

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Bradley Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School

Yew Tree Lane,
Bradley,
Ashbourne,
Derbyshire.
DE6 1PG

Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Derby
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Local authority	Derbyshire
Date/s of inspection	5 March 2018
Date of last inspection	17 January 2013
Type of school and unique reference number	112802
Headteacher	Nicola Foulds
Inspector's name and number	Louise Patterson (310)

School context

The school is a small primary school with 29 pupils currently on roll. There are 7 pupils with additional needs, one of which has a statement with full-time support. Pupils are split between 2 classes. All pupils are from White British backgrounds. There are no pupils eligible for free school meals or Pupil Premium. Attendance is above average. The school is within walking distance of the church. There has been a change in leadership since the previous inspection and in September 2017 the school federated with another local small church school under a joint Governing Board and the same executive head teacher.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Bradley Church of England (VC) Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding.

- The school has a very distinctive Christian ethos which is understood by all stakeholders. This is embedded in all aspects of the school and impacts positively on the school's provision and outcomes for the pupils.
- Excellent relationships exist which are based on Christian values. This leads to a very positive and supportive learning environment which enables success at all levels.
- The strong Christian vision and leadership of the headteacher and governing body, who consistently review and revise the Christian elements of the school.
- The school knows itself well and has a comprehensive action plan in place.

Areas to improve

- To involve pupils even more in the leading and planning of worship and include the impact on pupils, staff and visitors when monitoring collective worship.
- Extend the range of multicultural opportunities within school, utilising visits and visitors, to enable pupils to widen their cultural horizons.
- Monitor the recently introduced Understanding Christianity resource to clearly understand the impact on the Christian distinctiveness of the school.

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

The outstanding Christian nature of the school is well demonstrated through the ethos, the treatment of every child as an individual and the quality of the relationships. The stated school ethos of being 'proud to be a Church school' and their aim 'to promote Christian values in all that we do' is being lived out on a day to day basis enabling all pupils to achieve their full potential as well rounded, confident and spiritually aware individuals. Though the school is very small, pupils are offered a good range of opportunities and responsibilities both within the classroom and elsewhere which is enabling and encouraging them to be reflective and questioning in a safe and understanding environment. The excellent utilisation of all learning spaces is having a positive impact, this includes a distinctively Christian element to the spaces available, with a prayer tree and a range of symbols used for prayer and reflection. Careful consideration has been given to providing a range of appropriate resources to encourage pupils to engage with reflection and prayer at their own level. The results of these opportunities being taken up is evident in the outstanding quality of care and respect for each other. Pupils are able to articulate what it means for them to go to a church school, saying, 'we have reflection areas because there are different ways to say prayers', 'we have collective worship every day' and, 'God is in our school because God is everywhere!'

The meaningful analysis of data about outcomes for pupils is difficult as the cohort sizes vary but are usually very small. However the support and nurture given to all pupils is a reflection of the teachers' and teaching assistants' commitment to the school as a caring, inclusive establishment rooted firmly in Christian values. Though there is a significant proportion of pupils with some kind of additional need there is still the push for both personal and academic excellence. The school motto, 'quality, creativity, confidence', stresses the emphasis on the development of every individual child. It results in pupils who are developing into well-educated, rounded, and morally grounded individuals through the priority placed on their academic progress but also their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There is some development of global awareness through both charity work undertaken and the religious education (RE) within the school but this is not fully developed nor is the impact on pupils carefully monitored.

Pupils say that they feel very safe and extremely well cared for, which contributes to the above average attendance. There are very high expectations for behaviour, care and love, with staff acting as excellent role models. All staff consistently demonstrate that they care for pupils in the school both in the classroom and outside. This results in pupils who are very well behaved and have a positive attitude towards school. They engage readily with the learning process and are keen to come to school. There is an emphasis on having fun whilst learning.

RE is making a positive contribution to the school as a Christian community. It is not only enabling pupils to have an understanding of Christianity as a world religion, but also other world faiths. Pupils are being well equipped to question and make informed decisions about faith. A parent commented that, 'pupils are encouraged to question religion and to talk through the issues' and 'feelings about religion are talked about'. The subject is making a significant contribution to the spiritual growth of pupils which is demonstrated in their ability to articulate difficult religious concepts such as the Trinity and write their own thought provoking prayers. The school leadership, including governors, regularly review and evaluate the subject alongside other curricular areas.

The school is regularly mentioned in PCC meetings and the school promotes church activities resulting in pupils who have an understanding of the nature of the relationship between school and the wider Christian community. The school is an outstandingly distinctive church school with pupils and staff benefitting from the impact of the Christian values underpinning every aspect of school life.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good.

Worship occupies a central place in the life of the school and effectively underpins and demonstrates the school's embedded Christian ethos. The daily programme is very well planned utilising both Derby and Leicester Diocesan guidance. Recently, the biblical theology which underpins the themes being used has been stated at the outset of each set of worship plans, resulting in a clearer understanding of the themes from a Christian point of view.

Worship is delivered by all staff and an increasing range of visitors. The Worship Leaders, who are a small group of pupils, play a part in the worship on a daily basis with various responsibilities which they take very seriously. The makeup of the group changes regularly to ensure all pupils undertake the responsibility. This results in even the youngest pupils having an understanding of worship and its relevance to school life. Worship content rightly explores Bible stories and Christian teachings. This includes reinforcing appropriately the idea of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit and the example and importance of Jesus for Christians. The concept of the Trinity is reinforced through the lighting of three candles and the greeting 'we light these candles to remember that God is with us, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit'. When asked about the Trinity, a pupil said, 'we know about the Trinity because we have talked about why we light three candles'. There is a chart which shows the stages of the church year. This is instrumental in giving pupils a clear idea of the significance of the use of colour. Principal Christian festivals are well celebrated, both in school and in the parish church. Children have an age appropriate understanding of the meaning of the key festivals. This means that worship in the school effectively contributes to pupils' developing

knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith. Pupils participate enthusiastically. They clearly enjoy singing and listen very well to what is being said. They are very keen to participate, answer questions and offer their ideas on the topics covered. Everyone involved recognises that worship is a special time to think about God and share as a community. The importance and enjoyment of worship shown by pupils is shared by staff. Worship is making a significant contribution to the spiritual development of all involved. Pupils know the prayers used, including the Lord's Prayer, and the appropriate responses. Prayer is a regular feature within worship and the school day, with pupils having a clear understanding what prayer is at an age appropriate level. Not only are they given regular opportunities to write their own prayers which are then used in worship, they are happy to make prayers up on the spot with the use of randomly chosen 'teaspoon prayers' (thanks, sorry or please). Grace is said before lunch. Pupils said that they would welcome the opportunity to be more involved in both the planning and leadership of worship in the future and said that they feel confident in being able to do that. Parents say that, 'from Reception, children are involved in it' and when they are 'they are filled with pride'. Key elements of Anglican practice are embedded in school worship. This includes the use of opening and closing sentences with responses and the understanding of the Church calendar. Worship Leaders use the Lectionary to guide them. Worship is monitored by foundation governors. This is undertaken on a regular basis but the impact of the worship on pupils and staff is not being reported in order to inform future developments.

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

The committed Christian leadership and management of the headteacher and governors is making a significant contribution to the success of this outstanding church school. The school has a comprehensive and insightful church school improvement plan in place. The actions undertaken from this document, and the future developments, ensure that the Christian distinctiveness and ethos remain high on the agenda. The self-evaluation of the distinctively Christian nature of the school is accurate, if a little cautious, demonstrating that the leadership of the school has a clear understanding of where the school is and how it can continue to improve. The Christian distinctiveness is very effectively promoted through the vision and website which gives a clear view that the Christian foundation is central to the life of the school. There is a link to the local church page which reinforces the strong ties. Parents speak very highly of the school as a church school. They said such things as, 'children are made to feel like they are part of the school family', 'the ethos and the values that a church provides are here' and 'this is a gem of a school'. They say that they are kept very well informed about their children and that they appreciate the 'open door' policy that the school has in place. They greatly appreciate the values newsletters which contain the most recent school value and lots of relevant information, biblical content and activities for home use. Though very small, the committed and enthusiastic staff team fully support the vision and ethos of the school and there is a real sense of them working outstandingly well together to enhance the excellent support being given to every child. Pupils are encouraged to take on appropriate responsibilities from quite an early age which is helping them to develop a genuine sense of community, conscientiousness and duty. A parent commented, 'the confidence of children right from Reception is amazing' and 'Bradley children really look out for each other at secondary school'. Pupils feel that they have a voice within the school, especially through the various groups and committees they are involved in. They say that their ideas are taken seriously and are often acted upon.

There is a very effective and mutually supportive relationship with the local parish. There are many contacts both formal and informal, enabling pupils to have a clear understanding of the importance of the church in the life of their school. Rev. Phil Mitchell is a familiar figure in school and is an effective spiritual guide on the governing body. The governing body takes their role as leaders of a Christian community seriously and regularly discuss the foundation of both schools in the Federation. The school feels that it is extremely well supported by the diocese and it takes full advantage of the training provided. This relationship with the local Christian community is having a significant impact on the Christian life of the school. When pupils raised money in their Enterprise Fair they chose to donate it to the local church as the lead from the roof had recently been stolen. The school is undertaking significant developments in the use of the Understanding Christianity resource in RE. This has had an impact on pupils and they are enjoying the elements already in use, but as yet this has not been formally monitored. The school has made significant progress in addressing the areas for improvement from the previous report. There is now rigorous, evidence based self-evaluation, a highly effective head teacher is now in post, there is some formal monitoring of collective worship and there are excellent displays around school with either a worship or RE focus. RE and collective worship comply with statutory requirements.

There is continuous cycle of reflective and insightful self-evaluation of the foundation of the school, incorporating a range of views. Focused and robust monitoring by leaders and governors, underpinned by the school's Christian values, has brought about improvement and is clearly linked to the school's vision.