividing the computing suite to create an office space and the remainder is scheduled to be spent on revamping the outdoor learning areas for Year R and Year 1 during the summer holidays (subject to planning of course).

Some of these areas are currently boarded up to ensure pupil safety.

Clubs

Our range of extra-curricular activities has increased somewhat. So that we now offer: Explorers (our version of a CU), football, art, Funky Dance, orchestra, tennis, basketball, hockey, tag-rugby, gymnastics, French, choir, Forest School, healthy cookery and RockSteady (a musical band development club).

Sports

The school has also fielded teams in many District sporting tournaments this year including: hockey, swimming, football, tag-rugby. They have enjoyed varying degrees of success in these, but have certainly learnt a lot and competed admirably – beating some of the larger schools along the way!

Flower Festival

We will be participating in St Mary's Flower Festival as usual and look forward to performing our Country dances on The Causeway on June 13th at 2pm.

Worship

We are pleased to welcome different members of the clergy to lead our Worship each Tuesday and welcome parents to join our Worship on Tuesdays and Fridays, as well as for our half-termly Communion Service. I have been most delighted that Natalie has taken on organising our rota for this as Guy has moved on and that Bryan New has stepped into the breach next half-term too!

Prayer Spaces for Schools

We also really enjoyed our sixth Prayer Spaces event just before Easter. The children enjoyed many different activities and time to reflect over the week. We have had very

good support with volunteers from several of our churches, but special thanks must be given to Liz New who worked so hard in organising the event.

Raspberry Pi

This year's team made it six finals in a row for St. Mary's – being selected as one of the top three primary school entries in the country yet again. They head up to The Code Node to present their invention very soon. Huge thanks to Mr Tyler-Moore and his team of parents who mentored the team to their success.

Church Support

As a Church-Aided School, the School does rely on and receive a great deal of support from members of the Parish churches and the Parish clergy team. The financial support in the form of a Deanery Grant is much appreciated too and I would like to record our thanks for these things. I am also very aware that the vast majority of parents who turn up for our half-termly working parties are members of the St. Mary's congregation along with significant numbers of our governors too: who have worked so hard in helping and challenging me to move the school forward. For these folks I am so very grateful.

Thank you also to:

Our teaching and support staff who continue to work very hard to give the children high quality learning opportunities.

Our Home School Association who continue to put on fund raising and social events and offer other support to the school.

The school very much values the role the Parish and its churches play in the life of the school and I have really appreciated the sense of community that supports the school so much!

Best wishes

Alex Bird
Headteacher