



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Bampton Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Church Close, Bampton, Devon, EX16 9NW

Previous SIAS grade: Good

Current SIAMS grade: Satisfactory

Diocese: Exeter

Local authority: Devon

Dates of inspection: 20 January 2016

Date of last inspection: 2 December 2010

School's unique reference number: 113494

Executive Headteacher: Sandy Brown. Headteacher Gary Bladon

Inspector's name and number: Daphne Spitzer NS No 37

School context

Bampton Church of England Primary School is set in a rural location and serves the village of Bampton and surrounding areas near the town of Tiverton. It has 102 children on roll, arranged in single year groups in Key Stage 1 and two mixed age classes in Key Stage 2. It has a 27 place nursery class. The vast majority of children are from white British heritage families. The numbers of children with special educational needs and/or physical disabilities is above the national average and those eligible to be in receipt of Pupil Premium is below the national average. Since the last inspection the school has experienced a period of significant turbulence resulting in poor leadership and low standards. During 2013 the school entered into a Management Partnership with the South West Schools Federation Woolacombe and Combe Martin Community Schools and in May 2015 became a school within their federation. There has been a complete change of staff over the last 2 years, with a third of teaching staff, having started in January. Under the leadership of the new headteacher and executive headteacher standards have now risen and are good.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Bampton VA Church of England Primary School as a Church of England school are satisfactory

- Relationships based on Christian values such as forgiveness promote children's personal development
- The quality of spiritual awareness promoted by collective worship has a positive impact on the children's personal as well as spiritual development
- The strong church community is committed to working in partnership with the school to promote the school's distinctive Christian character for all the children's benefit

Areas to improve

- Develop and embed a core set of Christian values and seek opportunities to use them

to promote children's academic achievement as well as their personal development

- Monitor and evaluate the impact of the school's distinctive Christian character, including collective worship and religious education, with the whole school community, in order to raise their impact
- Develop a system for recording learning in religious education (RE) in order to identify and share individual progress and raise attainment

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

Bampton is a friendly and welcoming school community. Christian values both implicit and explicit now have a positive impact on children's personal development. Over the last two years there has been a concerted approach to improving the school's distinctive Christian character with the result that behaviour and relationships between children are now good. This is evident in the way children help and care for each other, for example, at lunchtimes and the way older children care for younger ones as they walk to church together. Children find it hard to identify and talk about Christian values in general because they have not been promoted on a sufficiently regular basis to make an impact on the children. As a result the school's distinctive Christian character is not yet fully developed. However, positive relationships are promoted by the way children recognise and understand the Christian value of forgiveness linked to the Easter story. The school promotes spiritual development well. For example, children are able to discuss their own beliefs and opinions about matters of faith in a secure and supportive setting. Children are developing an effective understanding of Christianity as a global faith. This has been promoted in particular by a recent link made with an African community. A recent trip to the city of London has provided opportunities to widen children's experiences and better meet the children's needs. As a result they demonstrate an open and tolerant attitude to people from diverse communities.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship is an important time in the day at Bampton for the whole school community. This is because children enjoy the opportunities presented to participate and are keen to contribute. Worship promotes spiritual development very well. A time of prayer and guided reflection at the end of worship ensures that the Christian message is understood at a personal level. For example, following reflection on the story of baby Moses in the bulrushes, a child said that as with Moses, God had a plan for himself because his life had been saved when he'd had an accident. Prayer is now integral to the school day. For instance, it is promoted well by reflective spaces in classrooms and the way prayers from the reflection tree are used in worship. As a result, children's growing personal spirituality is evident in their ability to confidently volunteer to say prayers spontaneously. Children are developing a good understanding of Anglican tradition. For instance, from the responses said when the three candles are lit to represent the Trinity and the coloured cloths linked to the church's seasons as well as the practice of saying the Lord's Prayer. The leadership of worship is effective, reflected in the way that its profile has been raised since the recent change of school leadership. The planning is detailed providing positive support for staff. Themes for worship although providing for the children's moral development are focussed mainly on the church's calendar. As a result, valuable opportunities to promote distinctive Christian values which will impact on the life of the school are missed. The recent introduction of the Open the book team is providing children with additional knowledge and understanding of Bible stories as well as increasing opportunities to participate. As yet, evaluation of worship is at the developing stage noted from the informal way that views from parents and children are sought. The governors' ethos team discuss worship regularly and next plan to include the evaluation of Christian festivals in their monitoring programme.

The effectiveness of the religious education is satisfactory

Standards in RE for the majority of children are in line with national expectations. Progress

across the key stages is satisfactory. Teaching observed was at least good as verified by the subject leader's monitoring. However, data demonstrating children's progress is limited due to the short period that children's learning has been assessed and their progress tracked. It is also limited by the lack of exemplars of assessed work.

The curriculum is interesting and engaging, ensuring that children enjoy the subject and find it relevant. Religious education promotes spiritual development very well. For instance, children are able to identify with the feelings of characters in Bible stories. This was evident when young children were exploring the feelings of the shepherd and the lost sheep, seen in a comment such as 'maybe I would ask God for some help'. However, RE does not promote distinctive Christian values in an effective way because explicit links to values such as perseverance or trust in the parable were missed. Where enquiry skills are used, such as in the lesson taught by the subject leader learning is of the highest quality. Children were using investigative skills very well to generate questions which elicited perceptive responses which promoted spiritual awareness very effectively. Although, to some extent evidence of learning is demonstrated by RE class Reflective Journals a lack of learning on an individual basis restricts progress and does not reflect the subject's profile as a core subject. Individual books for RE have been introduced for older children but these books are not yet being used to their full capacity to improve learning. This is because marking does not always promote learning; for example by including guidance in how individual children can improve, thus enabling them to achieve higher standards. The subject leader uses professional development effectively, ensuring that members of staff are well informed of current developments and well supported in their practice. He is currently addressing the need to improve the school's understanding of new assessment strategies in the light of current national expectations.

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

The headteacher has made an effective start in promoting the school's distinctive Christian character during the short time since his appointment. The school leadership are aware that during the recent past the school's distinctive Christian character was barely adequate and no coherent vision existed to drive improvement. A concerted approach by leaders including governors and church members, is being made to reverse this situation. Since the school joined the federation an ethos team has been formed which is working hard to proclaim and celebrate the school's Christian identity. It has now agreed an ethos and mission statement and next plans to develop its Christian vision with the whole school community. However, the need to develop and embed explicit Christian values in all aspects of daily life at Bampton has been delayed and not all issues from the last inspection have been fully met. Parents say they recognise that strong leadership has been effective in reinvigorating the school's Christian character and raising its impact on the children's behaviour. In particular they say that the school's promotion of Christ's command to love your neighbour is evident in the way children relate to one another. Parents comment on children's growing spirituality; the way they now talk about God and are keen to ask challenging questions about life. Self-evaluation strategies mainly through the newly formed ethos team, include learning walks and although effective are mainly informal and the process not yet established. The partnership between the school and diocese is good. The school feels well supported and has benefitted from relevant professional development. The church has greatly welcomed the open approach from the school. The recently formed Open the Book team and ethos team now contribute much valued support to the life of the school. The work of the church and school to place the church school at the heart of the local community is bearing fruit. The school meets the statutory requirements for RE and collective worship.

SIAMS report January 2016, Bampton Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, Bampton, EX16 9NW

