

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Bolsover Church of England Voluntary Controlled Junior School	Horsehead Lane, Bolsover Derbyshire S44 6XH
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Satisfactory
Diocese	Derby
Previous SIAMS inspection grade:	Outstanding
Local authority	Derbyshire
Date/s of inspection	22 June 2017
Date of last inspection	3 July 2012
School's unique reference number	112801
Headteacher	Claire Bailey
Inspector's name and number	Elizabeth Stanley-Wainwright 880

School context

Bolsover is a larger than average size junior school situated in a new development located to the east of the centre of Bolsover. The numbers on roll are stable however, there has been a period of instability within staffing. Since the previous inspection, there has been a change of leadership with the current acting headteacher being in place for just over one month having previously been head of school. The majority of pupils are White British and the proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above average. The proportion of pupils with Education Health Care plans is above average. Attendance in school is in line with the national. Ofsted judged the school inadequate in February 2017 and the school is converting into a Diocese academy.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Bolsover as a Church of England school are satisfactory

- The ethos of the school is based on the Christian values of respect, faith, hope and love.
- Pupils have a voice and are encouraged to care, nurture and support each other and the animals in their care.
- Pupils welcome visitors into their school and are proud of their achievements.

Areas to improve

- Pupils need more opportunity to plan, lead and evaluate collective worship.
- Professional development needs to be in place to ensure the leadership and management of Religious Education and collective worship are a priority within the school.
- Pupil's understanding of Christianity in a multicultural world needs strengthening.
- Ensure that all governors are fully involved in regular evaluation of the distinctiveness and effectiveness of the school as a Church of England school.

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

Bolsover Junior school is a friendly, warm, family orientated school where pupils say they are happy and safe. The learning environments are colourful, interactive and there are Christian symbols throughout the building, which pupils clearly use throughout their day for reflection. The school has recently reviewed its behaviour policy and the pupils say, 'they know that staff will listen to them'. Both pupils and staff report that there has been a huge improvement in behaviour since the review and throughout the inspection pupils were polite, showing acts of kindness and working together as part of a team. The use of family dining helps pupils to take responsibility and to value lunchtime as a period for informal discussion and serving one another. The school encourages all parents and families to attend community lunch each month where pupils serve their visitors and promote positive relationships. Adults and pupils have a clear understanding of spirituality and can confidently express their thoughts and respond well to each other. Pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is linked to a broad and balanced curriculum and is founded on Christian values resulting in plenty of opportunity to deepen pupils' understanding of the Christian faith. Relationships between pupils, staff, parents and governors is based on respect and all parties know that they can challenge, discuss and question each other without fear of reprisal. The sense of family has been made explicit by the new acting headteacher who has worked hard to open up the lines of communication and empower, pupils, staff and parents to have a voice within school. While pupils have an understanding of a variety of faiths and respect for others' differences, their knowledge of Christianity, as a multicultural world faith is less secure. In addition to creating links with other church schools locally, the pupils have regular Skype sessions with a school in Egypt pupils have the opportunity to ask questions and talk to each other about their beliefs and way of life. The pupils report that these sessions are valuable as it helps them to think about others living in different parts of the world. The school's use of animals have helped to enhance pupils understanding of life and death. They have a range of animals including pigs, goats and guinea pigs and all pupils are involved in ensuring that all God's creature are cared for and loved. This is demonstrated in children visiting the animals at weekends and during the holidays to maintain the animals' welfare. Pupils say, 'God created the world and he cares about us all, including our animals, he will never turn his back on us'. The school grounds are used as part of the learning environment however, there are many missed opportunities for awe and wonder and using the outdoor space for spiritual development.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is satisfactory

The school has a large purpose built hall, used for whole school worship. The pupils enter in a calm and quiet manner as music is played, candles are lit and a cross is on display. There are many display boards and a range of opportunities for reflection promoted by the quality displays. Each classroom has a reflective space, which is used to encourage pupils to stop, think and pray. The power of prayer can be seen throughout the school where children have written prayers for themselves and for others and each class has their own end of day prayer, which they say together. Pupils engage in the Lord's Prayer in worship and are able to talk about what it means to them. Pupils have a good understanding of prayer and its relevance in daily life. Within worship, there is opportunity for pupils to share prayers from the prayer box with the whole school. The pupils are well behaved and eager to take part in the worship. There is a strong sense of linking current events to the Bible and staff give the pupils the opportunity to share their thoughts and express ideas. Art plays an important part in pupils' understanding of Christianity and faith as the art produced throughout the school celebrates God's beautiful world. Worship is based on the teachings of Jesus and the themes planned by staff support this. Although pupils do have some input into worship this is somewhat limited and does not demonstrate their knowledge and understanding. Pupils have some knowledge about God as father, son and holy spirit and can talk about the Trinity in its simplest form. Throughout the year, the school visits the church, St Mary and St Laurence, to celebrate Christian festivals. Rev'd Rachel comes into school on a regular basis to support and lead collective worship. She also comes into school to carry out a Eucharist celebration, which the children say they enjoy, as they are able to plan and deliver this service. Bolsover church have worked with the school to produce a 'schools' resource pack' to help plan for church visits and help children get the most out of their visit to church buildings. The leadership of collective worship is under review and although planning is in place there is little evaluation of its impact on the pupils. The foundation governors have carried out learning walks based on spirituality and their findings have led to increased opportunities for all children to reflect and to be still. The church council have also started to monitor worship and pupils report, 'being a church councillor makes me feel special because the teachers trust us'.

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

The new acting headteacher can confidently articulate the vision based on distinctively Christian values, this has lately been reviewed in a very short time and skilfully shared with the school community. The self-evaluation has been recently completed with the school community and is an accurate reflection of the schools current performance. Leaders are aware of the up-to-date developments in RE and have made good use of the Diocesan training regarding the Understanding Christianity resource, which is starting to be used within school. The pupils say they now feel they are listened to and can influence change within school through the school council. The staff have encouraged pupils to be courageous in all that they do and all staff model this. The governors are very passionate about their school and fully support the acting headteacher in implementing changes to bring about rapid improvement. Withstanding this, the governors acknowledge that they need to continue to build a stronger platform for challenge and ensure that all leaders are held accountable for outcomes for all pupils. Governors make frequent visits into school and have access to the key documents. Both of these are starting to help them have a better understanding of the school's performance against the national expectations. There has been a recent review of governance and governors now feel empowered to ask challenging and honest questions of leaders. The role of governors in monitoring and evaluation of the school as a distinctive church school is in the early stages and therefore, the strategies that lead to sustained development and improvement are not yet embedded. The school council, with the support of a foundation governor, regularly writes articles for the church magazine to ensure that the church community is up to date with school activities. The role of the school council needs further development in order for pupils to develop their skills to contribute to governors meetings. This would help them to have a better understanding of how to apply their literacy and numeracy skills for a real purpose. The governors and leaders acknowledge that communication within school has improved and parents are made aware of events and information through the school website and newsletters. The school website does celebrate this church school's distinctiveness and gives a clear picture of the experiences that children have in school through its updated information about collective worship and church school status within the community. The links between school and the church are in place and beginning to have an impact upon pupils understanding of the Christianity. However, the school acknowledges that this needs to be strengthened in order to impact upon all pupils, staff and parents.

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