

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Bury Church of England Primary School

Owls End Ramsey Huntingdon PE26 2NJ	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Ely
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Date of academy conversion	September 2013
Name of multi-academy trust	Diocese of Ely Multi Academy Trust
Date of inspection	8 February 2018
Date of last inspection	19 February 2013
Type of school and unique reference number	Primary Academy 139844
Headteacher	Emma Heanes
Inspector's name and number	Pat George 845

School context

Bury is a one-form entry school of 186 children. The school is part of the Diocese of Ely Multi-Academy Trust [DEMAT]. Attainment data is above national averages. Pupils come mainly from the village itself, although some come from the surrounding area. There is little deprivation and the pupils are predominantly from a White British background. 16% are entitled to pupil premium with 9% of pupils identified with special educational needs or disabilities [SEND] including 1 child with an educational health care plan. The school enjoys close links with the nearby church. Since the last inspection in 2013, a new head teacher has been appointed and has been in post since September 2015.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Bury as a Church of England school are outstanding

- Christian values are at the heart of school daily life and impact significantly on pupil spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC). Pupils explain how Christian values contribute to and link with British values.
- Positive relationships between all members of the school community and the respect and care between pupils and staff are built on distinctly Christian values and embedded in the daily life of the school.
- Worship is linked to Christian values and biblical teachings. Learners are aware of the central role of Jesus Christ and have a good age appropriate understanding of the Trinity.

Areas to improve

- To continue to build on current opportunities provided for pupil involvement in worship, including how feedback is provided and a more formal link to the governing body, so that pupils are able to deliver both planned and spontaneous acts of worship.
- To broaden pupil understanding of difference and diversity within and between faiths; also their awareness and understanding of Christianity as a worldwide faith and of difference and diversity within other denominations so that they have a clearer understanding of their place in the wider Christian family.
- To ensure consistency in learning objectives and marking effectiveness in RE to further raise attainment and knowledge and understanding of pupils.

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

The whole school community follows the core values of friendship love and forgiveness. Staff are very articulate about how they value the Christian distinctiveness. Values include hope, peace, service, compassion and thankfulness. These are celebrated in a poster with God at the core as the trunk and the values the branches. Pupils readily explain this and the symbolism of the dove as the Holy Spirit in another picture. The values are on the website but they don't have the prominence that reflects their impact in school. Both adults and children can demonstrate how their Christian values enable British values to be taught effectively.

The school has robust systems in place to respond to needs of individual pupils and appropriate support is provided not only for academic but for social and emotional needs. This and the pupils' enjoyment of learning and school life leads to above national average attendance. Data supports the positive impact of these interventions and shows achievement at or above national standards. Trends for progress and attainment are positive. Vulnerable pupils are well cared for with opportunities for meetings with the inclusion lead which enable them to work towards a range of individual targets.

The Christian character makes a positive contribution to learners' personal wellbeing through developing self-esteem and resilience impacting positively on their academic progress. Pupils say the distinctiveness brings God into their learning. Core Christian values support the children well, consequently pupils are clear they are a Christian family. Pupils readily talk about how this is what school means to them, love and forgiveness. Pupils contribute to school life through the school council and the eco council and can explain how this links to their core values. Pupils are developing reflection space outside. They also have a buddy system, with Y6 pupils supporting YR including first thing in the morning. Pupils are clear the values show them the right things to do. Behaviour is exemplary.

Parents and governors talk about the impact of the distinctiveness on children and how school supports the whole child. They feel the values in school equip the children for life. One parent spoke about how buddies who have gone on to secondary school keep in touch with the children they have supported. Parents appreciate the inclusive nature of the school and that the values are a part of school everyday life. They appreciate the worship through celebration of music. They feel included and have the opportunity to contribute to development, including of Christian distinctiveness, through questionnaires.

Learners are aware that Christianity is a worldwide faith but are still developing their depth of knowledge about this. Pupils are accepting and respectful of the diversity and difference of the other denominations; however their knowledge of these and major faiths is underdeveloped. The input of RE into the distinctively Christian character of the school and its impact on SMSC is clearly evidenced by pupils. It supports the Christian character of the school by providing opportunities to explore key concepts and questions. The Christian character supports a focus on responsibility and service, including fundraising for those in need, having a positive impact on pupil SMSC.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship plays a major role in the life of the school and there is universal praise for its contribution to their community. Planning is done by the headteacher and the teacher with responsibility for RE and collective worship; themes are linked to the values, Bible stories and the church year. Worship is led by a variety of adults in school including the incumbent, though rarely by other adults from different Christian denominations. Pupils are confident in planning, leading and participating in worship. They are active in sharing the new theme and its message at the beginning of the week. They are familiar with a range of liturgical greetings. Worship through music is a strength of the school and supports spirituality for the whole community. Pupils pray in worship through speaking and singing and have time for reflection. Their spirituality is enhanced by the gathering and sending being completely silent, just accompanied by music. Pupils feel worship helps them understand what is important and how to behave. 'The Bible helps us to be better Christians'. They explain the Old and New Testament as the first being about God, the second about Jesus.

Worship follows the Anglican gather, engage, respond, send format. Children can explain the significance of the candle in worship and of the other focus objects on the prayer table. They explain that the colour of the cloth follows the church year. The messages from worship and important times of the church year eg. Easter are supported by opportunities to read and tell the stories with story stones. Sending includes a message for the day. The incumbent describes the school and worship as encouraging and inviting people in.

Pupils value prayer and reflection and have a good understanding of reasons to pray; to talk to God, share your worries, to listen to God, to keep us safe, say thank you, when you make a mistake and ask for help. They relate prayer to their value of forgiveness. They regularly use the reflection space inside in the atrium and are confident about praying in different places and at different times of the day, during worship, before bed. They write and share their own prayers in worship and on class prayer boards in the atrium/reflection area. They explain the crosses in

their classrooms are important because Jesus died on the cross. Pupils have a good understanding of the Trinity as a three, God the father, Jesus the son on earth, incarnation and the Holy Spirit who lives in you.

Worship is well led and monitored. Governors are regular visitors to worship and consequently have a good understanding of worship in school. Governors, staff and pupils provide regular feedback. Governor records of visit are fed back to the full governing body.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

RE is taught using the locally agreed syllabus and Understanding Christianity which is fully implemented across the school. RE has a prominent place within the school curriculum and standards are good. Teachers have well developed subject knowledge and high expectations for pupil learning. Marking is sometimes effective, however this is not consistent across the school and at times the marking is not linked to the RE objectives. There were some good examples of marking developing pupil knowledge and understanding through challenging questions which pupils respond to. Books show that pupils needing additional support are accessing this in RE. Topic links are made to other subjects for example science and maths. KS2 pupils took part in a concert at Ely Cathedral celebrating science and religion. Learning is well planned. Assessment is in place and the school monitors progression and reports to the governing body. There is a governor responsible for RE which ensures its high profile with the full governing body and supports the RE leaders, a teacher and the headteacher.

Pupils pose their own questions eg. 'Was it fair that God only saved two of each animal from the flood?' In one lesson observed younger children were finding out about Sikhism. They spoke confidently about their prior learning and shared their ideas through discussion and effective use of talking partners. They linked the Sikh value of sharing to school and home and could give examples of when Christians share. eg. When they go to church. They spoke of Guru Nanak as a teacher spreading kindness and that they spread kindness in school. In the other lesson observed, pupils were discussing what God is like using a well-developed vocabulary. They could explain omniscient and omnipresent and were able to articulate their own ideas on the difference between God as holy and as loving. Links were made with worship and their family rules display in the hall. They spoke about the different roles of Jesus and the Holy Spirit and the link to God. Pupils have opportunities to link their learning in RE to the world around them. They say they enjoy RE and lessons are fun. They can make appropriate links between RE and collective worship and values, worship is referenced where appropriate in RE lessons. They show an age appropriate understanding of the shared core aspects of faith and belief. eg. holy books and places of worship.

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

The headteacher has developed a clear vision for the school as a church school since starting in post. This well-articulated, strong vision is shared by senior leaders and other stakeholders. All continually uphold the Christian values providing good role models for pupils. This ensures that pupil SMSC is a priority and the impact across the school is evident in the highly positive relationships. The core values of forgiveness and love are used to support decision making, especially in terms of pupil wellbeing. Staff speak positively about the professional development they have on distinctiveness and values and these are an integral part of the appointment of new staff.

Governors feel it is a family school and the Christian ethos is the heart of the school. They appreciate being attached to one class and following that class through the school. They have supported the school to visit other places of worship through engaging with and supporting parents and accompanying children and staff. Governors are committed to maintaining and enhancing the Christian distinctiveness of the school. They are clear the Christian values and ethos encourage the behaviour and respect for others seen in school, developing confidence in individuals which has a positive influence on standards, attitudes to learning and attendance. Monitoring includes a focus on the distinctive Christian character. Although visits to school are fed back to the governing body, there is as yet no regular formal mechanism for pupils to provide feedback to governors other than for worship.

The relationship with the church is positive and the incumbent is fully involved in the life of the school through pastoral care, leading worship and visits. Parents appreciate the relationship with the church and enjoy worship in church. The 'First Bite' service held monthly in school provides a way for parents to join with their children in a familiar environment. Parents spoke of this as a way into going to church. Worship has a high profile within the school and is well led. Leadership in RE is strong and is committed to ongoing development of the role of RE and its links to other curriculum areas and worship. Self-evaluation as a church school is in place and improvement planning includes a section on distinctiveness which keeps the vision and values to the forefront of leaders' drive for sustained school improvement. The school has very good links with the diocese and supports diocesan training and professional development. It is a valued member of the multi academy trust. Strong leadership has ensured the areas of development from the last inspection have been met and that the school has an ongoing vision for its development as a church school.