

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Bampton Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

School Close
Bampton
Tiverton
EX 16 9NW

Diocese: Exeter

Local authority: Devon County Council
Dates of inspection: December 2nd 2010
Date of last inspection: June 23rd 2008
School's unique reference number: 113494
Head teacher: Paula Shore
Inspector's name and number: Mrs Sandra Symonds 109

School context

Bampton Church of England V.A. Primary School is smaller than average with 107 pupils on roll. Its intake comes from the surrounding rural area and the local town. The majority of children are white British and all speak English as their first language. The proportion of learners with special educational needs is broadly average. Pupils are taught in 3 mixed age classes and there is an early year's class which caters for children aged 3 to 5. The present head teacher has been in post since September 2010.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Bampton Church of England V.A. Primary school as a Church of England school are good

Under the leadership of the new head teacher the Christian ethos of the school has become a more central part of school life. The school has a strong caring ethos based on Christian values and the learners feel valued and supported. This school has good capacity to improve as a Church school

Established strengths

- The distinctive Christian ethos of the school which has a positive impact on the learners
- The clear vision of the head teacher, staff and governors for this Christian ethos
- The high quality of the relationships between all members of the school community

Focus for development

- To establish an effective system of evaluation and assessment in R.E.
- To develop the evaluation of Collective Worship and to include the learners
- To improve the pupil's spiritual development

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

The school's distinctive Christian character is good, reflected in the values held by the stakeholders. The new leadership team at Bampton Church of England V.A. Primary school has focused on a clear vision for the school which all stakeholders recognise and this is beginning to impact. One learner stated "It's not like other schools because we are a church school so we forgive each other". The learners had a very good understanding of forgiveness. "Even if someone broke your Birthday present you should still forgive them because God forgives you." The school has a good working atmosphere and relationships are based on the Christian values of care and concern for others. Learners from all groups feel valued and special and this raises their self esteem and levels of independence. The school has high expectations of behaviour and encourages learners to be kind and

considerate. Parents are clear about the school's Christian focus "I researched the local schools and chose this one because of its clear Christian status". Another mentioned how her child had come home with a direct quote from the class rules "We must always use kind hands, kind words." Pupil voice is effectively heard through the school council which has been responsible for several changes in the school, for example in starting a Healthy Tuck shop in the playtimes, as one pupil said "We get to influence what goes on but if it's not suitable it doesn't happen". The younger children are well supported by the older ones in many ways, for example at lunchtime each table had children of all ages sitting together. The midday supervisors were very complimentary about how the older children looked after the younger ones at lunchtimes and were given responsibilities such as the playground equipment and the buddy bus stop. There is a quiet reflective area within the school and the children were given a quiet time during collective worship. The school recognises that spirituality is an area that needs further development. The school has recognised the need not only to identify particular values that are at the heart of the school's Christian ethos but also to ensure they are reflected in their vision. The new head teacher has been instrumental in writing a manifesto reflecting her thoughts regarding Church school distinctiveness and her vision for the future. It includes such elements as how they will nurturing Christian values, develop the R.E. teaching by focusing on assessment, develop evaluation of collective worship and evidence the church school distinctiveness. This has been shared with all staff and the Diocesan adviser and shows that the school has good capacity to improve as a distinctive Church School

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship occupies an important place in the life of the school, is well planned and enjoyed by the learners who can clearly articulate its importance in their lives. There is a broad range of worship themes that give the pupils opportunities to reflect on events in the Christian calendar and cover issues that affect their lives. All of these are based on the bible and make an impact on the learners. This was evident in the way they talk about collective worship and its relevance to them. The learners could remember many acts of collective worship they had enjoyed and the underlying messages that they gave. The head teacher makes acts of worship exciting and gives ownership to the children. She has begun to involve the pupils in planning and evaluation "It's much better than it used to be. Now they ask our ideas and involve us and we all get to say what we think." On the day of the inspection the collective worship was to do with gifts, talents and loosing and the children were asked to move to the left or the right or stay in the middle of the hall according to their opinion about who was the best. The question was asked "Does loosing matter to God?" and one pupil replied "God and Jesus see the best in everyone" The pupils have a good understanding of prayer, that it is a way of talking to God and saying thank you or asking for help. The school emphasises this by lighting the candle just before a time of reflection and prayer in collective worship. The singing of the hymns was accompanied by actions and the learners were fully involved even the younger children. All teaching staff lead collective worship and everyone is present. The school had managed very well during an interregnum and a retired member of the clergy who was a governor had continued the practise of taking an act of collective worship each week. There were also other visitors who came in including the Methodist minister. The school was looking forward to continuing the good links with the church under the new curate.

The effectiveness of the religious education is satisfactory

Standards of achievement in Religious Education are broadly in line with national expectations. Attainment throughout the school is average. The overall quality of the teaching varied between classes but all was satisfactory. The pupils' attitudes to R.E. are positive. They say that they enjoy their learning because the teachers make it exciting. This was seen in a lesson with years 3 and 4 about how Christians use the Bible. They had been studying the story of Joseph and the focus was on the problems that this story portrayed and how they could relate the solutions to their own lives. The lesson developed with groups of pupils acting out the story of Joseph. The teacher took photos of their expressions which were used later to talk about the possible emotions being experienced. In the second part of the lesson

the learners acted out a modern version. The skilful questioning by the teacher helped them to focus clearly on how the Bible can have an impact on their lives today. Children are encouraged to develop their confidence and respond with deeper thoughts. The school follows the Devon Agreed syllabus. The R.E. coordinator has only been leading this area this term but she has a good grasp of the subject and ensures it is an important part of the curriculum. She is knowledgeable about standards and achievement and is very aware that the next step to develop is an improved form of assessment which will help to identify trends and future provision. She is very committed to extending this area and as a result the school has chosen to be a part of the Diocesan pilot in assessing pupil performance in R.E. There are good resources available and the R.E coordinator has undertaken recent training.

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

The head teacher in the short time she has been leading the school has introduced new initiatives that are taking the Christian ethos forward. This is most obvious in the fresh approach being taken in collective worship. With the arrival of the new vicar and a new foundation governor the head teacher is now wishing to revisit the mission statement and her vision for the school with all stakeholders and to raise the profile of its Christian foundation. Her manifesto indicates this quite clearly. The governors are very much aware of their position in terms of self evaluation of the church school distinctiveness and have begun to be much more involved in this area. They are already monitoring collective worship on a regular basis and need now to report some of this monitoring back to the whole governing body. This term they have invited parents to come and meet them and raise any issues they may have. The new foundation governor has quickly gained an understanding of his role and is keen to see this develop and to become more involved in the whole area of governance of a church school. Despite the interregnum, important relationships with the parish church have been successfully maintained through key church members and the input of a retired member of the clergy who is a governor of the school. The church building has been used for various celebrations and the foundation governors see the school as at “the heart of the community”. The school inputs to the community magazine and the church uses the school newsletter home to inform parents of such things as family services. A new curate has now been appointed and the school is keen to begin working closely with her. Parents are very supportive of the school and say that the strong values give their children clear guidelines through which they can lead their lives. They appreciate that the new headteacher is making the Christian ethos more evident and those spoken to are happy with the direction being taken.

SIAS report December 2010 Bampton Church of England V.A. Primary school, School Close , Bampton, Tiverton, Devon EX16 9NW