



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Bidford on Avon Church of England Voluntary Controlled School

Bramley Way
Bidford on Avon
Warwickshire
B50 4QG

Previous SIAMS grade: Good

Current inspection grade: Outstanding

Diocese: Coventry

Local authority: Warwickshire

Date of inspection: 5 May 2016

Date of last inspection: July 2011

School's unique reference number: 125625

Headteacher: Andy Simms

Inspector's name and number: Alan Thornsby 137

School context

Bidford on Avon School is a large primary school that shares its site with the library, council office and a private nursery. Pupils are mainly from a White British background with a higher than average number of Gypsy Roma/Traveller children. There are 11 classes, some of which are mixed age. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs is average. Since the last inspection there have been a number of new staff.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Bidford on Avon as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The senior leadership team and governing body have a deeply founded commitment for a secure Christian learning environment that nurtures each individual as a child of God.
- The Christian ethos and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) in the curriculum have a significant impact on the wellbeing, personal and academic development of children.
- The strong links with the clergy and church community enhance the biblical knowledge and spiritual development of pupils.

Areas to improve

- Make explicit and celebrate the theological background of the school's values to ensure that they are recognised and understood as distinctively Christian.

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

The school has an inclusive and caring Christian ethos that is based on the Christian values of tolerance, respect, compassion, hope, truth, individual self-worth and self-knowledge. These securely underpin the practice and policy of the school and are summarized in the school code of ABC (Appearance, Behaviour and Courage). The school community created this guide to daily life in school with support from parents, foundation governors and the vicar. Although each section of the ABC code has a biblical reference, the core values displayed in school are not explicitly theologically expressed or celebrated as distinctively Christian values. However, pupils readily relate daily actions to the core values, explaining 'they are what Jesus wanted people to do'. They are also insistent that they are good values for any religion. Pupils mirror the example of adults in displaying values in action and care for each other, taking responsibility for others through peer mediation, playtime buddies and playtime pals. The distinctive Christian character of the school ensures excellent relationships, behaviour and attitudes to work. Children want to come to school. The school goes 'the extra mile' to meet the needs of pupils because of the commitment to nurturing each individual as a child of God. It also ensures that the curriculum is accessible to all groups of children. Pupils are confident, articulate and respond to the high expectations of the school. Consequently, academic and personal development is good. Standards of progress and achievement are at least in line with national expectations. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) reinforces and extends the core values of the school, underpinned by an effective policy. Opportunities for exploration are identified in planning and rigorous monitoring ensures continuous development of opportunities. SMSC is furthered through a range of activities, visits and forest school. Pupils explore and explain issues in a non-threatening way through the use of therapeutic writing. Religious education (RE) has a high profile in school, with links to worship and other curriculum areas to ensure good progress. It is well led and managed by the deputy headteacher. A well-established tradition of RE days allows a deeply focused study of subjects such as The Trinity and Freedom, with input from the diocese. These days also recognise values in action throughout world, in addition to reinforcing pupils' understanding of respect, tolerance, empathy and diversity. Such days also extend pupils' knowledge of right and wrong, their questioning skills and decision-making. These enable pupils to explore big questions such as 'what does heaven look like?' and 'will there be more wars?' Pupils very aware of the local and global diversity of faith and culture but very adamant that 'it is what is inside that is import and respect for others'. This is enhanced by links to a number of schools involved in the Comenius project. The school grounds and gardens provide many opportunities to experience stewardship of God's creation. These include links with the 'Food for Life' project and Soil Association.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Inspirational and inclusive daily collective worship securely underpins the Christian foundation of the school. As a result, pupils and adults recognise the impact on Christian values on their lives. Worship themes are well planned by the leadership team to reflect the termly school value and their impact on daily life. The vicar and reader plan acts of worship to reinforce the church calendar and Bible stories. Worship is underpinned by a comprehensive policy document and guidelines. Pupils enjoy worship as a time to learn about God and Jesus and the significance of Christian values. They experience a range of leaders including staff, clergy and the 'Open the Book' team from the Heart of England benefice of churches. Their dramatized stories provide a visual link to values and moral dilemmas in action. Pupils, including the Eco group and school council regularly plan and lead worship. House captains lead a weekly act of worship that dedicates pupils' academic and behavioural achievements to God. This reinforces the impact of the Christian foundation of the school with everyone recognising the achievements and aspirations of each other. They have an awareness of belonging to a wider worshipping community through the input of the local Baptist church and shared services with the Heart of England cluster group of schools. Pupils experience a range of worship formats, including whole school and key stage. Parents regularly attend celebration assembly to share achievements. The links with St Laurence's Church are strengthened through the celebration of festival services. These now include two Easter services and evening carol services to reflect the amount of parental support. The Anglican ritual in worship is displayed in the lighting and blowing out of three candles to mark the beginning and end of worship. The Trinitarian greeting, opening of the Bible 'to welcome Jesus' and the use of liturgical colours are further examples that Anglican ritual is well established. These support

the reverent atmosphere created by pupils and reflected in their quiet entry. Pupils recognise Christian symbolism of the cross and the dove. They describe the Trinity as 'God the Father, who created the world. God the Son, who is Jesus and God the Holy Spirit, who is with us all of the time'. They have a good knowledge of the life of Jesus and describe how 'he used parables, stories with a message, to teach people'. They describe miracles of Jesus as 'the impossible made possible'. Pupils understand the events of the church year, including Ascension Day and Pentecost when 'the disciples spoke in many languages because of the Holy Spirit'. Prayer is central to the spiritual life of school. Pupils describe prayer as 'a time to talk to God and build a relationship with him'. They confidently recite the Lord's Prayer and the school prayer. They are beginning to offer spontaneous prayers. They contribute written prayers to the school prayer book that is used as a resource by leaders. Reflection areas and posters in each class reinforce the Christian foundation of the school as well as opportunities for personal prayer and reflection. The local churches pray for the school and its work in their prayer evenings. A range of monitoring and evaluation procedures includes input by pupils, staff, governors and the diocese. These inform on-going discussion and developments, such as rearranging how pupils are seated in worship and exploring further ways of engaging parents in worship.

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

The school has a distinctive vision to meet the needs of each individual as a child of God within an inclusive Christian school. The core values of the school drive the practice and policy to continually develop the distinctive Christian character of the school. There is a shared commitment to the climate of self-review and development across all areas of the school. As a result, everyone knows the strengths and areas for development. This has resulted in significant improvement in academic achievement because the school is proactive in managing challenge. Governors have a good understanding of SMSC and its impact on the school ethos. They have attended SIAMS training and have a good understanding of current issues and developments within church schools through visits and discussion with children. Foundation governors understand their statutory role and monitor the Christian ethos to ensure its on-going development and impact on lives of children. They acknowledge this gives everyone a guide for a Christian life. RE and worship meet statutory requirements. The development points from the previous inspection have been addressed and further developed. Self-evaluation is informed by reports and action plans and identifies current strengths and areas for development. The distinctive Christian character forms an important part of the School Development Plan. Staff are proud of working in the school and recognise they are valued by leaders and managers, pupils and parents. There is a great sense of supportive teamwork. Staff recognise that the Christian values of the school give pupils a sense of purpose and direction. These ensure pupils develop independence, resilience and confidence to share their views. The strong commitment to curriculum and personal development, including future leadership of church schools, is recognised in the 'Investors In People' award. The school values the close relationship and partnership with parents. They speak highly of all administration and teaching staff who support pupils and home school links and give a warm welcome to visitors. Parents praise the work of the school and the impact of values and faith on pupils. They recognise the diversity of faith in school and the inclusivity of Christian teaching that 'ensures confidence, maturity and respect for all because of the links with the vicar, the church and Christian values'. Parents are proud that their children understand the real meanings of Christmas and Easter as times of celebration and thanks. The school has links with other schools in the Heart of England Benefice, other diocesan schools and is a hub school for the Ogden Trust school science partnership. The school also greatly benefits from training and support from the diocese in dedicated improvement days. The links between school and church extend to contributions to the parish magazine and 'Messy Church' activities.