

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Kirkby-on-Bain Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Wharf Lane, Kirkby on Bain, Woodhall Spa, Lincolnshire, LN10 6YW

Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Lincoln
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Date of inspection	11 July 2017
Date of last inspection	16 and 19 July 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Primary VA 120623
Headteacher	Simon Morley
Inspector's name and number	Yvonne Shaw 245

School context

Set in rural Lincolnshire, this is a much smaller than average sized school with 93 pupils on roll, none of whom speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is well below average. There is a below average proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium throughout the school. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is broadly average. Attendance is in line with national averages but for some groups, the proportion of persistent absence is high. A small proportion of children are from Service families.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Kirkby on Bain Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The strong leadership and the headteacher's commitment to the Christian ethos, fully supported by school leaders, staff, governors, parents, children and local clergy, ensures a shared Christian vision which permeates the whole life of the school.
- Religious education (RE) is very well led and as a consequence, it is woven deeply into the learning and culture of the school.
- A very clear set of Christian values pervades all aspects of school life, having a significant impact on children enabling them to thrive in their personal development and behaviour, which are exemplary.
- Children make good or better progress and achieve well academically, due to the significant impact the Christian values have on their motivation and attitudes to learning.
- High quality, inspirational acts of worship, based clearly on biblical teaching, are highly valued and central to the school day, it inspires and impacts profoundly on children's spiritual development, which is outstanding.
- Grounded firmly on Christian principles, relationships across the school are extremely positive. There is a tangible sense of care and compassion in this school which is spoken of by many members of the school community.

Areas to improve

- Ensure that evaluation as a church school has the same rigour as other aspects of monitoring school effectiveness by establishing a more formal approach to the review process.
- Within collective worship, embed the work of 'The Spiritual Gang' in their leadership role by ensuring their monitoring and evaluation activities bring about subsequent change.

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

The headteacher, school leaders, staff and governors are extremely committed to ensuring that each child is valued and educated in an environment that embodies clear Christian values. The distinctive core Christian values, which include hope, peace, trust, friendship, forgiveness and respect, underpin a range of other Christian values which are taught on a three year rolling programme. At the time of inspection, the school studied compassion. These values are high profile, deeply embedded and impact on the life and work of the school in ensuring the highest possible outcomes for all in academic, spiritual, moral, social, emotional and moral development. They are expressed in many Bible quotes and various creative displays around the school. Children clearly cherish the way in which these values are on display for example, the wooden cross sited in the main entrance and made by a local craftsman, is worn on the cross-beam from children rubbing it as they pass by. However, they are not yet expressed as clearly as they could be on the website.

The School Vision Statement 'Learning together for life', with its emphasis on 'together', encapsulates the school's ethos, which is lived out by children and adults. Children respond with compassion to others, being inspired by highly effective RE and collective worship. They feel both safe and valued and play an active part in school life, for example through leadership roles such as The Spiritual Gang and School Council which strongly promote responsibility and confidence. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very effectively supported by the curriculum, collective worship and RE and makes a very positive contribution to the Christian ethos of the school.

Behaviour and attitudes to learning are exemplary. Children enjoy coming to school, their attendance is good for the vast majority. There have been no permanent exclusions in the last year. Most children are working at or above age related expectations in the core subjects. All children are very well supported, particularly vulnerable children, who are nurtured to help them overcome barriers to learning. Progress for all groups is good from varying starting points.

Parents, governors and staff recognise the significant impact the Christian ethos has on the daily lives and achievements of children. The wide range of clubs and visits enhance the curriculum. Visits to a range of places of worship, in addition to the church, are arranged, which promote respect for people of other faiths. More are planned for the future. The small minority of children who attend the school from other faith backgrounds are fully included and confident to speak about their faith in front of other children, who show interest and respect. Children are able to talk with understanding about how Bible stories relate to their own lives. For example a child commented, 'Daniel and the Lion teaches us to trust God'. There is great emphasis on the development of the 'whole' child, with focus given to their personal and spiritual development, which is exceptional. Prayer plays a significant role in the life of the school with many opportunities built into the day for collective prayer, individual prayer and reflection.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Central to school life, collective worship is inspirational, inclusive, affirming and impacts profoundly on children's exemplary attitudes and behaviour, relationships and spiritual awareness. Children participate with enjoyment, reverence and passion. They sing with enthusiasm mixed with reverence, using the words and music to further deepen their spiritual awareness. Daily collective worship is very well planned across the school year and takes a variety of forms including whole school, key stage and year group. Christian values and the church seasons are the basis for the themes. Acts of worship place the Bible at its core. Carefully planned Bible readings are often from the Gospels, giving a strong focus on the person of Jesus Christ. Children are able to discuss the Trinity with excellent understanding for their age because it has been well presented during acts of worship and RE lessons.

The collective worship leader is now being well supported by the newly established 'Spiritual Gang'. This group of children are being coached by the collective worship leader and the vicar in planning, presenting and evaluating acts of worship. This is in its early stages and the outcomes of these evaluations have yet to lead to actions for improvement. The group is keen to take a more pro-active part in these activities and are very proud of their achievement so far.

As a result of a sharp focus on prayer during acts of worship, prayer has a high profile in school. Prayers are offered before lunch and at the end of the day and also at the beginning of governing body meetings. Children write prayers on a variety of themes some of which are displayed on the prayer tree. Children also write personal, spontaneous prayers which are sometimes used during acts of worship. Parents say their children often initiate saying prayers and singing worship songs at home. They say that they find this particularly uplifting and many commented that they were stunned at the maturity shown within the prayers offered at home.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

Religious education has a high profile within the overall curriculum and makes a significant contribution to the promotion of the distinctive Christian ethos. The subject is very well led and teaching is at least good and much is outstanding. Within RE, children are encouraged to learn about diverse cultures and faiths which are very different from those found in this part of rural Lincolnshire. Teachers have created a learning environment in which children feel safe to explore their ideas within a culture of mutual respect and regard for the opinion of others. Children respond well to this learning, for example in the Year 5/6 class, when learning about Islam, children discuss frankly the positive and negative aspects of various rituals. They also compare these rituals to similar ones in their own lives, for example, charitable giving, showing considerable maturity. Additionally, in Foundation Stage, the youngest children respond to Bible stories with great excitement and enthusiasm and relate the messages to their own lives. Through these opportunities, RE makes a significant contribution to the children's spiritual, social and cultural education.

The school began to introduce the 'Understanding Christianity' resource earlier this academic year which is challenging both teachers and children to explore Christianity in greater depth. Leaders are excited and children say that they are enjoying this aspect of their RE learning. The RE leader has attended the relevant training in delivering 'Understanding Christianity' and receives appropriate support from the diocese. He has also disseminated the training to the staff to enable them to teach it with courage and understanding.

Standards of achievement in RE are at least in line with English and mathematics although attainment is above. Progress is as expected for the overwhelming majority of children. Scrutiny of children's work shows clearly that teaching and learning strategies used in other curriculum areas are reflected in RE. Generally children record their work in Learning Journals and the subject therefore sits alongside other subjects such as Geography and History. In Early Years Foundation Stage, much of the children's learning is captured pictorially in the same way as achievement is recorded in other areas of learning. Teachers and support staff make secure assessment of progress and attainment. Scrutiny of children's work also shows that the subject is comprehensively taught, using a two year rolling programme to accommodate mixed age classes and progress across the school can readily be seen. Work is regularly marked in accordance with the school's marking policy and children receive both positive praise and developmental points. These challenge them to think more deeply.

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

The headteacher, staff and governors have an exceptional commitment to the development of the school as a church school. This has been embedded and strengthened since the last inspection. Leaders are not complacent and seek ways to continuously improve the Christian provision at this school. They have achieved all the issues for development from the previous inspection. Together, and with the strength and support of parents, children and the local church community and clergy, there is a strong, tangible promotion of the Christian ethos. One parent commented, 'I could feel it right from my very first visit,' and another said, 'I feel so fortunate that my children come here'. With the impending departure of the long standing and well respected headteacher, governors have made every effort to ensure that his successor maintains this crucial aspect of the school through their appointment processes.

Religious education and collective worship are both very well led. The leader knows his areas of responsibility very well because there are systems in place to ensure evaluation leads to improvement. Governors utilise excellent systems for reviewing other aspects of the school through, for example, Peer Review, however this is not yet transferred to reviewing the Christian distinctiveness of the school. The 'Spiritual Gang' is now enabling children to develop their role as leaders and they are very keen to do this. As yet, their evaluation has not led to changes for improvement.

The school has an excellent relationship with the Diocese and the headteacher works with them as an Associate Adviser. He has used this skill to ensure that reviewing the work of the school as a church school has regard for the current inspection framework. Leaders have made good use of diocesan training for example, 'Understanding Christianity' and the Head and Chair conference. The school has very productive links with the local church through the support of the vicar and a number of other organisations who make a significant contribution to the life of the school. For example, the incumbent is leading children in meditation through focused lessons in spirituality. Statutory requirements for RE and collective worship are met.

SIAMS report July 2017 Kirkby on Bain CE VA Primary School, Woodhall Spa, Lincolnshire LN10 6YW