

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Barby C of E Primary School

Daventry Road, Barby, Nr Rugby CV23 8TR	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese	Peterborough
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Date of academy conversion	February 2014
Name of multi-academy trust	Peterborough Diocese Education Trust (PDET)
Date of inspection	28 March 2017
Date of last inspection	12 December 2011
Type of school and unique reference number	Academy 141044
Headteacher	Jody Toone
Inspector's name and number	Jane Lewis 27

School context

Barby Church of England Primary School is a smaller than average primary school serving a rural village in Northamptonshire. Some pupils attend the school from the nearby towns of Daventry and Rugby. There are currently 118 pupils on roll. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The proportion with special educational needs is just above the national average. The school converted to academy status in 2014 and is part of the Peterborough Diocese Education Trust (PDET). The current headteacher has been in post since September 2016. A significant number of new staff also began work at the school at the start of the academic year.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Barby C of E School as a Church of England school are good

- Christian values are lived out through a strong family ethos. This has a powerful impact on the wellbeing and relationships of everyone in the school community
- The headteacher and senior leaders provide clear direction, inspired by a Christian vision, that ensures the school is fully inclusive and meets the needs of all learners
- The contribution of clergy and foundation governors ensures the school's Christian character is secure and sustainable for the future.

Areas to improve

- To embed a more strategic approach to ensuring that all documentation, including the school website, more explicitly reflects the Christian distinctiveness of the school so that it is clear that everything is underpinned by the school's Christian foundation
- Provide opportunities for pupils to make use of their biblical knowledge and spiritual skills by offering them opportunities for planning, leading and evaluating collective worship
- Ensure that pupils have opportunities to develop their understanding of Christianity as a worldwide faith to enhance their awareness of the breadth of Christianity

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

The overwhelming characteristic of this small school is that of a strong family feel which has a significant effect on the wellbeing, personal development and achievement of pupils. The house system works well with younger pupils benefitting from having older ones as role models. Through this system all pupils learn to appreciate one another and to value one another as unique and special human beings. Pupils talk about being known by everyone in the school and so 'we never find ourselves with no one to care about us'. Relationships are exemplary and any tensions are quickly resolved. Christian values set out a clear pattern for expected behaviour, relationships and attitudes towards others. All pupils are familiar with these values which include forgiveness, courage and compassion. They talk readily about biblical stories that support their understanding of the values. Older pupils can clearly link the story of Jesus at Easter with the value of courage. Teaching linked to values has also helped pupils to appreciate ways in which they can be involved in bringing about change in society. They enthusiastically speak of the importance of putting the needs of others before your own. Any issues of low level bullying and unacceptable behaviour are dealt with swiftly and in a spirit of compassion and care for every child involved. This is because all members of staff champion positive behaviour and always lead by example. The school is highly inclusive. All pupils are given the best possible chances to do well and succeed. This includes the way in which they are able to participate in collective worship by asking questions, through to selling cakes for the many fund raising activities the school is involved with. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural [SMSC] development is therefore woven through all the school is and does. New pupils and their parents receive a warm welcome and staff's attention to detail ensures a smooth transition into the school. Funding received by the school, known as pupil premium, is used to employ a member of staff who carries out intervention activities with vulnerable pupils. This ensures these pupils have support in accessing the curriculum and support for their social and emotional wellbeing. Pupils achieve well at Barby school. Target setting is ambitious for all groups including vulnerable groups. The school's good outcomes over recent years are being sustained. Pupils are doing at least as well as expected and many do even better. In 2016 the key stage 2 combined scores for reading, writing and maths placed the school 6th in the county. Religious education (RE) contributes significantly to the Christian character of the school. In RE lessons pupils are able to explore Christian ideas and concepts in depth through teaching that is clearly enabling them to progress in their understanding. Materials from 'Understanding Christianity' are currently being introduced. Pupils understand that their village school does not have the same diversity as schools in other places. Although they enjoy covering different religions in RE, it is the additional learning experiences they are offered that capture their interest. Pupils talk animatedly about the time when a member of staff talked to them about her Hindu faith and they could dress up in 'her lovely clothes that are different to ours but really colourful'. Pupils have some knowledge of different Christian traditions but this does not extend to understanding that Christianity is a global faith.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship plays an important part in every school day because it reinforces the sense of belonging to a family and the importance of the school's Christian foundation. It is time regarded as a building block for each day's activities. Pupils enjoy the opportunity to sit together in whole school worship and share time with everyone. They speak of this time as helping them to 'think about the day we are having and what we can do to make it better'. Themes explored in worship link closely to the values and worship provides everyone in the school community with the opportunity to hear together the Christian understanding of the values. Class and key stage worship ensures that deeper thinking can be done about the values and their significance in the life of the school community. A promises tree for Lent in the Foundation Stage classroom was full of promises the pupils had made after their whole school collective worship introducing the Lenten season. Much of the teaching in collective worship focusses on the life and teaching of Jesus. Pupils can therefore talk with a secure knowledge of the place Jesus Christ has in the Christian faith. They are familiar with wording of God as 'Father Son and Holy Spirit' and express clearly their understanding of this as a key way in which Christians understand God. Pupils have a good understanding of the key features of Christian worship through the use of a worship table, symbols, a Bible and a recently presented prayer book. Changes made since the previous inspection have brought about a greater awareness and understanding of the purpose of prayer. Pupils know they can pray about anything. Younger children remember asking God to look after the chicks in their classroom whilst older children talk of praying for situations in the world when they hear about bad things happening. Worship is planned by the headteacher and delivered by a range of people including the incumbent and representatives from another local church. The contribution they make is valued by staff and pupils alike. The stories they tell and the presentations they make are remembered by pupils for some time afterwards. The celebration of festivals takes place in the church. These are seen by both the church and the school as opportunities for supporting the already well established relationship between the two. Since the last inspection the school has made good progress in embedding processes for monitoring the impact of collective worship. School leaders now have a much clearer idea of the ways in which worship needs to develop. One such way is for pupils to be more involved in the planning and leadership of worship.

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

School leaders and foundation governors are committed to the school's Christian foundation. This is firmly established in their vision for the school to continue to serve the local community as a Christian presence. Through the mission statement 'From little acorns great oaks grow' school leaders talk about the personal growth of pupils in many ways, including spiritual growth. Through collective worship, links with the church and promotion of distinctively Christian values they are continuing to find ways to do this. At present however, the profile of the school as a Church of England school is not seen in documentation or explicitly on the website. There is therefore no indication that policies written and decisions made by governors are reflecting the Christian vision they express. Policies such as that for behaviour do not state that Christian values underpin it. The partnership with parents is strong. They value the Christian principles with which the school is led whether or not they are of a faith background. Its welcoming, inclusive atmosphere is seen as the result of its Christian values. The headteacher and foundation governors have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and the areas where improvement is needed. The self-review that informs strategic planning as a church school has been dependent on the headteacher. The current foundation governors are beginning to take a more active and discerning role in supporting the development of the school's distinctively Christian character. Their monitoring visits, that include talking with pupils, are prompting actions to secure improvement. Although the headteacher is new in post she has already established herself as a respected and inspiring leader. Staff, governors and parents are confident in her ability to lead the school as a distinctive church school. She has accessed training offered by PDET including RE training for implementing 'Understanding Christianity' and headteacher network meetings. Relationships with the church are strong. The incumbent came into post at Easter 2016 and along with the headteacher continues to explore ways in which the relationship can grow. A recent pancake party held in the church with pancakes made at school being eaten at church provided an opportunity to share teaching about Lent and open up the church to the school and village community. As a result of such activities pupils and parents have a growing understanding of the church as 'our church'. Links with the diocese are positive. Despite the widespread nature of the diocese the school uses opportunities available to raise awareness of the wider Christian community. Year 6 pupils attend the transition day at the Cathedral. At a recent Candlemas service in the Deanery the school was presented with a candle to light in collective worship. Pupils talk about these events as 'like being part of a big family' and the candle reminds them of that every time it is lit. The school's arrangements for RE and collective worship meet statutory requirements. Barby C of E Primary School is well placed to move confidently into the future.

SIAMS report March 2017 Barby C of E Primary School, Northamptonshire CV23 8TR