

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

East Bierley Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Address	South View Road, East Bireley, BD4 6PH		
Date of inspection	3 April 2019	Status of school	Voluntary Controlled Primary
Diocese	Leeds	URN	107719

Overall Judgement	How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?	Grade	Good
Additional Judgements	The impact of collective worship	Grade	Good

School context

East Bierley is a primary school with 207 pupils on roll. The school has a very low level of religious and cultural diversity and very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is below national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is below national averages. A new headteacher was appointed in January 2016 and there have been considerable changes in leadership and staffing since then.

The school's Christian vision

Our school vision – Always giving; Always here, is to inspire children to reach their full potential, preparing them to live life in all its fullness and contribute fully in society. We aim to develop resilient individuals who have a strong moral compass and live their lives through our Christian values.

Key findings

- Since her appointment the headteacher, supported by effective leaders, has worked tirelessly to ensure that the school's Church school foundation makes a significant contribution to the effectiveness of pupils' good achievement.
- The school lives out its vision through a bold creative curriculum underpinned by Christian theology and values.
- The uniqueness of every individual is emphasised and celebrated across the curriculum. Care is taken to nurture and value everyone so that all can flourish.
- Effective use of prayer contributes well to pupils achievement and wellbeing.
- The influence of collective worship on the life of the school is effective because it is invitational and inclusive. However pupil involvement in class worship is not as extensive as it is in full school worship.

Areas for development

- Develop further pupil involvement in leading, planning and evaluating class worship to improve practice.
- Ensure all pupils develop their understanding of the Trinity so that they can compare the nature of Christianity more easily with other world religions.
- Ensure that attainment and progress in RE is communicated to governors in sufficient detail so that they understand the full picture of achievement in RE in line with its entitlement as a core subject.

How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?

Inspection findings

During the last three years there have been many staff changes, however, as a result of leaders' up to date understanding of church school education, the school's vision is evident over time. The refreshed vision is rooted in a clear theology of hope, and always being present to assist others. It is the basis of the good relationships that exist between all. The vision shapes what happens in practice and informs all school policies. Everyone knows what the plans are for the development of the school as a Church school and this understanding means for example that policy and practice to promote positive mental health are based on information provided by the Church of England Education Office. There are strong local and regional partnerships that are effective in enhancing pupil achievement. For example the school works in partnership with a group of local and regional senior leaders. This enables the school to take advantage of learning from and about the wide range of local communities which exist close by. Pupils compare these with the Diocesan link with Mara in Africa. Parents say that they highly value the school and the welcome extended to them. Partnership with the local church, which was an area for improvement set at the last inspection is now a strength of the school. It is far reaching and makes a significant contribution to collective worship. The invitational nature of this relationship is highly valued by pupils and by parents and other members of the local community. There is full involvement by pupils in leading and evaluating all aspects of the many occasions worship which takes place alongside members of the church. Pupils have less involvement in evaluating class worship. The school proudly displays a cross and font gifted by the church building next door on its recent closure. These gifts were to mark the special partnership that existed between this church building, due to its proximity, and the school. Long-term contact between staff and pupils with members of the congregation and clergy covering both churches enabled pupils to understand that prayer is personal and that faith can be sustained through the closing of a location of worship. Partnership continues with the second local church. Pupils say they love RE because the staff know a lot and make it fun and they can be creative. As a result of this the pupils have a good knowledge of the Bible and use this knowledge when considering big questions such as how and why the candle represents God and Jesus. Expectations in RE are challenging, pupils develop religious and theological literacy, critical analysis and interpretation in their engagement with key religious and philosophical concepts across a range of religions and worldviews. They are less sure about the Trinitarian nature of God. The school is very clear about its legal obligations and pupil entitlement to RE as a Controlled school. It ensures it meets them fully. Achievement in RE is assessed with rigour however information about RE is not reported in sufficient detail to governors to enable them to compare achievement in all core subjects. All pupils, including those with SEND make at least good progress from their starting points. A comprehensive programme of professional development for staff and governors provides a good basis for current and future responsibilities in Church schools as well as the self-evaluation process. The chair of governors pointed out that his monitoring had shown that discussions about the development of the school as a Church school were not recorded well enough in minutes of meetings. As a result, he brought this to the attention of the clerk and minutes have been improved.

The bold and creative curriculum meets the academic needs of the pupils well because it is designed to meet the needs of the context of the school population and individual pupil's needs. The school holds a world faith week each year where pupils extend further their understanding of other religions. They also deepen their understanding of the connection that Christianity has with British culture and on culture and society worldwide.

Nurture provision is very effective because pupils are given time and space to calm and reflect and develop answers to questions. Pupils say they appreciate this and staff are very effective in enabling them to feel supported when they need it. Developing resilience is a strength of the school because it is informed by current thinking in Church school development. The considerable expertise in mental health that exists in the school enables both pupils and staff to flourish. Spiritual development is further developed in the enrichment and enhancement curriculum time when pupils can, for example, reflect privately through any medium to specially selected music.

The school's 'statements to live by', which are part of the school's Christian values, have a profound effect on how pupils live and behave. For example, pupils' debate and think deeply about what it means to love themselves and others. They consider why these statements affect how they behave including what it means, for themselves as well as others, to forgive. Pupils show concern for the natural world when they become highly concerned about the impact on deforestation of our want for palm oil. They check products at home and in shops to find out if it is included and then discourage the use of these items. They collect pennies for every time they use fresh water to show their appreciation of this gift. They understand the injustice of the existence of places in the world where there is no fresh clean water and know what they and adults could do to improve this situation using the

money collected.

Pupils can be heard at break times discussing what they learn in RE and collective worship and parents say they also discuss adhering to these principles at home. Pupils of all ages use words such as respect in their conversations with each other and know what it means. They know how this idea relates to celebrating difference and diversity. As a result pupils of different faiths can discuss their beliefs confidently. For example in a group of younger pupils those of the Muslim faith were the first to speak to explain that they did not celebrate Easter. Nevertheless they recounted the Easter story in considerable detail and understood the concept of salvation. The trained Respect Ambassadors take their role seriously. The full school community contribute to this ethos of respect because all policies are clear and up to date and take account of current thinking in Church school education.

The variety of ways of worship that the pupils experience through the week enables them to grow spiritually. They are invited to think, reflect and pray in full school worship as well as in class worship. Pupils write their own prayers and read them out proudly. The traditions of Anglican worship are consistently incorporated into worship. They include pupils leading traditional responses as well as incorporating the liturgy of the seasons of the church's year. Pupils locate the places in the Bible that relate to a selected story and then read this from the Bible in collective worship. This develops an understanding of the origin of the story as well as identifying a special spiritual moment within the worship when it is read out.

Pupils say they love RE because the staff know a lot and make it fun and they can be creative. As a result of this the pupils have a good knowledge of the Bible and use this knowledge when considering big questions such as how and why the candle represents God and Jesus. Expectations in RE are challenging pupils develop religious and theological literacy, critical analysis and interpretation in their engagement with key religious and philosophical concepts across a range of religions and worldviews. They are less sure about the Trinitarian nature of God. The school is very clear about its legal obligations and pupil entitlement to RE as a controlled school. It ensures it meets them fully. Achievement in RE is assessed with rigour however this information is not reported in sufficient detail to governors to enable them to understand the full picture of achievement in RE.

Headteacher	Lysa Upham
Inspector's name and number	Pauline Hilling-Smith 641