

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Bramcote Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Hanley Avenue, Bramcote, Beeston, Nottingham, NG9 3HE

Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding	
Diocese	Southwell & Nottingham	
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding	
Local authority	Nottingham	
Date of inspection	23 May 2017	
Date of last inspection	20 April 2012	
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Aided	122788
Headteacher	Sarah Meredith	
Inspector's name and number	Sheila Grice (165)	

School context

Bramcote Church of England Primary School is a small primary school within a suburban area on the edge of Nottingham conurbation. The school population is mostly of White British background, with other ethnic and faith communities represented. The headteacher has been in post since 2010. Since the last SIAMS inspection a new deputy head has been appointed. There are currently 200 pupils on roll. The proportion of children with Special Educational Needs, Statements, Free School Meals & English as an Additional Language are below the national average. Pupils' attendance was 96.8% last year, which was above the national average.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Bramcote Church of England Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding

- Outstanding Christian leadership provided by the headteacher and Religious Education (RE) leader, along with the active support of staff, governors and the vicar, ensuring the centrality of Gospel values.
- Christian values are deeply embedded in all aspects of school life, resulting in learners having a very good understanding of how they impact on their own achievement and behaviour.
- Inclusive collective worship is of a very high quality, engaging all children in reflection.
- Opportunities provided through worship, RE teaching and across the curriculum powerfully impact on children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural (SMSC) development.

Areas to improve

- Increase opportunities for children to plan and lead acts of worship so that their ownership of worship is further enhanced.
- Develop more opportunities for children to develop their understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- Continue to develop assessment, in order to further inform teaching and learning in RE.

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

This school is exceptional in nurturing, encouraging and challenging learners so that they achieve their very best. Pupils in all year groups make good progress and when children leave this school results are in line with expected levels and rising. The school's vision, 'Life in all its fullness' (John 10:10) is the 'watchword' of the school and it is clearly evident in all aspects of school life. High quality displays bear colourful testimony to the importance given to the school's Christian character. Staff go the extra mile to ensure the needs of all children are met, whether academic or social and pastoral care is exceptional. Children have a good understanding of different Christian values such as respect and reverence and they can relate these to the Bible and their own lives. Children understand the importance of asking for forgiveness if they have hurt someone and even young children know that they should 'forgive others like Jesus forgives us, even when they're nasty'. Staff and governors are united in their understanding of the importance of the school's distinctively Christian character. This is evident through the school's genuine love and care shown to each and every child in school. Children's behaviour and their attitudes towards learning are both outstanding. RE teaching is given a very high priority and it contributes significantly towards the children's spiritual and cultural development. The children benefit from taking part in termly whole school RE and SMSC projects which provide opportunities for children to respond to questions like, 'Where is God?' Prayer is key to developing children's spirituality and opportunities including Prayer encounters, Prayer Club and Prayer Window (in reception), encourage children to deepen their understanding of prayer and build their relationship with God. A weekly prayer meeting for parents shows the closeness of the school community and an understanding that staff in school value dependence on God for support and guidance. Links with children in Tanzania, involvement in Toilet Twinning with Columbia as well as visitors sharing their experiences of their faith with children in school, have helped children gain an appreciation of different faiths and cultures. Local initiatives like 'Super Soup' and Hope Nottingham provide opportunities for children to show their love and care for others. World events are often discussed in Spiritual, Social, Emotional Aspects of Learning (SSEAL) time and children are confident and secure when discussing their own feelings. For example, a Year 6 child explained how, 'We can't begin to understand why people do terrible things but Jesus would want us to forgive them', in the aftermath of the recent terrorist attack in Manchester. A real strength of the school is the value placed on pupil voice. The Pupil Parliament, which has a responsibility to focus on the school's Christian character ensures that the voice of the children is becoming much stronger. Improvements are made as a direct result of their recommendations.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

High quality collective worship, which enriches the lives of both adults and children, is clearly at the heart of this school community. There is a strong focus on Biblical teaching and consequently children are developing a good understanding of Bible stories. As one child explained, 'They help me to think about my life and how I behave and what God would think about what I am doing'. The attitude of children towards collective worship is very positive because they are actively engaged and it supports their spiritual development. There is an agreed structure in worship which enables all children to be fully engaged and familiar with what is happening. Regular visitors including the vicar, children & young people's worker and other local leaders, enable the children to have rich, varied experiences, which enhance worship. Singing, prayer and reflection time form an integral part of worship. The reflection time includes watching a candle, listening to music watching pictures or closing their eyes. This helps children to apply what they have been learning or just to be calm and still. The use of modern, religious songs enables children and adults alike to engage fully in worship. Action songs are a favourite with many children. There are regular occasions when children lead worship and they do so confidently, however there are limited opportunities for them to plan worship at present. Worship is consistently and recognisably Christian, due to very detailed, thoughtful planning, and children are developing a good understanding of the Christian calendar. They are learning about Anglican practice by using liturgies when appropriate. However, their knowledge and understanding of the Trinity and its importance to Christians is underdeveloped. Staff appreciate collective worship which, 'is a great start to the day when we sing and praise God together'. Parents also value the opportunity to share in worship and class assemblies and services in the church are very well attended. The leaders for collective worship have been instrumental in ensuring that it is continually improving. For example, monitoring showed that the structure for collective worship was not consistent throughout the week. Now staff and visitors follow an agreed proforma which includes all the elements of effective worship. Pupil voice is strong. Children identified that they wanted more involvement in reading the Bible during acts of worship, so staff took this on board and now invite children to read the Bible passages.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

RE has a very strong profile within the curriculum. The standard of written work, discussion and displays are very high, demonstrating the effectiveness of the RE teaching. Children are achieving an age appropriate understanding of Christianity and of the importance of Jesus to Christians. As one child explained, 'Jesus died on the cross to save us from all the bad things we do, he is our Saviour'. They have a good understanding of the teachings of Jesus and why we should follow his example. Children are developing skills of comparison and personal reflection. The RE curriculum introduced two years ago provides good opportunities for children to develop the higher-level skills of enquiry, analysis and interpretation. Termly projects provide regular opportunity for children to present their learning using more creativity and originality. Children respond meaningfully in a variety of ways, including art and drama, during RE lessons. They are fully engaged in their learning, speaking very positively about their RE lessons and they regularly express their excitement and enjoyment of them. Parents also speak very positively about the RE teaching and its impact on their children, saying their children come home excited and wanting to talk about what they have learnt in school. Books show good progression across year groups and feedback and marking is very effective. Children clearly take a great deal of pride in their work and this is reflected by the high-quality recording in their books. Children benefit from high quality learning experiences which impact significantly on their knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other religions as well as their spiritual development. Older children can reflect on their own beliefs and those of others and they show a good level of understanding and respect for other adults and children who have different beliefs. Assessments are made which inform both planning and teaching and the assessment system now needs developing so that children's progress in RE is measured year on year. Insightful monitoring and evaluation by an enthusiastic and dedicated RE leader ensures that RE teaching and learning is continually improving. Her secure knowledge and clear vision proves encouragement and support to colleagues and she has a very good understanding of the strengths in RE as well as the areas for development. Her effective monitoring ensures children continue to experience a rich, varied and interesting curriculum. Having piloted some of the 'Understanding Christianity' resources she is now well placed to introduce this across school in the future.

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

All leaders in school articulate a distinctively Christian vision for the school and they are clear how Christian values encompass all areas of school life. One governor explained how the Christian character runs all the way through school life like the branding in a stick of rock, because it is so deeply embedded. Children are exceptionally well cared for within a 'family' atmosphere based on Christian love and respect. This is a very happy school where relationships are extremely strong and children feel safe and secure. Children of all faiths, and none feel valued and respected by staff and children alike. Leaders are focussed on school improvement. They have an excellent understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development and have been instrumental in securing changes, particularly in ensuring the needs of all children can be met so that they can experience 'Life in all its fullness'. The foundation governors encourage and challenge the school effectively, working extremely closely with the headteacher. Governors are fully involved in the role of monitoring and evaluation and this ensures that the school's Christian character is central to all decision making. Evaluations are reported back through staff meetings and the strategic development committee of governors. Agreed improvements are then fed into the school development plan which ensures improvements are made. Parents speak very positively about the benefits of their children attending a church school and they value the strong sense of community and family which encourages their children to look out for each other and help others in need. They appreciate the way children are taught to respect others even when they hold different views or have a different faith. Links with St Michael and All Angels are excellent, offering mutual benefit to all. The whole school community speak enthusiastically about very positive relationships with the parish and the impact of this can be seen both in school and in church. The vicar, who is also the link governor for RE, contributes significantly to the leadership and management of this school. He is a frequent visitor and provides valuable support for the headteacher. Statutory requirements for RE and collective worship are fully met and full advantage is taken of training for both leaders and governors. All the issues from the previous inspection have been successfully addressed and the school is well placed to continue to thrive as a church school.