

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Broad Chalke Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Newtown,
Broad Chalke,
Salisbury,
Wiltshire,
SP5 5DS

Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Salisbury
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Date of inspection	21 June 2017
Date of last inspection	9 July 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Aided Primary School 126435
Headteacher	Amanda Brockway
Inspector's name and number	Rupert Kaye (906)

School context

Broad Chalke is a smaller than average primary school with 208 children on roll. The school serves families living in local rural communities and those in nearby towns. The number of children from military families is above national average. The majority of children are of a White British heritage. The number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is lower than the national average, as are those entitled to receive pupil premium. There has been low staff turnover and the headteacher has been head in post since January 2013.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Broad Chalke C of E Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The clear Christian vision of the headteacher is pursued with love, joy and passion. She inspires all staff, governors and children to live out the school's Christian values every day.
- Exemplary standards of children's conduct and behaviour are the fruit of excellent, caring and respectful school relationships that are modelled on the person and teaching of Jesus.
- Children are enthusiastic about their involvement in planning, leading and evaluating collective worship and can clearly articulate the relevance of Bible stories to their own and others' lives.

Areas to improve

- Deepen children's understanding of and respect for religious diversity and difference within the Christian church and other faith communities by organising visits to places of worship.
- Extend opportunities for children's spiritual growth through the development of outdoor worship and spiritual areas that provide time and space for awe and wonder as well as prayer and quiet reflection.
- Review religious education (RE) assessments, taking into consideration both the school's phased introduction of Understanding Christianity resources and age-related mastery approaches to assessing children's higher order thinking skills and comprehension of key concepts.

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

The school's mission statement 'With the love of God we learn, care, grow and share' is well understood and lived out with enthusiasm by school leaders, staff and children. Each of the four core Christian values is linked explicitly to a Bible verse that exemplifies its meaning. This strengthens the theological basis of the values which support the school's vision. Furthermore, each core value echoes one of the four basic elements of the Church of England's *Vision for Education*: 'Learning' relates to 'Educating for wisdom, knowledge and skills'; 'Caring' links to 'Educating for community and living well together'; 'Growing' corresponds to 'Educating for dignity and respect'; and 'Sharing' matches with 'Educating for hope and aspiration'. Children talk about the four core values and 12 supporting values in terms of how they have affected their own choices and achievements. Moreover, children relate these values to specific Bible quotes which are displayed prominently around the school premises. For example, the Bible quote for the value of 'service' is stencilled on the school office counter: 'Serve one another in love'. The school's website clearly sets out the school's mission and values, stating: 'Our church school status is at the heart of everything we do and every decision which we take'. Staff are committed to ensuring children feel safe and happy. Relationships are strong, highly respectful and mutually supportive between all parts of the school community including church members. Children say that school leaders and staff respect them and listen to their views. Parents attribute the outstanding behaviour to the school's commitment to helping children to live out the school's core Christian values. Parents comment that 'older children mix with and take care of younger children and speak of a 'strong sense of school community' that 'feels like one big family'. This is of particular relevance given that the majority of children attending Broad Chalke live outside the village. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development is outstanding as a result of a focused Christian ethos and a highly developed understanding of spirituality that is shared across the school community. For example, parents and governors value the Year 6 residential to inner-city Bristol (which includes time at Bristol Cathedral) and the Year 5 children's residential to Lee Abbey, a Christian retreat centre in Devon. As one governor put it, 'Lee Abbey signifies the school's belief that children's spiritual development is just as important as their physical and academic development'. School leaders make the school building available for a Christian holiday club called 'Treasure Hunters' and monthly 'Revive' Sunday worship services. Each of these is attended by Broad Chalke children who would not otherwise experience Christian worship and teaching outside of the school day. Children have a well-developed sense of Christianity as a worldwide faith. This is because the school and local community share a strong connection with South Sudan thanks to links to the ministry of CRESS (Christian Relief and Education in South Sudan). Consequently, children talk sensitively and knowledgeably about the needs of the wider world, and how Christians in the UK support Christians overseas through fundraising and prayer. Academic attainment in 2015 and 2016 was above the national average in headline figures. School leaders attribute this to the school's distinctive Christian ethos, which creates a supportive learning environment in which all children feel secure and able to try new things and take risks. Children take pride in their work and talk with confidence about what they are doing well and what they need to improve upon. Children say their efforts are acknowledged and celebrated by adults. Consequently, children want to be in school and their attendance is above the national average.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship is both inspirational and transformational, strongly promoting the school's Christian character and deepening children's awareness, knowledge and understanding of Christian values. This enables children to relate individual values to their own lives. Children and staff value collective worship as a time to gather together as a school family to praise God and hear Bible stories. The weekly pattern of worship is varied, but with well-established routines, so that children have a wide and rich experience. Well-planned themes, based on the church year and the school values, provide a strong basis for children to engage with Bible stories and learn about the Anglican tradition. Children talk confidently about major Christian festivals and the different services held to celebrate them. Worship times have a strong focus on Jesus as a person and God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Consequently, children have age-appropriate understandings of the Trinity. Visits from a local 'Open the Book' team further enriches and enlivens worship by giving children opportunities to read, pray, narrate, dress up, act and dance. One child said that learning about Bible stories had challenged them to change their own attitude, behaviour and choices. The impact of collective worship often extends beyond the act itself and prompts social action and charitable giving. Recently, children have supported people in need locally (Trussell Trust), nationally (Help for Heroes) and globally (Christian Relief and Education in South Sudan). Prayer and praise are practised through song. A choir of children leads singing with energy and joy. The choruses and hymns are chosen carefully to reflect and embed the theological themes being explored. Spoken prayer is given a high profile in worship. Younger children understand prayer as 'thinking about' and 'talking to' God whilst older children add that, for Christians, 'prayer and reflection is about listening to Jesus' and 'being aware of the Holy Spirit'. In response to the previous SIAS inspection, the role of the children's worship group has developed significantly. Responses which open and close worship are led by the children and, three times a year, a group of children plans and leads an act of whole-school collective worship. Children, together with a range of other stakeholders, are involved in regularly monitoring and

evaluating the quality and effectiveness of collective worship, considering its impact on school life. Local clergy from the Valley Team Ministry regularly contribute to school collective worship and one vicar runs a lunchtime club every Friday called 'Secret Agents', which adds value to collective worship and provides a space for children to think even more deeply about Bible stories. Parents and governors appreciate the opportunities to attend and participate in worship at the school and at the church. Children and school leaders agree that more could be done to develop outdoor worship and spiritual areas within the school grounds to offer everyday opportunities for children to pause in awe and wonder as well as in prayer and quiet reflection. One child remarked: 'I don't always want to run around at playtime. Sometimes I want to sit down and think about God.'

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

Religious education is a core subject at Broad Chalke and has a suitably high profile within the curriculum. The subject is well led, resourced and taught. Subject leaders have the highest level of expertise and an ambition to consistently improve provision and offer new and exciting ideas to widen the experiences children have in RE. Learning walks, lesson observations, work scrutiny and conversations with children provide evidence that RE teaching over time is often outstanding and never less than consistently good. Standards of RE attainment for all learners are at least in line with national age-related expectations and often higher, and outcomes are comparable to those in other core curriculum subjects within school. The school's RE subject leaders and headteacher have attended all the relevant training for implementing the 'Understanding Christianity' materials. These materials have recently been trialled in school and a comprehensive and meaningful assessment of their impact or effectiveness has not yet been carried out. Religious education lessons regularly make links to the school's chosen Christian values and this in turn has a great impact on the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of children. Children in all classes apply a wide range of higher level skills to great effect in the enquiry and reflection on their understanding of the impact of religions studied. Across the school, a secure age-appropriate understanding of subject-specific vocabulary is matched by an impressive knowledge of relevant theological concepts. Children's levels of understanding of the Christian faith are high and supported by RE theme days at Christmas and Easter which enrich and consolidate children's learning. Children in upper Key Stage 2 talk about the Christmas story in terms of 'the incarnation' meaning that 'God was born as a human'. Younger children explain the meaning of Christmas in terms of Jesus being 'the light of the world' and 'God's gift for everyone'. A third 'multi-faith' RE day enables an in-depth exploration of the core beliefs, practices and cultural origins of other religions. Parents say RE in general, and the annual multi-faith day in particular, has taught their children respect for other religions and each other, as well as encouraging them to think and talk deeply about what they have learned. However, there is not yet in place a comprehensive programme of visits and visitors which allows children to visit places of worship and engage with worshippers from the full range of religions studied.

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

Broad Chalke is a Christian learning community that is characterised by wisdom, hope, community and dignity. The school is at one and the same time distinctively Christian yet extremely welcoming to the extent that parents of all beliefs and none feel comfortable around the Christian faith and spirituality. Relationships with parents are strong and they speak highly of the school, saying that teachers listen carefully, respond quickly to their concerns and that their children are nurtured well at the school. They believe that the respect shown by and to staff and amongst children themselves can be directly attributed to the school's core Christian values, collective worship and RE. Non-Christian parents speak of finding school collective worship 'really moving' and say they appreciate the way the school's distinctive Christian provision impacts positively on children's academic achievement and personal development. Parents also feel that the school's open door policy means that any issues are swiftly addressed. Governors regularly monitor and evaluate the school as a church school, benchmarking activity and outcomes against the school's Christian mission and core values. As a result, planning at a strategic level is consistent with the school's Christian foundation and is in alignment with the Church of England's *Vision for Education*. In addition, the headteacher and governors continually articulate, promote and model a clear Christian vision, ensuring that the school's values are clearly understood, articulated and lived out by all. Governors regularly survey the views of children and parents and listen to and take account of the views of staff. Governors also attend collective worship, carry out learning walks and scrutinise RE. As a result, they know the school well and are well placed to effectively challenge and support the headteacher. Arrangements for RE and collective worship meet statutory requirements. In fact, both RE and collective worship leadership are strengths of the school. This is because high priority is placed on these areas by school leaders. Since the previous inspection, the necessary steps have been taken to act on the key areas for development and all issues have been successfully addressed. Children are encouraged to be independent, act responsibly and to use their initiative. Training for and by leaders leads to practice which is highly effective, meets statutory requirements and continues to improve at a rapid pace. The challenge, going forward, will be for leaders to ensure that Broad Chalke sustains its distinctive Christian character over the long run.