

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Brierley Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School				
Address	Beech Close, Barnsley, South Yorkshire S72 9EJ			
Date of inspection	13 June 2019	Status of school	Voluntary Controlled Primary	
Diocese / Methodist District	Leeds	URN	106629	

Overall Judgement	How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?	Grade	Good
Additional Judgements	The impact of collective worship	Grade	Good

School context

Brierley Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School has 210 pupils on roll. The school has a very low level of religious and cultural diversity and very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is below national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and or disabilities is below national averages. A new headteacher and RE lead were appointed to post in September 2018.

The school's Christian vision

'Though we are many, we are one body. Together we learn and grow' Romans 12:5 and Corinthians 12 12:27.

Key findings

- The strong and purposeful Christian leadership of the headteacher, with the unwavering committed support of the deputy headteacher, the staff team and governing body, emphasise the clear Christian vision.
- The Christian vision permeates all aspects of the school's daily life and is understood by all members of the school community. Together with core Christian values, the school's vision ensures that everyone grows and flourishes in a loving and caring community where the mental health and wellbeing of the whole school family is given high priority.
- The refreshed vision has enabled the development of many areas of school life which are already leading to strong practices, but are not yet sufficiently embedded to support a higher grade.
- Relationships based on Christian love, with forgiveness and reconciliation at their heart, along with an exciting curriculum ensures that behaviour is good, pupils are keen to learn, nurturing success for each pupil.
- Collective worship, at the heart of school life, ensures the biblical roots of the chosen core Christian values are clearly understood, significantly promoting distinctive Christian values and deepening pupils' spirituality. Providing inclusive opportunities for debate, courteous discussion and sharing of ideas and beliefs amongst those present.

Areas for development

- Develop a structured, systematic approach to embedding Understanding Christianity with the Barnsley agreed syllabus ensuring learning outcomes secure sustained progress in RE as a church school.
- Ensure that governor processes for monitoring and evaluating the impact of RE in classrooms are embedded in the school review procedures.
- Widen pupils' experiences of difference and diversity to prepare them for life in the global community.

How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?

Inspection findings

Led by the personal commitment of the inspirational headteacher, Brierley's school community lives out its refreshed Christian vision in every aspect of its work. All members of the school have contributed to its development, ensuring it is a Christian vision not just for the pupils, but for all stakeholders. Its biblical text upholds core Christian values. These values are used by stakeholders as the underpinning reasons for their choices of action or response. Parents explain that their children also choose to demonstrate the values within their home lives. Thus the school's Christian vision successfully reaches out into the wider local community. It also nurtures the development of pupils' personal spirituality, arising from the awe and wonder that are experienced within their learning and collective worship. For some pupils this develops into a personal connection with God through prayer and reflection. During a class liturgy session one young pupil said 'I can feel God's hand on my shoulder, I know he is looking after me'. There is a general sense of love and care for all in the school, enabling all to flourish within a supportive Christian framework.

The school's vision and values have shaped personalised planning, driving the Thrive school accreditation and growth mind-set provision. Several staff are trained to identify any wellbeing or mental health issues to support all pupils, parents and staff. This is supported by work on embedding the principles of 'Valuing all God's Children'. This results in respectful, considerate behaviour and a supportive atmosphere in which all pupils work and play happily together. Instances of bullying and discrimination are exceptionally rare and quickly eliminated by timely staff intervention. The school supports pupils in becoming confident and resilient learners, ambitious to achieve well. Pupils know that in order to achieve their best they will need to consider the core value of endurance. This courageous determination for success is regarded as a way of living out the school's Christian vision, leading to all pupils making above national progress from their starting points, as leaders successfully eliminate barriers to learning with innovative practice. Consequently pupils enjoy coming to school.

Brierley is an active member of the North East Barnsley school collaboration, supporting two neighbouring schools. The diocesan education team has played an important role in supporting the school's recent improvement journey. Staff and governors all benefit from a range of ongoing professional development opportunities. Pupils show their Christian stewardship in their thoughtful fundraising, often targeted at concerns with a local focus.

Pupils also show practical care for others. The long standing link with Bollingbroke House residential home gives aspiration to the youngest pupils who socialise happily with older residents and enjoy making them smile.

Older pupils engage in community action in connection with promotion of a safe clean environment which include designing promotional materials promoting the use of palm oil as an alternative fuel use at Chester Zoo. Pupils are respectfully accepting of difference in lifestyle, faith and language. Pupils are confident to express their views in a culture of respect for one another. However given the mono-cultural context pupils are not regularly meeting people of different cultures.

A range of opportunities are provided for pupils to undertake responsibilities, worship ambassadors, school council and assembly monitors. The pupils are proud of their roles and feel that they are setting the best examples for others to follow. They particularly like to model the new handshake at the end of breaks and lunchtime where all pupils shake hands and say 'Though we are many, we are one body. Together we learn and grow'. This is further embedded in collective worship. Collective worship is central to school life, invitational and meets statutory requirements. Children plan, lead and evaluate worship regularly both as a whole school and in daily class liturgies. Opportunities for pupils and staff to reflect on worship and their own lives are embedded across the school and contribute to spiritual development through prayer. Worship allows pupils to increase their knowledge and understanding of Bible stories and they are able to articulate how these help them to understand how Jesus used parables to teach people how to behave. Children understand the church's calendar and celebrations of the Christian year through key event worship and services at church. Following recommendations from the previous SIAMS inspection, Clergy and other visitors take worship on a regular basis and children enjoy the variety of approaches. They say a range of prayers and have an age appropriate understanding of the Eucharist and Trinity. 'Open the Book' worship undertaken by parishioners is greatly enjoyed, demonstrating the close links with the parish. Joint planning with the different churches in Brierley have shaped the reflection garden and the peace garden which was opened by Bishop Tony. Pupils, staff and visitors use the numerous reflection areas around school to respond to key questions and make personal prayers.

All recognise the importance of religious education (RE) in ensuring pupils flourish and this is reflected in the time, resources and training from the diocese in introducing Understanding Christianity. Planning and drawing together the locally agreed syllabus along with Understanding Christianity is in its early stages. Triangulation of new planning documents linking challenging questions across all age groups is beginning to shape RE. The new subject leader is effective in supporting her colleagues to deliver exciting and stimulating RE lessons. Written work shows progress

and includes opportunities for pupils to reflect and respond to the area being studied. Pupils of all abilities enjoy RE and topics are often linked to collective worship themes and the wider curriculum. Use of inclusive discussion and debate in RE enables pupils of faith or none to reflect upon personal beliefs, and to be challenged by the big questions. Pupils appreciate the changes and report that RE is a favourite subject. Older pupils say it is 'exciting and makes them think about there not always being a 'right and wrong answer'. Whilst governors' monitoring of RE is supportive, at present it lacks the robustness to challenge and move the subject forward.

Through its Christian vision, the school makes a difference to many adults and pupils. It helps them to be the best version of themselves, and in a pupil's own words, 'When you have God on your side, anything is possible'.

Headteacher	Samantha Benson
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