

## Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

### St Bartholomew's Church of England Primary School

Ann Street, Brighton, BN1 4GP

**Current SIAMS inspection grade**

**Satisfactory**

**Diocese**

**Chichester**

Previous SIAMS inspection grade

Good

Local authority

Brighton and Hove

Date of inspection

5 December 2016

Date of last inspection

27 January 2011

Type of school and unique reference number

Voluntary aided 114538

Acting Executive Headteacher

Mike Jee

Inspector's name and number

Rosemary Appleby 749

#### School context

St Bartholomew's CE primary is smaller than the average size primary school with 193 pupils on roll. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is higher than the national average, as is the number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The number of pupils with English as a second language is significantly above national average. Attendance is below national average but current data indicates that attendance is improving. The school was judged to be requiring improvement by Ofsted in 2014 and 2016. An acting executive headteacher has been in place, for two days per week, since September 2016.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Bartholomew's as a Church of England school is satisfactory

- The Christian character of the school is shown through a strong ethos of nurture resulting in the school community feeling that they are part of a family.
- Leaders show a readiness for improvement through accurate self-evaluation of areas that need developing to enable improvement of the Christian character of the school.
- Inclusivity is valued and linked to the Christian value of friendship by the school community.

#### Areas to improve

- Strengthen the process of self-evaluation through formal monitoring of all aspects of the school's Christian distinctiveness, gathering robust evidence of how the Christian character impacts on all learners.
- Make the school's Christian values more explicit in the life of the school. Ensure that the St Bartholomew's 'winged' learners', mission statement, golden values and Christian vision are coherently linked through Christian values and enable the school community to confidently articulate the impact on their daily lives.
- Significantly raise attainment and progress in religious education (RE) by:
  - raising expectations, so that the RE tasks consistently and effectively support and challenge pupils to deepen and broaden their knowledge and skills
  - focusing assessment and feedback, so that pupils know what they need to do in order to improve work further, thus enabling leaders to track progress and attainment across the school.
  - enhance teachers' subject knowledge so that they feel confident about teaching the revised RE curriculum and supporting pupils to develop a range of skills including enquiry, analysis and reflection.

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

This is an improving church school where there has been a focus on driving up attainment and improving leadership across the school. Although some academic outcomes remain below floor targets, data shows an upward trend illustrating that attainment is catching up with national expectations. St Bartholomew's school effectively provides an inclusive environment where the needs of families are met. This high level of nurture and care to its school community is guided by a strong Christian ethos of love, friendship and respect. Pupils say that friendship is important because 'we like loving people because it makes us feel special'. Parents praise the school because it treats 'children as individuals and addresses their individual needs and involves parents'. They choose this school because there 'is a genuine faith' and the 'school is about what they can do for us'. Inclusivity is explicit and pictures of families around the world are representative of the school's families on roll and celebrate the school's diversity. The school motto of 'Learning for life within Christian values' drives the school and governors are steadfast that 'faith is at the heart of our school community'. The school community confidently talk about the schools' 'winged' learning values and golden values; be calm, positive, respectful, polite and safe. However, these have not been linked to the school's mission statement or Christian values and do not provide a coherent picture of the school's Christian ethos. This means that the school is not explicit about which Christian values are driving their Christian foundation and the school community cannot confidently articulate the impact of Christian values on their daily lives. Pupils understand that giving money for charity, such raising money for a school in Sierra Leone and Red Nose Day is important because it helps to give others a better life. They link the Christian values of respectfulness, kindness and generosity to their fundraising. St Bartholomew's have welcomed Syrian refugees into school; they involve them and their families in day to day life of the school and create a calm environment for praying and fasting during Ramadan for Muslim staff and families. In this way pupils are exposed to the needs of diverse communities in the UK and abroad. Displays around the school of Black History Month, Martin Luther King, Remembrance Day, and class reflection areas contribute to social, moral, spiritual and cultural (SMSC) education. They provide an environment which reflects the school's foundation and as a result frame reflection in a Christian context.

### **The impact of collective worship on the school community is satisfactory**

Collective worship is a distinct time in the school day when the school gather together as a family. Most pupils are respectful through participation in worship such as singing and praying. Aspects of Anglican worship such as praying, reflection, lighting a candle for advent and singing hymns are established and reflect the shape of Anglican worship. Some pupils know that lighting a candle is to show that Jesus is the light of the world. Pupils learn about important times in the church year. They know that that Advent is about preparing for the birth of Jesus and this is linked to helping others through 'random acts of kindness' as modelled by Saint Nicholas. There is an appropriate focus on the centrality of Jesus Christ in worship. Reference is made to God as Father, Son and Holy spirit but learners do not yet understand this is called the Trinity. The weekly mass at St Bartholomew's parish church is central to the life of the school. Year 6 write and read prayers and serve at mass. Pupils are proud of their local church and 'find it special going into church because it's a calm space where you can relax'. The proximity of the church to the school increases its profile and it is valued by the school community. Services at St Bartholomew's church such as Remembrance Day, harvest, Christingle, year 6 leaver's service, carol singing and confirmation of pupils appropriately extend Anglican tradition. St Bartholomew's church is currently recruiting for a leader. However, clergy from a local church regularly lead worship at the school and are known well by the school community. Pupils know that the curate is important because 'she teaches us about Christianity'. Pupils do not experience contributions from other Christian leaders, therefore they do not experience a rich range of worship and the school is actively seeking to increase the range of leaders for worship. Prayer is valued and pupils know you can pray to God to 'say how fortunate you are'. Reflection areas in each classroom provide opportunities for spirituality by providing a quiet place to pray read the Bible and write prayers. After a recent monitoring visit governors fed back that pupils were not engaged with the prayer said before lunch. Therefore each class now has a prayer book where they write personal prayers. Pupils choose a prayer to read before lunch. Pupils value the new practice of choosing a prayer to read and reflect upon before lunch each day. The school prayer and prayers written by both staff and pupils are displayed around school and reinforce the importance of prayer. Pupils know that the Bible is important to Christians because it is 'like a map to guide you the right way'. However, pupils find it challenging to talk about their favourite Bible stories so most pupils are not yet linking these stories to their own lives or to Christian values. Adults are starting to evaluate worship. However, this is not yet embedded and pupils do not formally evaluate worship. Planning is appropriate but is not contributed to by a variety of stakeholders. Recently this has been the responsibility of the curate while the school seeks a permanent leader of collective worship

### **The effectiveness of the religious education is inadequate**

The school is currently revising its scheme of work for Religious Education (RE) using the Guildford Syllabus. It is challenging to assess coverage, progress and attainment in RE as the quantity and quality of recording is limited and revised long term planning is only completed for one term. Differentiation is not evident in RE work and tasks are heavily reliant upon worksheets rather than the pupils giving their personal responses; as a result pupils are not sufficiently developing skills such as enquiry, analysis and reflection. The school has recently and accurately evaluated that RE is in need of urgent attention and has started to raise its profile. Staff attended a deanery inset day in January 2016 led by Lat Blaylock who is the editor of RE today and a respected RE trainer. This is effectively increasing the confidence of staff which is evident in RE lessons but the impact has not yet been assessed and the knowledge gained is not yet embedded across the school. A senior leader has recently become the RE leader. She is enthusiastic and has recently written an appropriate plan to improve RE provision. This plan includes using the expertise of the local network of church schools to introduce assessment of RE across the school. Staff are enthusiastic when teaching RE and lessons are becoming more creative through the use of drama, art and music. One example of this was art work by the pupils which illustrated their thoughtful representations of the nativity. Pupils learn about the annunciation and about angels being special. However teacher knowledge is not yet secure and misconceptions are not always challenged which limits the progress made by pupils. Pupils learn about Christianity, Judaism, Islam and Buddhism and through this work pupils develop compassion, empathy and respect for other cultures although their understanding of the global nature of Christianity is limited. The monitoring and evaluation of RE has not been given the priority that the current leadership team aspire to for the future. This means that the leadership team do not know the overall RE standards across the school and cannot compare with national expectations or report effectively to governors.

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

There is a clear sense of commitment to the Christian foundation from leaders at all levels who have started to articulate their aspirations for the school. Senior staff share a vision for the school where the current school 'winged' learning values are linked to explicit Christian values and all stakeholders will be enabled to articulate how they impact on their daily lives. They aspire for their pupils to be confident, capable, compassionate, reflective and independent thinkers. Governors recently wrote their vision for the impact of their Christian foundation on the achievement and wellbeing of those in their care after a meeting with the Director of Education for the Diocese of Chichester. Governors aspire for an environment where they 'cherish and safeguard the image of God in all of our pupils, staff, parents and governors' and 'learn to grow in mutual respect, to care for each other, and to celebrate diversity'. Leadership is driven by the school's mission statement of 'Learning for life within Christian values'. Christian values, although not explicitly expressed, underpin and have a demonstrable positive impact on the school's approach to relationships, the pupils' wellbeing and attitudes towards learning. The leadership team are passionate about ensuring that care for each other and respect are embedded in the daily life of the school. Governors are committed to the Christian ethos of the school and support the school through visits and have recently interviewed pupils about their attitudes to the weekly mass at St Bartholomew's church. Information from Governor visit days is beginning to be fed into the strategic planning cycle and inform discussion around the improvement plan. In recent times there has been no significant use of diocesan training to support staff and governors either in their development as leaders in a church school or in the monitoring of St Bartholomew's as a church school. A lack of formal evidence gathering, such as discussions with pupils, has resulted in leaders not being secure regarding the extent of the impact of Christian distinctiveness on the school community. Governors are aware of the urgent need to put measures in place to formally monitor and evaluate Christian distinctiveness across the school. This is because systems for monitoring and evaluating the impact of the school's Christian character on pupils' achievement and well-being are not yet sufficiently established, formal or rigorous in identifying areas for future improvement. This is illustrated in the school's self-evaluation document which lacks information and detail of impact. However recent support for leadership from the acting executive headteacher, local authority and diocese is increasing confidence and raising awareness of the areas for improvement. Governors are currently recruiting for a permanent headteacher and are resolute that they want the future headteacher to be a deeply committed Christian who will support them in strengthening the Christian character of the school. Parents value the developing community links with the church and say that services at St Bartholomew's church 'bring us all together'. A recently formed partnership with a local supermarket has resulted in donations to enable pupils to make christingles. The arrangements for RE and collective worship meet statutory requirements.