

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Brixworth Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Froxhill Crescent, Brixworth, Northampton NN6 9BG

Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Peterborough
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Date of inspection	15 November 2016
Date of last inspection	November 2011
Type of school and unique reference number	121964
Headteacher	David Boucher
Inspector's name and number	Reverend Morey Gompertz 507

School context

Brixworth School is a larger than average-sized primary school in an expanding village six miles outside Northampton. Most of its 508 pupils are of White British heritage. Increased numbers have necessitated an extensive building programme which is not due to finish until next Spring. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is lower than that of schools nationally. The number of pupils with special educational needs is lower than average. The head has been in post for thirteen years and is due to retire next July.

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

- Christian values which are embedded in the life of the school inspire the pupils and promote a love of learning
- Strategic leadership of the staff and governors is highly effective in promoting the Christian vision and values of the school.
- Each member of the community feels uniquely valued because of the leaders' understanding of their unique worth as a child of God.

Areas to improve

- Extend the range of pupils engaged in planning, leading and evaluating collective worship to increase the sense of involvement amongst all pupils.
- Enrich the pupils' understanding of worship by including more formal and traditional prayers and responses.

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

This school lives out its Christian vision by seeking to reflect the love of God in all aspects of its work and life. Christian values underpin the success of all it does and its expressed aim is to mirror the value which God puts upon every individual. As a consequence, pupils feel secure and relationships in this large community are excellent. Members of the community share a passion for pupils to achieve their potential and do everything possible to remove any barriers to their learning. The school's concern for the wellbeing for all is reflected in their provision of a parent support advisor. Consequently, even the more vulnerable pupils have a very positive approach to their learning. The impact of the Christian vision on their academic achievement results in consistently improving levels of progress and good attainment at all stages. The school's care for individuals as unique children of God results in all members of the community feeling valued. The active promotion of Christian values helps to shape the pupils' aspirations and self-confidence. Parents identify and appreciate the impact of the Christian environment on their children's academic and personal development. They say that their children are 'eager to come to school.' This results in attendance figures being above national expectation. Pupils show understanding of those values which are distinctively Christian. They are able to refer to stories from the Bible and define the values as those 'which make us live more like Jesus did'. Behaviour is very good because pupils are able to make responsible choices and reflect on the consequences of their actions. RE is a major contributor to the pupils' spiritual, moral, cultural and social (SMSC) development. It provides varied experiences to support the pupils' spiritual growth and has significant influence on the Christian character of the school. It gives pupils confidence to express their feelings and thoughts in some depth. In promoting the skills of empathy and respect, the school effectively prepares the pupils for the future and enables their understanding of diverse cultures and communities. Pupils have developed a link with Joy School in Uganda through the Notivate Trust. They exchange letters and use their Skype link to maintain regular contact. This is part of the school's concern to develop global links and an appreciation of Christianity as a multi-cultural world religion. Parents appreciate this and other opportunities offered by the school to broaden their children's concerns for communities less fortunate than themselves.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good.

Collective worship is an integral part of the life of this school. One pupil remarked, 'The day hasn't started properly until we've had worship'. The school is committed to providing worship which demonstrates its values within the Christian setting through biblical teaching. This reinforces the importance and impact of Christian values on the life of the community. Consequently, it is viewed as a priority by all members of the school family. Planning for worship is taken seriously by all involved and as a result its positive impact is evident from the attitudes and responses from adults and pupils. It provides opportunities for stillness, reflection and prayer. Pupils talk about it as a peaceful time to think about God. Members of staff describe its value of peace at the start of a busy day and as a link in their life between home and school. All members of staff share its leadership together with leaders of the local Anglican and Evangelical church communities. As well as contributing to the pupils' spiritual, cultural and moral development worship also contributes to their social awareness. Consequently, they engage enthusiastically in charitable projects such as the shoebox Christmas appeal. Parents speak of their families' enjoyment of this and of raising money for the school in Uganda. Pupils enjoy planning, leading and evaluating but this is presently confined to Year 5. The worship coordinator offers support to any who need it. Pupils appreciate the opportunities to pray offered both in collective worship and more personally in reflection areas around the school. They explain prayer as talking to God and appreciate that there are times when 'things are too big for anyone else.' Worship themes include the Anglican liturgical calendar. Pupils are introduced to important doctrines of the Christian faith. At an age appropriate level they can engage with the idea of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The children are aware of the importance of Jesus Christ in the Christian faith and link the school values to those shown in his life. Pupils enjoy worship at the Anglican church but as single year groups fill the building, only one year group attends at each major festival. It becomes very 'special' for them. Pupils enjoy music and drama in worship, participating in singing and instrumental contributions. Links with RE enable teaching in worship about Christian values, the Bible and the life and work of Jesus Christ to be reinforced. Worship is regularly monitored and evaluated by pupils and adults, including foundation governors. This has led to considerable improvements over the past three years. However, in whole school worship the use of traditional prayers, including the Lord's Prayer, is currently limited.

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

The head teacher is committed to promoting his vision for the school which is securely rooted in Christian values. He believes in a distributive leadership which is shared with a team of senior staff. Since the team members are committed to the same vision, all are able to promote the Christian values confidently. A visitor has described the school as 'a large school with a small school family atmosphere'. The head teacher attributes this to its Christian vision and values. The governing body is well skilled and successfully supports and challenges the leadership to

consolidate and develop the school's Christian values. Consequently this secures good standards of teaching and good pupil progress within a nurturing ethos where all flourish. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and shows insight into all areas of its work. This leads to consistent improvement. The school has made some progress in addressing areas to improve given in the previous inspection. The school development plan includes RE and worship thereby showing their high profile and perceived importance. This is also evidenced by the support and resources offered to the coordinator who leads both areas effectively. The SMSC of all pupils is a high priority and opportunities for their development are threaded through learning experiences in the whole curriculum. Out of school activities add to the overall development of the pupils. Beside sports and musical activities there are lunch time opportunities provided for prayer, planning of worship and contact with the school in Uganda. Pupils say they are always oversubscribed. The Christian vision makes a very positive impact upon the attitudes and behaviour in this large school community. Builders working on the school site remark positively on the cooperation of the school leadership and the behaviour of its pupils. Staff development is planned strategically for the good of the school and the future welfare of the staff. The school is important to the village and especially in the life of its Christian communities. The leaders of both evangelical and Anglican churches are foundation governors and lead worship in the school. Parents express pleasure that the values which are the monthly focus for worship are mentioned in the school weekly newsletter. This means that they are able to be reinforced at home. Church services and holiday clubs are also publicised in this way so that families are kept well informed of local Christian activities. Parents speak glowingly of the school's Christian influence on their children adding that 'in this turbulent world, whether parents have faith or not, they want the faith of this school for their children.'

SIAMS report November 2016 Brixworth Church of England Primary School, Brixworth NN6 9BG