

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Barrowby Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Church Street, Barrowby, Grantham, Lincolnshire. NG32 1BX.

Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Lincoln
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Date of inspection	25 November 2016
Date of last inspection	6 December 2011
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Controlled. 120513.
Headteacher	Len Batey
Inspector's name and number	Anne Lumb. 333

School context

This is an average sized primary school located in the village of Barrowby. The majority of pupils are from Barrowby, Barrowby Gate and Barrowby Lodge, with the remaining pupils travelling from other local villages and the nearby town of Grantham. A new headteacher and deputy have been appointed since the last inspection. However, stability has been maintained as both the appointments were made from within the existing staffing structure. The majority of pupils are White British and speak English as their first language. The number of children with special educational needs is lower than average. The local church, which is located next to the school, has close links with the school.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Barrowby Church of England Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding

- This is a deeply spiritual school where all members of the school community are valued as children of God and consequently enabled to 'shine like lights'.
- Religious education (RE) and collective worship are imaginative and well planned, creating a safe space so that all members of the school community engage in highly reflective thinking, times of prayer and asking 'big questions'.
- Senior leaders and foundation governors consistently monitor and evaluate all aspects of the school's Christian distinctiveness thus ensuring that deeply embedded Christian values inform every aspect of school life.

Areas to improve

- Extend pupil leadership roles within school to include the leadership of collective worship thus enabling greater pupil involvement in its planning and delivery.

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

This is a distinctively Christian school in which a strong commitment to an explicit ethos ensures that all pupils have the opportunity to fulfil their potential. Core values of creativity, respect and independence are explicitly derived from biblical teaching and deeply embedded in the life of the school. Parents value the way that Christian teachings from the Bible give pupils opportunities to develop 'a way of life for themselves and not just because school says so'. Children are known as individuals, each one is 'special to God'. Parents comment that the care shown by all members of the school community for each other ensures that school is 'like an extension of family'. The pupils' behaviour is exemplary. All pupils treat staff, visitors and each other with respect and courtesy, within the context of a 'caring Christian community'. Reception children are actively helped to become fully integrated members of the school community by older pupils who have a range of leadership responsibilities within school.

Academic excellence is prioritised alongside spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development which relates to Christian values and teaching so that the needs of all learners are met. Senior leaders ensure that robust monitoring and evaluation, verified by external moderators, leads to appropriate modifications in teaching and learning. Thus standards of achievement, which are higher than the national average, are being maintained. Attendance is high and there are no exclusions.

There are regular opportunities for pupils to engage in high quality experiences which contribute to the development of a deeply spiritual environment. The excellent outdoor learning space has areas specifically set aside for individual reflection and opportunities for awe and wonder within lessons are frequently utilised; Reception children expressing feelings of being 'joyful' and 'excited' following a walk through the autumn leaves. Pupils display a high degree of understanding and respect for different faith communities, speaking enthusiastically about visiting a school in Leicester where they met children from different religious backgrounds with whom they made friends. Religious education has a central role within the curriculum, providing a safe space for pupils to explore their own beliefs and values within the context of the school's values. Pupils are engaged and challenged by high quality RE lessons in which they learn about Christianity and other world faiths whilst relating their learning to their own experiences. In a lesson on dreams in the Bible one Year 5 boy comments on a dream in which he experienced blackness, light and a voice 'which might have been God'.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship is central to the life of the school and all members of the school community engage actively with inspiring whole-school collective worship. They confidently express how worship makes an impact on their lives. Children speak enthusiastically of learning the Lord's Prayer and giving thanks for God's provision; support staff comment positively on being given opportunities to attend collective worship and a teacher speaks of worship as 'a highlight of the day, they are reflective and a joy to be part of'. Collective worship regularly includes biblical material and Christian teaching and pupils have many opportunities to relate this to the school's core values and their own lives. One pupil commented that collective worship 'teaches us lessons and we learn what God is like'. Weekly celebration assemblies are set in the context of collective worship and often include a longer time for prayer. There is a focus on the person of Jesus and on the teaching of the Trinity. Pupils have an age-appropriate appreciation of the concept of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Prayer is deeply embedded so that at times of personal difficulty, such as bereavement, it is the 'natural reaction'. Staff model reflective practice and ensure that children have many opportunities for personal reflection throughout the school day which results in a calm, inclusive, spiritual atmosphere within the school. A senior leader speaks of the learning being 'stimulating and engaging whilst also being able to create moments of calm and reflection'. Pupils are given opportunities to plan collective worship through class worship. However, the wide range of leadership roles in which pupils participate does not currently include leadership of collective worship. A range of leaders from different Christian traditions regularly lead collective worship providing pupils with a rich experience of the diversity of worship traditions. Governors regularly monitor and evaluate collective worship and the views of pupils contribute to the evaluation process, increasing opportunities for children to lead singing and music during collective worship.

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

Leaders passionately articulate a vision which is rooted in distinctively Christian values. Pupils are encouraged to strive for excellence in order to 'be the best they can be and to be like Jesus', saying 'sorry' sincerely and asking for forgiveness so that 'we can play with each other again'. Christian values are woven through the life of the school community and pupils continually 'think of others'. For example, Year 6 pupils raise money each year to fund a legacy project of their choosing (such as a prayer garden) which they give to the school community when they leave. Senior leaders and foundation governors have developed a thorough monitoring and evaluation system which involves the whole school community in identifying key strengths and development points of the school as a church

school. As a result, over a sustained period of time, the school values have been much more explicitly related to Bible teaching and links have been established with a school in a more culturally diverse area. A robust staff interview and induction process ensures that the school retains its distinctively Christian ethos. Staff are provided with excellent opportunities to develop as leaders of church schools resulting in significant benefits for the continuing leadership of the school. Links with the local church are well-developed and mutually supportive. For example, the church provides refreshments for parents collecting their children from school and family church services are regularly publicised by the school. Parents contribute fully to the life of the school. They speak enthusiastically about attending services in the church and the way in which the church, the school and the village community look after each other 'as a close-knit family'. Staff attend appropriate diocesan training enabling them to develop an effective church school self-evaluation process which informs the school development plan. Links with the wider diocese are also maintained through attending services at Lincoln Cathedral and St Wulfram's Church, Grantham. All the development points from the previous inspection have been met resulting in increased experience and awareness of faith diversity, and improvements in the monitoring and evaluation of collective worship by foundation governors. The arrangements for RE and collective worship meet statutory requirements.

SIAMS report November 2016 Barrowby Church of England Primary School, Barrowby, NG32 1BX