



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

<b>Bakewell Church of England Voluntary Controlled Infant School</b>	Bath Street, Bakewell, Derbyshire, DE45 1BX
<b>Current SIAMS inspection grade</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
<b>Diocese/Methodist District</b>	<b>Derby</b>
Previous SIAMS inspection grade:	Outstanding
Local authority	Derbyshire
Name of multi-academy trust/ federation	n/a
Date of inspection	11 October 2017
Date of last inspection	12 November 2012
School's unique reference number	112797
Headteacher	Patricia Outram
Inspector's name and number	Kerry Palmer (60)

### School context

Bakewell CE (VC) Infants School was the original town all-age school. This presents limitations, including the lack of a hall, but good use is made of available accommodation and surroundings to provide a stimulating educational environment. It now provides Key Stage 1 education for almost all the children in this small, rural, market town and surrounding area. There are currently 65 pupils in three classes drawn from a wide social spectrum. Almost all are of White British heritage but ethnic diversity is increasing. There have been significant staff changes in recent years, although the headteacher has been in post since 2004. All Saints Parish Church is a short walk away.

### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Bakewell Church of England Voluntary Controlled Infant School as a Church of England school are outstanding

- A highly effective headteacher who lives out the school's Christian ethos and provides dynamic and professional leadership.
- Strong links with the parish embodied in a pro-active vicar and committed foundation governors.
- A well informed and engaged governing body who recognise and promote the school's church foundation.
- A culture of inclusion which sustains the view that all are unique and special in God's eyes.

### Areas to improve

- Develop strategies to explicitly highlight the centrality of the teaching and example of Jesus Christ to the Christian ethos and values the school espouses.
- Explore ways of diversifying the leadership of school worship as a whole school and in the classroom.

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

Bakewell Infants is a welcoming, inclusive and nurturing church school where the well-being of the whole community is of the utmost importance. School leaders and staff successfully promote core Christian values of service, compassion and determination which, along with independent, enquiry based learning results in progress and achievement consistently at or above expectations. This is a school where nothing is too much trouble to ensure children reach their full potential, feel safe and cared for. Children enjoy school, are happy and say they feel safe. Consequently, attendance is very good, occasional isolated concerns being addresses with tact and practical support. Staff have developed an exciting and creative learning environment. Almost all teaching is considered outstanding. Children's behaviour is excellent; there is a considerate, supportive atmosphere where forgiveness and reconciliation are taught and practiced. This is typified by the attitudes of staff, children and parents to a number of children with significant special needs. They are fully integrated into school life. However, the biblical foundation of the school's values is not always made clear. Religious education (RE) makes a significant contribution to children's spiritual, moral, cultural and social education. Lessons encourage children to reflect and ponder on big questions. Examples were reception children creating multi-media jellyfish when exploring God the Creator while Year 2 used drama to explore God's forgiveness. Relevant displays around the school include panels from a whole school RE day 'Picturing Christianity,' held earlier in the year. Preparation for the world of work begins young. The use of enterprise activities and support for a range of charities successfully develops empathy for the less fortunate and awareness of the wider world. Both were demonstrated at the recent Harvest festival which, through its Christian Aid 'Give Peas a Chance' appeal helped the children empathise with poor families in Malawi. Children also learn about Fairtrade, typical of the many ways in which they are made aware of our diverse world. The school recognises that their children are growing up in an ever-changing world and ensures that age appropriate teaching about other cultures and faiths is woven into the school's topic cycle and worship planning.

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

Collective worship and prayer are integral to the school day and central to promoting the school's Christian ethos. It engages and excites the children with a series of well-planned themes focussing on the church year and key Christian values. Friendship, cooperation and koinonia, Christian community, are lived out in relationships throughout the school. Bible stories are regularly used to illustrate the Christian perspective. These are delivered using a range of interactive strategies with lots of child participation. There are strong links between worship and active support for a range of charities. However, worship is often referred to as assembly and most staff are not present negating its centrality to the whole school community. Regular contributions from the vicar, the local 'Open the Book' group and other church leaders enrich children's experience. Staff occasionally take worship themes back to classes for further exploration but they are insufficiently involved in regular worship leadership. Children display a growing awareness of the nature of prayer to say thank-you, sorry and ask God for help. 'I said thank-you for my friends and sorry for falling out,' said one. Children are not familiar with the Lord's Prayer or its special significance as the prayer Jesus taught his disciples. They enjoy contributing their own prayers, especially for celebration services, such as Harvest, in All Saints Parish Church. Church visits for worship and educational exploration give the children an age appropriate insight into Anglican tradition and practice, such as changing liturgical colours through the year. Visits to the local Methodist church lead to discussion of similarities and differences. Worship songs are sung with gusto. One parent wrote, 'my child sings songs and hymns at home that she had learnt at school and links them to Jesus and the world'. Lots of families and friends join the children for festival services in church and at weekly celebration assembly in school. These celebrate children's successes, birthdays and achievements but, whilst they include a song and a prayer, are not fully appreciated as a celebration of God given gifts and talents. Despite the limitations of gathering in the scout hut, insufficient attention is given to enhancing the worship setting and giving worship a clear liturgical framework. Some positive developments are evident since the last inspection including more active involvement of children and the development of an outdoor quiet area. Effective strategies are incorporated into worship and RE to help children have a growing appreciation of God as Father, the creator, Jesus the Son and Holy Spirit. Worship and RE succeed in being inclusive and no children are withdrawn. Regular monitoring by foundation governors contributes to review and action planning.

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

It is evident to all that this is a school 'Where every child can shine' and Christian values drive a concern to nurture the whole child. This is motivated by the commitment, vision and professional skill of the headteacher. She, and school governors, have an accurate assessment of the school's strengths and detailed priorities for further improvement. They recognise that the professional development of staff is key to the sustained growth and promotion of the school's ethos and values. These are clearly Christian in practice but not always explicitly expressed in policy documents and on the school website. The need for focussed professional development is recognised and strategic planning addresses the needs of staff unfamiliar with the particular expectations of a church school. Good use is made of cooperative work with the local school cluster, local authority and diocese. The introduction of Understanding Christianity resource is one example and joint staff and governor training with other local schools another. Staff and governors are united in the pursuit of excellence in a school that rigorously evaluated and has focussed and aspirational development priorities. Consequently, standards are high, children are enthusiastic and the whole school community works as one. Governors know the school well and are actively supportive. Foundation governors do much to promote recognition of the school's church foundation and promote its Christian ethos. They are a vital and positive link with the parish. Along with the vicar their contribution to the monitoring and development of the school's Christian distinctiveness is significant. 'The vicar is part of school life,' a parent commented. He is accepted as a friend and pastor. Parents are full of praise for the school. There is an active 'Friends' group which supports the school through social events, such as the annual summer fair, bringing families together and fundraising. Significant involvement with the local community includes a contribution to the annual well-dressing, this year depicting a dove and cross with a peace theme. The school meets statutory requirements for collective worship and RE and the Church of England's expectations as given in the Statement of Entitlement.

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