

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Bosley Church of England Primary School

Leek Road, Bosley, Macclesfield, SK11 0NX

Current SIAMS inspection grade

Outstanding

Diocese

Chester

Previous SIAMS inspection grade

Good

Local authority

Cheshire East

Name of multi-academy trust/federation

N/A

Date of inspection

13 July 2017

Date of last inspection

October 2011

Type of school and unique reference number

Voluntary Controlled 111253

Headteacher

Raj Barard

Inspector's name and number

Tracy Beatty 890

School context

Bosley St Mary's is a small rural primary school serving the village of Bosley and the neighbouring towns of Leek and Congleton. It has an informal partnership with another small local primary school which the headteacher supports. The great majority of pupils are White British, with English as a first language. The proportion of pupils for whom pupil premium is received and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. There is a good attendance level across all year groups.

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

- This personal faith of the headteacher has driven a distinctively Christian vision for the school that has engaged all stakeholders. As a result, the school has made outstanding progress since the previous inspection and takes every opportunity to celebrate its Christian character.
- Very strong relationships at every level are rooted in respect for all and create a harmonious Christian ethos.
- Partnerships with the church and community are very strong and mutually beneficial.
- The culture of prayer and reflection has resulted in pupils knowing the importance of prayer for themselves. They contribute frequently in collective worship which promotes their confidence and spiritual growth.
- Governors are strongly committed to enhancing the school's distinctiveness which ensures that the Christian ethos always has a high profile

Areas to improve

- Review and revise the core Christian values so that members of the school community can readily articulate them and so enrich the school's Christian character and distinctiveness.
- Develop an outdoor prayer space to allow children more opportunities for personal reflection and unstructured prayer to nurture their spiritual development.

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

The headteacher has a strong Christian vision stemming from his personal faith which is understood and echoed by all members of the school community. The needs of all learners are very effectively met through a strong commitment to this vision and through the school values, which are based on the fruits of the Spirit. Although not all pupils could remember nine, they knew where to find them in the Bible and the school has displayed them prominently. These Christian values have a significant impact on the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of all learners. The leaders have created a caring, nurturing and supportive environment in which every child is valued and pupils feel safe and secure. The Christian ethos encourages positive attitudes to learning, resulting in good progress and attainment. Pupils' self-esteem and sense of worth are developed through encouragement, affirmation and an understanding that each is a child of God.

The school is proud of its Christian character and celebrates this on its website and throughout the school environment. This includes naming the school houses after Bible characters. As a result pupils are familiar with a range of Bible characters and people of faith who exemplify how they should live, which influences their attitudes and behaviour. A Year 5 pupil said 'Before we came to this school, we didn't even know God existed. Now we know all about Him and belong to God's family'. Pupils display a good understanding of the Trinity and of baptism, 'When you get baptised it cleans inside you' said a Year 2 pupil. Religious education (RE) is high quality and spoken enthusiastically about by pupils, particularly the visits, such as Pilgrim Day and to the Mosque. RE contains a good balance of other faiths and strongly contributes to the school's Christian ethos and the development of Christian character in the pupils.

The excellent relationships with parents are developed by a welcome service for new families at church and a warm greeting every morning from the headteacher. Parents describe the school as 'phenomenal' in its pastoral care for children, embracing the whole family. They refer to the headteacher as highly approachable and enormously supportive to families. Pupils say 'if you have difficulties, the school will always help you learn, whatever it takes'. Parents report that the community can always recognise a 'Bosley child' by their manners and excellent behaviour. The behaviour policy is grounded in Christian belief and the fruits of the Spirit, instilled not only through collective worship and RE, but also the whole curriculum. The pupils' compassion for others is evidenced in the 40 Acts during Lent and the example of them taking the initiative to organise a collection for the recent Manchester tragedy. The Christian context constantly promotes a strong sense of stewardship, with pupils regularly supporting a range of charities such as providing a mini bus for an orphanage in Romania. The pupils' caring acts and community involvement are frequently reported in the local newspaper.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Worship is highly valued and central to daily life in the school with a strong focus on Jesus and the Bible. Staff create a special time of stillness and reflection with the use of candles, lights and contemplative music. The school has made the evaluation of worship by pupils a priority since the last inspection and has listened to their views, leading to improvement. The introduction of the resource 'Roots and Fruits' has resulted in worship becoming more interactive and thus children participate in practical ways far more frequently. Using this resource, the themes for collective worship are well planned around the Bible and encourage pupils to be reflective and respectful about their own faith and the faith or beliefs of others. The school has drawn on a range of visitors to enhance collective worship, such as clergy from other local churches. A good balance of learning about and learning from Christianity is presented. For instance, pupils learn the parable of the wise and foolish man in the context of transition to a new year and making God the foundation for life. Learners are able to relate the teaching they receive from the staff and clergy to their own lives and grow in their own faith. A Year 2 pupil said 'Acting out stories from the Bible with vicar John helps me remember them and look to God for help like the disciples did'.

The school has a strong link with the church. Pupils' confidence in school is mirrored in their willingness to contribute in church services. The pupils received complimentary responses following the Bosley disaster anniversary service in the local Methodist service, where pupils read out their own prayers. Pupils are confident to pray with their own words and also know a range of Anglican responses and familiar prayers. Parents welcome the opportunity to share in the worshipping life of the school, many of them attending weekly. The vicar spoke of the 'umbrella of Christian distinctiveness from which droplets of Christian values fall, pervading everything we do'. He also described the decision of the church to buy every pupil a Bible at the start of their school career, which has had a big impact on their knowledge of it and their spiritual growth. He shared plans to incorporate more opportunities

to teach about and share the Eucharist next year, as an example of the school always seeking to build on strengths. Worship is closely linked to RE and the curriculum, ensuring Christian values are woven seamlessly into the daily life of pupils in the school. Parents report their children love to praise and often sing worship songs learnt at school when at home. Governors participate in worship and observe RE, giving them a good understanding of the strengths in these areas.

The pupils are given varied and plentiful opportunities to pray and see it as meaningful in their own lives. A Year 4 pupil said 'We are learning to really understand the Lord's Prayer, not just say it. We pray for our government and the poor too'. The pupil ethos group is enthusiastically involved in planning, leading and evaluating worship and is currently planning an outdoor prayer space.

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

The headteacher's clear and uncompromising Christian vision is supported extremely well by staff and governors, which has led to constant improvement since his appointment. He describes how his faith has informed every decision and conversation. His integrity is affirmed by governors, staff and parents who are testimony to the strong team he has built around him. The example he shows has resulted in faith being demonstrated in the lives of pupils, who say 'he's very funny and likes to be with us. He helps us make good choices and loves all of us'.

The curriculum is clearly informed by a Christian vision and a desire for children to reach their maximum potential academically and develop socially, morally and culturally. The school has good links with the church and leaders ensure a wide variety of visitors come regularly to school to deepen children's faith and understanding, such as 'Open the Book'. Members of the congregation regularly come to school to bake and make crafts with the pupils which further reinforces the relationship. The vicar is often in school to lead collective worship and rejoices in the mutual benefits arising from the collaboration. A strong partnership with the diocese through discussion and training has contributed to the highly effective development of church school distinctiveness. Since the last inspection, the leaders have very effectively addressed development points, building upon previous strengths even further.

The statutory requirements for RE and collective worship are met. Self-evaluation of collective worship and RE is robust and regular. It effectively leads to progress and improvement driven by the governors. The governors stated that Christian distinctiveness is always a priority. Their decision to make it an agenda item at every meeting has resulted in the reinforcement of the Christian character and identity of the school. Governors report that this ensures faith underpins everything rather than being an add-on. The leadership of RE and collective worship is strong, with good selection of resources, very thorough monitoring systems and record keeping and a clear action plan. Governors value the quality and detail of the documentation surrounding RE and collective worship in keeping them updated. Information is regularly sent to them in a clear manner in addition to that displayed on the governor board in the corridor. They praised the sustainable actions that have been introduced over the last four years. A governor said of the improvements, 'there are no 'one hit wonders', all the actions introduced have been well planned and very sustainable'. Their joint INSET days with the staff have ensured roles and responsibilities are clear and fostered a real sense of collaboration. Governors emphasise the upholding of the Christian ethos when recruiting and also have a clear plan for Christian leadership development and succession.

SIAMS report July 2017 Bosley St Mary's Church of England Primary School, Bosley, Macclesfield SK11 0NX