

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

### Bollington Cross Church of England Primary School

Bollington Road, Bollington, Macclesfield. SK10 5EG

<b>Current SIAMS inspection grade</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Chester</b>
Previous SIAS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local authority	Cheshire East
Date of inspection	27 September 2017
Date of last inspection	September 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Controlled 111252
Headteacher	Yenson Donbavand
Inspector's name and number	Stephen Burrow 622

#### School context

Bollington Cross CE Primary School is a smaller than average primary school. The majority of pupils are White British with a few from minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils supported by pupil premium is below average, as is the proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability. Attendance is high. The school is a Forest School. The newly appointed headteacher has been in post since September 2017.

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

- The strong, purposeful Christian leadership of the new headteacher, supported well by senior leaders, staff and governors, demonstrates a clear Christian vision. This strongly promotes the school's Christian character and mission.
- A deeply embedded Christian ethos underpins all that the school does. Pupils are highly valued and nurtured as individuals in a caring Christian environment.
- Exceptionally strong, caring relationships, based on Christian values, support all members of the school family.
- The strong, mutually supportive links with the vicar and church family, make a significant contribution to the school's Christian character and to the spiritual development of all members of its community.
- Collective worship and Religious Education (RE) are central to the life of the school and highly effective in supporting the spiritual development of all pupils and staff.

#### Areas to improve

- Enable pupils to be more fully involved in future developments by discussing and sharing their ideas and thoughts with governors on a regular basis in order to further enrich the Christian ethos of the school.

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

The school places great emphasis on Christian values, which are deeply embedded in the ethos of the school. Exceptional relationships, rooted in the teaching of Jesus, are evident in every part of school life. These underpin the distinctively Christian character of the school. Each child is known as a unique individual in a community where care and respect is bestowed on each and every member. As a result, strong mutually nurturing and supportive relationships, firmly rooted in respect and forgiveness, exist throughout the school. Consequently, behaviour is outstanding and pupils feel safe, happy, valued and well cared for. They mirror the excellent adult role model provided for them in the school.

The curriculum is rich and varied, providing a wide range of experiences. These contribute greatly to pupils' enjoyment of school and to their outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The high profile of RE and collective worship makes a significant contribution to the school's Christian character. All that the school does is underpinned by its distinctive Christian ethos. As a result, pupils' achievement is at least in line with national outcomes at the end of Key Stage 2. Reflection books containing pupils' work, photographs, thoughts and ideas, make a very significant contribution towards their spiritual development. Well-used areas for reflection and prayer in all classrooms are very important to all members of the school family. They reinforce the message that the school has a strong Christian foundation and enable pupils to reflect and pray quietly. One pupil explained, 'It's important to pray. You can speak to God and he can help you.' The vicar has a high profile in school, giving practical and prayerful support, which is valued and appreciated by the whole school family.

Pupils see the importance of RE and worship in helping them to learn about Christianity and other world faiths. As a result, awareness of Christianity as a worldwide faith is well embedded. Pupils' acceptance of and respect for the views and beliefs of others is effectively promoted. The school's strong emphasis on caring for others leads pupils to raise money for charities such as Children in Need. The school is very supportive of all families, based upon a clear understanding of each pupil's unique personal needs. Staff work very hard to intervene early where support is needed and ensure that all concerns are dealt with quickly and effectively. As a result, there are excellent relationships with parents and attendance is high. Parents explained how distinctive Christian values are deeply rooted in the life of the school and spoke of the impact these have on their children. One parent said, 'Our children come home and share Christian values.'

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

Collective worship is inclusive and central to all that the school does. It is recognised as hugely important and ensures that core Christian values are at the forefront of daily life. An experienced and enthusiastic leader ensures that worship is well planned and led. Themes are developed around the school's core values, festivals, the Bible and the teachings of Jesus. Bible stories and Christian teachings explored through worship enhance pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very effectively. Worship is varied and includes whole school and class led worship. There are also regular opportunities to worship in church. Staff and visitors lead worship on a regular basis. This includes the 'Open the Book Team', who present Bible stories to the whole school family in a lively and inclusive way. Consequently, pupils benefit from a wealth of varied opportunities, including different styles of worship.

Prayer and reflection are key features of all acts of worship and pupils are familiar with a range of traditional prayers. Parents and members of the local community are invited to share in class led worship and key Christian festivals in church. The recent 'Moses Experience,' organised by church, effectively underpinned and extended the school's deeply embedded Christian ethos. Through worship and RE, great emphasis is placed on encouraging pupils to explore the Christian faith as well as providing an understanding of the beliefs and practices of other world faiths. This is enhanced by visits to other places of worship, including a Mosque and a Synagogue, as well providing an opportunity for pupils to experience a Hindu workshop.

When pupils enter worship, there is a calm, welcoming atmosphere. This allows them to reflect and prepare themselves for worship. A table with a cross, Bible and candles provide a clear focal point. One pupil expressed that worship, 'Helps you to become more focussed.' Another added, 'It helps us to reflect.' The act of collective worship observed in the inspection, on the topic of God's creation, provided excellent opportunities for reflection. Pupils' understanding of the Trinity is reinforced well through the daily greeting at the start of worship and the

lighting of three candles. The school has effective procedures in place to monitor and evaluate the impact of worship. Findings are then used to influence ongoing improvements in order to ensure that the spiritual needs of the whole school community are met.

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

The leadership of the school provides an extremely clear vision for sustaining the powerful Christian ethos that permeates all aspects of school life. This vision is understood and extremely well supported by everyone involved in the life of the school, including governors and parents. It is lived out across the whole school family. The focus of the school is very much on ensuring that each pupil is given the opportunity to flourish and reach their full potential as children of God. The successful leadership is enhanced by the close working relationship with the vicar. As a result, the prayer, pastoral and other links between church and school are very effectively interwoven. There is a real sense of growing together in God's world.

Governors are actively involved in self-evaluation and in the life of the school. They support and challenge the school leadership team in all areas of school improvement, ensuring that church school issues are prioritised in improvement planning. They have a regular involvement in the school's life and work through their visits and learning walks. They also receive detailed information on developments in RE and worship from the headteacher and worship leader. This ensures that they know the school well. All staff are valued and inducted well into what is expected of them in relation to promoting the Christian ethos of the school. They feel that their ideas are listened to and valued. One teacher said, 'It's about belonging. Everyone looks after each other.' The leadership team clearly understand what it means to lead a church school. Potential future leaders are prepared well through a strong emphasis on professional development, including Christian leadership.

The school council provides opportunities for pupils to offer suggestions and know that their views are valued. However, ways for pupils to share their thoughts and ideas about the development of RE and worship on a regular basis with governors is limited. There is a strong PTA, which actively supports the work of the school through social and fund raising events. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. They say their views are listened to and that their children enjoy school, are happy, safe and nurtured well. They attribute this to the strong Christ-centered ethos of the school. One parent summed up the feelings of the parents by saying, 'Christian values are intrinsic in all the school does and the way it operates.'

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