

## Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

### Biggin Voluntary Controlled Church of England Primary School

Main Street, Biggin, Buxton, Derbyshire, SK17 0DQ

**Current SIAMS inspection grade**

**Good**

**Diocese**

**Derby**

Previous SIAMS inspection grade

Good

Local authority

Derbyshire

Name of multi-academy trust / federation

N/A

Date of inspection

18 May 2017

Date of last inspection

22 May 2012

Type of school and unique reference number

Voluntary Controlled 112822

Headteacher

Heather Gosney

Inspector's name and number

David Wood 907

#### School context

Biggin Church of England Primary School is a small village school currently with 38 children on roll split between 2 classes, and is situated within the Peak District National Park. The age range is 4 – 11. All of the pupils are of White, British heritage. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is slightly lower than the national average. The proportion of children with special educational needs and disabilities is above the national average. There are currently no pupils who speak English as an additional language. Since the last SIAS inspection, the school have an additional teacher, which allows for Year 3 and 4 to be taught separately from Year 5 and 6 every morning. Pupil numbers have also risen considerably since the previous inspection.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Biggin as a Church of England school are good

- All members of the school community speak whole-heartedly about the importance of the Achieve, Believe, Care (ABC) motto. Caring for each other is central to this, and pupils demonstrate this in their everyday actions.
- The Christian character of the school and the broad learning experiences, contribute effectively to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school is led well, with all members of the school community committed and contributing to the continued progress that Biggin is making.
- Highly professional, dedicated staff, who hold Christian values at the centre of their work so that pupils achieve well, are happy and safe.

#### Areas to improve

- Develop further the monitoring and evaluation of collective worship and religious education (RE) by school leaders, leading to continuing improvements in these areas.
- Embed the materials from the Understanding Christianity resource in order to supplement the current curriculum and deepen the pupils' understanding of the Christian faith.
- Develop the school website, ensuring that the school's distinctively Christian characteristics are apparent. As a result, the wider community will be increasingly aware of the important part Christian values play within daily life in school.

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

Caring for each other, both within the school community, and further afield, is central to the school's values. Pupils, staff, governors and parents, express this clearly, all of whom cite the ABC motto as playing a crucial role in affecting the values and achievements of the pupils who attend the school. The progress and achievement of pupils from all ability groups and backgrounds is good. Pupils readily talk about achieving their best and not giving up. One pupil spoke about having a hard question to answer in maths, but that they know that they should not to give up. Another pupil said that Jesus did not give up on people, even when others did.

The school's behaviour policy states that Christian values play a central role in supporting the children's social and moral development. Pupils behave well, again, with the Christian value of caring for others evident. An example of which was when older pupils support the younger pupils during collective worship and at lunchtime.

There is a shared understanding of spirituality amongst adults. Within the curriculum pupils are encouraged to continually ask questions. A big questions display in school evidenced how the children engage well with this. Pupils also spoke about how they are made aware of the beauty of their surroundings and the creatures that share it with them.

The school also makes good use of trips and visitors in order to help the pupils to gain an understanding of the diverse and multi-cultural nature of the world in which they are living. Pupils visit the Derby Open Centre and places of worship of a variety of faiths, which enables them to discuss similarities and differences between different faiths, demonstrating a respect for all.

Parents are happy with the Christian values that the school promotes. They talk about the closeness within school, the family feel and the caring nature of the pupils.

RE contributes to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. A parent spoke about their children coming home and saying how religion has helped children in other countries. Another parent added that the children have a respect of people who follow religions other than Christianity.

Pupils discussed how they have learnt about different things during RE lessons. They spoke about learning right from wrong. One pupil said they looked at how they can take on some of the characteristics of good role models to make them a better person. Pupils talked about service and said that they learnt about Jesus serving others when he washed the feet of his followers.

Attendance levels remain good and there have been no exclusions.

### **The impact of collective worship on the school community is good**

Collective worship takes place on a daily basis and almost all pupils and staff worship together. Leaders ensure that the children are able to attend St. Thomas's Church to conduct acts of worship on a regular basis. Pupils, governors and parents alike talk very positively about the contribution this makes to the community, with residents and pupils coming together at these times. Pupils spoke about going out in to the community to take Harvest baskets to local residents, and how it is important that we should care for those members of the community who may need additional support.

Pupils are comfortable taking part in, and leading acts of collective worship. Following on from the previous day's collective worship, a group of pupils will act out the events. Other pupils then respond with questions of the actors or observations. A number of pupils spoke about how they are encouraged to open up their hands and to reflect upon what they have seen and heard, and to ask themselves how it can help them through their lives. Pupils demonstrate an understanding of prayer. They talk about praying to God and asking for help and forgiveness. Pupils also contribute prayers to school worship that are relevant and appropriate.

Pupils clearly enjoy contributing to collective worship. Parents spoke about how their children will often talk about the Biblical events that they have learnt about in collective worship, and how as a result their children understand the importance of caring for and looking after each other. Following the previous inspection, some action has been taken to develop the monitoring and evaluation of collective worship. This has led to a small change in the arrangements for worship, with some of the younger pupils now sitting with the older pupils. When writing about collective worship, one pupil put, 'The children can understand about god.' Governors also attend and report back to the full governing body following attendance at collective worship.

Pupils are developing their understanding of different Christian traditions in worship. A pupil discussed the lighting of a candle signifying that Jesus is the light of the world. Another pupil spoke about the lighting of candles every Sunday during advent. One governor spoke about how children from school will greet her happily when they see her in the village, citing the school's caring ethos as a contributing factor. This caring attitude is further evidenced with a group of children who have knitted fiddle muffs that will shortly be given to some older members of the community who are suffering from dementia. One pupil spoke passionately about wanting to do what Jesus did and

care for other people and spread love. These thoughts add evidence to the spiritual and moral development of the pupils.

Some pupils were able to talk about Jesus being God's son, and an age appropriate understanding of the Holy Spirit is beginning to be developed.

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

The headteacher has a clear vision for the school based on Christian values and the governors and staff support this. School leaders all share and live out Christian values and describe the impact of these on the life of the school. Staff spoke about pupils of all ages playing together, and during lunch, pupils happily work together to serve each other food, and share out their tidying up responsibilities in a polite and respectful manner.

The school's self-evaluation is accurate, with staff and governors contributing to it; because of this, it knows what its strengths are and what it needs to do to benefit pupils. All groups of learners achieve well, making good progress from their starting points. The governors have taken action to address one of the development points from the previous inspection and are monitoring and evaluating the impact of the school's ethos and distinctive Christian values within the school improvement cycle. They have observed collective worship and RE lessons and spoken to pupils to ascertain the impact, reporting back to the full governing body. The school has identified that it has capacity to further develop the impact of this aspect of its leadership.

The distinctive Christian values make a positive contribution to the pupils' behaviour and attitudes towards each other. One pupil spoke about how important it was that we care for each other, and that if someone is hurt we always go over to make sure that they are all right. With another pupil adding that, we should follow Jesus and try to do the things that he did. Pupils' spiritual development is supported through opportunities for prayer during collective worship, the saying of grace and at home time. Staff also make good use of the natural environment in the village, referencing the plants and animals and encouraging a sense of awe and wonder.

Leaders in school have established links with schools in Slovakia and France. This has allowed pupils to further their understanding of different cultures through the exchange of post cards and letters. Parents added that the curriculum has helped their children to become more aware of children in other parts of the world and how religion has helped them in their lives.

Until relatively recently, a ministry assistant regularly worked with the pupils to plan and deliver collective worship and strengthened links with the local church. Reverend Benson very much valued the work that was being done here, and hopes that the post can be resourced again in the future. The pupils spoke about how they were able to deepen their understanding of God and Jesus and that they learnt a lot about themselves at the same time.

Staff and governors have attended diocesan training and are in a position to lead further improvements as a church school. One example of this is the continued implementation of the Understanding Christianity resource to improve pupils' understanding of Christianity as a multicultural world faith.

Collective worship and RE meet statutory requirements.

SIAMS report [May/2017] [Biggin Church of England Primary School, Buxton, Derbyshire] [SK17 0DQ]