

## Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

### **Brigstock Latham's Church of England Primary School**

Latham Street Brigstock Kettering Northamptonshire NN14 3HD

**Current SIAMS inspection grade**

**Outstanding**

**Diocese**

**Peterborough**

Previous SIAMS inspection grade

Good

Local authority

Northamptonshire

Date of inspection

7 February 2017

Date of last inspection

12 January 2012

Type of school and unique reference number

Voluntary Controlled 122011

Executive Head teacher

Wayne Jones

Inspector's name and number

Rev. Morey Gompertz 507

#### **School context**

Brigstock Latham's School is a popular smaller than average-sized primary school situated just outside Corby. The school is largely mono-cultural with minority ethnic groups numbering well below the national average. (6.5%) A very small minority of children have special educational needs. The school has been led by an executive head teacher for the past year but governors hope to appoint a substantive head for the start of the next academic year.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Brigstock Latham's Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding**

- Distinctively Christian values lie at the heart of the school's life and have a profound impact on the lives of all members of the community.
- The priority of collective worship inspires pupils and adults to realise their worth before God
- Exemplary provision for prayer and reflection impacts positively upon pupils' spiritual development and empowers them in the choices they make.
- Acknowledging God to be the source of creativity, children are encouraged and given confidence in this aspect of their learning.

#### **Areas to improve**

- Continue to work on the school website so that it reflects more clearly the distinctively Christian ethos of the school
- Resolve the appointment of the head teacher so that the aim to maintain the Christian ethos of the school is realised.

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

The positive impact of the distinctively Christian ethos upon all members of the school community is evident in their relationships and the principles which guide their management of learning. Described by one child as 'unique' pupils are proud of the displays of their work in classrooms and public areas. They are eager to explain that the Christian values, which extend to learning and the clear communication offered in assessment and marking, help them to succeed. Parents agree that although the school in the village is the natural choice for them as residents, they are particularly thankful for its distinctive Christian values. They recognise these nurture the wellbeing, safety and confidence shown by their children. Within religious education (RE) and collective worship (CW) the children learn to identify the biblical origin of school values and their exemplification in the life and teaching of Jesus Christ. In describing the challenge of obedience to his parents as he grew older, one child quoted the example of Jesus' absolute obedience to his father's will. Thus RE contributes considerably to the school's Christian character giving children opportunities to explore inter-faith values and appreciate cultural diversity. Evidence of the impact this has on the pupils' understanding is found in their reflections and thoughts written in the school 'Reflections and Thoughts' book. Particularly impressive is the pupils' poetry written in response to Martin Luther King's visionary speech. Regular mixed age cross-curricular learning experiences provide opportunities for members to teach to their strengths and areas of expertise. In teaching the whole range of pupils, staff members appreciate their progress and levels of achievement. Although very small cohorts make comparisons with national results difficult to interpret, tracking and data suggest that all pupils make good progress. Attendance is well above national expectations and behaviour is excellent. Pupils show a high level of empathy and thoughtfulness so demonstrating the effective promotion of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development. The school appreciates support from the diocese and local cluster of schools to provide wider experience for staff and pupils.

**The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding**

Collective worship is an integral part of each school day. The powerful sense of the presence of Jesus in the school is described by a child when she explained the lighting of the candle at the beginning of worship. 'It shows that Jesus is the light of the whole world but we hardly need to do it since he is everywhere here.' Worship is inclusive, lively and inspiring. Themes are based upon the school's values and have direct impact on daily school life with children talking about them in subsequent discussions and lessons. They also prompt pupils to respond readily to local, national and international issues. They take responsibility for fundraising or other appropriate support and a recent example was the support for refugees in Calais initiated, led and managed by pupils. Pupils join senior staff and foundation governors in planning and evaluating worship and this secures ongoing development. Seasons of the church year, Christian festivals and responses to national and international issues are all included. The village and local church appreciate the contribution made by the school for Advent, Remembrance, Harvest and Christmas services. While setting the school values in the context of biblical teaching, the focus on the life and teaching of Jesus and his place in the Trinity enables pupils to speak about them with understanding. Pupils are able to describe choices they make being influenced by his example. Pupils enjoy singing and respond well to times for reflection. They show considerable spiritual maturity when discussing their thoughts and beliefs with adults and their peers. Cross-curricular activities have produced stunning displays of Christian symbols and aids to prayer which not only increase the pupils' understanding but are used in worship to enrich times of prayer and reflection. Prayer has a very important part in daily school routines and times of reflection form an integral part of learning. Pupils describe opportunities provided as 'whenever and wherever we need it'. A range of visitors lead worship enabling pupils to become more aware of different Christian traditions and practice.

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

Leaders consistently articulate and live out their vision that faith should be integral to all the decisions they make and that, as their development plan clearly states, 'faith should be at the heart of this community's life.' Because of this displays and regular communications to parents contain biblical texts referring to distinctively Christian values to which the school is committed. The school web-site is not as effective in its portrayal of the school's Christian distinctiveness. However, the school newsletters describe the value of the month and the school events and achievements. Worship is well supported with the provision of a realistic budget and access to good professional development for staff. The teaching of RE as a core subject is similarly well supported so that the school more than adequately meets the statutory requirements for RE and CW. The unique cross-curricular sessions focus upon issues which enrich the spiritual moral social and cultural development of pupils. Leadership responsibilities are shared among the staff and this is effective because all subscribe to the aim of maintaining the school's Christian values. Rigorous self evaluation is largely accurate and secures consistent improvement. Good progress has been made since the previous inspection in the areas identified for development. Progress tracking, work sampling and data scrutiny informs leaders how needs of individual pupils may best be met and effectiveness of interventions is

closely monitored. The local church, diocese and parents all contribute to the life of the school and its contributions in turn enhance a rich variety of village activities. Opportunities have been provided for the pupils to extend their understanding of other Christian cultures by developing regular contact with Harriet, -a child in Kenya. All leaders and members of the community take pride in the school environment and manner in which the pupils' creative work is displayed. Although the present leadership of the executive head has moved the school forward while continuing to foster its distinctively Christian character, the governors are finding it difficult to appoint a substantive head to begin the new academic year. They are currently determining the budgetary possibilities of such an appointment while also showing concern that the appointment maintains the truly distinctive character of the school. For rural schools of this size and character, the difficulties are easy to recognise since although professional development of staff is seen as important, appropriate training for future leadership in church schools relies also upon the willingness of staff members to see themselves in this role.

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