

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Bleasby Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Station Road, Bleasby, Nottinghamshire. NG14 7GD.

Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese	Southwell & Nottingham
Previous SIAS inspection grade	Good
Local authority	Nottinghamshire
Date of inspection	22 June 2017
Date of last inspection	29 May 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Primary 122750
Acting Headteacher	Louise Carpenter
Inspector's name and number	Anne Lumb 333

School context

This is a smaller than average size school serving Bleasby and other surrounding villages on the outskirts of Southwell. It is a very popular and over-subscribed school. The number of pupils entitled to claim free school meals is lower than the national average. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage and their first language is English. The proportion of children with special educational needs is below the national average. This year there have been significant changes to the senior leadership team resulting in the current acting headteacher taking up her role officially during the spring term of 2017. The arrival of a new incumbent has led to a strengthening partnership with the local church which is located within half a mile of the school.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Bleasby Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School as a Church of England school are good

- This is a caring church school community rooted in Christian values where relationships are excellent such that all are nurtured and enabled to achieve their full potential as children of God.
- There is a close partnership with the local church which has enabled school leaders to root the life and work of the school more securely within the Christian tradition.
- A highly committed staff team working effectively together exemplify the school's Christian values thus maintaining the wellbeing of staff and children whilst ensuring that the children's learning has been not been disrupted during recent times of considerable staff changes.

Areas to improve

- Introduce a more structured approach to the monitoring and evaluation of church school distinctiveness so that staff and governors can integrate the outcomes within the school improvement plan.
- Provide opportunities for children to regularly plan, lead and evaluate collective worship so that they have increasing ownership.
- Integrate the *Understanding Christianity* resource within the religious education curriculum to ensure that children develop a deeper knowledge and understanding of the Christian narrative.

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

This is a caring church school community where all are valued as children of God. As a result, children are enabled to thrive spiritually as well as academically. The school's Christian values of love, care, compassion and respect have

become more explicitly rooted in Biblical teaching so that children and staff are increasingly able to articulate the values and ensure that they are embedded in daily life. Consequently, all members of the school community are treated with respect so that there are positive relationships throughout the school; 'We are one big family.' As a result, behaviour and manners are excellent and visitors are welcomed into school. Outstanding attendance figures reflect the fact that children enjoy going to school. Each child is known as an individual by each member of staff. In addition to regular pupil progress reviews, there are daily informal updates on children to respond to ongoing needs. Teaching assistants work with different groupings of children to aid their learning and progress. Children consistently achieve above national expectations at the end of key stages whilst progress records and tracking show good to outstanding progress is made by children of all abilities. Good opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are provided both within the curriculum and throughout the school day so that children are able to, in the words of a Year 6 girl, 'be in the moment' when in the garden of reflection. Children are developing a growing appreciation of Christianity as a multicultural world faith through links with the St Dorcas Orphanage in Bungoma; 'There are Christians there too' a child commented. The religious education (RE) curriculum embraces extensive teaching about a variety of world faiths so that children respect diversity between and within faith communities. Children gain a good understanding of Christian values through RE. However, their knowledge and understanding of Christian faith and belief is limited.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship is a central aspect of school life. All members of the school community value meeting together to explore Christian values. The children engage enthusiastically and positively with collective worship times, learning to connect the school's Diamond Rules with the Bible; 'The Bible stories help us understand how to live.' A range of people, including regular visitors from the local churches, lead collective worship so that children are developing a growing understanding of different Christian traditions. Children plan and lead services in the church but there are insufficient opportunities for the children to take regular ownership of leading collective worship in school. Major Christian festivals are celebrated in the church. Through changing the colours on the worship table in the school hall, the children learn the significance of these festivals within the church calendar. Parents are highly supportive of these services in church. They appreciate the close links with the church, commenting positively on the increased focus on spirituality in recent months. Prayer is becoming an increasingly important aspect of school life. Formal prayers are said in class as well as at lunchtime and within collective worship. A recent focus on prayer activities on Ascension Day enabled children to deepen their understanding of prayer and recognise its importance in their lives. A teacher commented, 'Reception children felt inspired following Ascension Day and many wrote their own prayers.' A Year 6 pupil commented that 'We live out the rainbow prayer. It helps us take things in our stride. It helps the younger children.' Prayer, reflection and stillness throughout the school day are embraced enthusiastically by the children. They value the thinking space in the midst of busy days, commenting that they can 'connect with God' and have 'moments of respect.' Children learn much from collective worship about the special nature of Jesus. They have an age appropriate understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Collective worship is well managed and evaluation contributes to focussed development planning.

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

Leaders articulate and promote a vision for the school based on distinctively Christian values. As a result, this is a caring community where the seeds of the Christian faith are being sown. Faith and spirituality are explored so that children can make their own decision about the faith journey they will follow later in life. The whole staff team, led by the acting headteacher, has worked together in challenging circumstances to ensure that the children's learning has not been disrupted. The school's values are now rooted firmly within Biblical teaching and impact more directly on pupil achievement. Governors and senior leaders ensure the wellbeing of both the staff and the children thus living out the Christian values of care and compassion. Strong links with the local church are continually developing to ensure a good partnership between the school, the church and the local community. The vicar commented that the Christmas event held in church showed a 'meshing together of school, church and the wider community.' Children are aware of the place of the village and the local church within the wider diocese. They talk knowledgeably about their benefice and other churches within the benefice along the River Trent. They speak of the vicar as 'our friend' and clearly appreciate the contribution he makes to school life. Highly supportive parents contribute fully to school life. For example, children have the opportunity to serve their school community through growing and nurturing plants. This allows them to consider spiritual aspects of life in a practical way. Leaders are beginning to engage more directly with the diocese, working alongside advisers and accessing training to further develop the school's Christian distinctiveness. Leadership skills are therefore being developed effectively at all levels. Development points from the previous inspection have been addressed and the wider community has become more aware of the school's status as a church school. Governors increasingly hold senior leaders to account for

developing the distinctively Christian character of the school. However, formal systems to monitor and evaluate Christian distinctiveness are underdeveloped. RE and collective worship meet statutory requirements.

SIAMS report June 2017 Bleasby Church of England (VC) Primary School Bleasby Nottinghamshire. NG14 7GD.