

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Burton Bradstock Church of England Primary School	
Church Street, Burton Bradstock, Bridport, Dorset, DT6 4QS	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese	Salisbury
Previous SIAS inspection grade	Good
Date of academy conversion	1 April 2016
Name of multi-academy trust	Minerva Learning Trust
Date of inspection	17 May 2017
Date of last inspection	20 June 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Primary 142692
Headteacher	Claire Staple
Executive Principal	Kay Taylor
Inspector's name and number	Anna Willcox (Quality assurance assessor: Margaret James 698)

School context

Burton Bradstock Primary School is a smaller than average sized, coastal village primary school. The school has 78 children on roll and 66% come from outside the catchment area through parental preference. The majority of learners are of White British origin. The number of children who have special educational needs is broadly in line with the national average although the school has a higher than average proportion of children with an education, health and care plan. The headteacher has a 0.2 teaching commitment. The school converted to an academy on 1 April 2016 as part of Minerva Learning Trust, a newly formed, mixed multi-academy trust.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Burton Bradstock CE Primary School as a Church of England school are good

- There are a set of clearly identified Christian values known by all members of the school community which underpin the work of the school.
- Collective worship is valued by all members of the school community. However, learners do not have a clear understanding of what worship is which limits the impact it has on their development.
- Relationships between all members of the school community are highly positive and this is largely attributed to the Christian distinctiveness of the school.
- The passionate leadership of the headteacher provides good capacity to drive improvement.

Areas to improve

- Crystallise the view widely shared amongst school leaders, staff and parents into a cohesive Christian vision for a church school which leaders can then use as a benchmark for formalised monitoring and evaluation of the church school distinctiveness in order to drive improvement.
- Develop learners' comprehension of what worship is, including a specific focus on the purpose and value of prayer, opportunities for spiritual development and an understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- Refine and develop formal systems for school leaders to monitor and evaluate the impact of collective worship in order to bring about specific improvements which have measurable, positive outcomes for learners.

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

Christian values are central to all aspects of school life at Burton Bradstock Primary School and leaders articulate clearly how these are distinctively Christian through being rooted in scripture. Children are able to cite some examples of how they help them in life and it is clear how these impact daily on relationships, behaviour and learners' ability to make good choices. Children achieve well overall academically and this is attributed, by school leaders, to the Christian character of the school and its values. Relationships are a strength of the school. Learners say, 'we are all friends... we all know each other here' and this is supported by staff and parents who confirm that this is as a result of the school's Christian ethos. The school is described by many as being a 'family'. A high profile is given to ensuring that all members of the school community are valued as individuals, made in the image of God, and well cared for in line with the school's values. Parents are unequivocal in their praise of the school and its staff and describe the school as wholly inclusive where 'every child is valued'. This can be seen particularly clearly in the way the school responds to issues regarding attendance where the headteacher has shown great compassion towards families in need. This distinctively Christian approach has a positive impact on attendance which is currently improving. A definition of spiritual development forms part of the school's social, moral, spiritual and cultural (SMSC) education policy. Although staff can articulate this, it is not succinct enough for the children to be able to fully understand. However, teachers provide regular opportunities for children to explore spirituality, for example, as part of visits to the beach and weekly welly walks. Children respond positively to these. Reflection journals are used weekly to promote reflection on worship themes. Children find it challenging to express what they gain from this reflection or how it helps them. Children have a developing understanding of Christianity as a world faith and can identify other faiths they have learnt about, although they show some confusion between the beliefs and practices of different religions. The school has adopted the principles of a 'Rights Respecting School'. This is shown clearly through the learners' understanding that everyone has the right to believe what they choose and that others' viewpoints should be respected. Religious education (RE) makes a contribution to the children's SMSC development, although this is not yet consistent. Behaviour in the school is at least good and children link the reasons for this to the Christian values of the school. For example, one child stated that 'we know it is important to forgive someone if you fall out with them'.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is satisfactory

Collective worship is valued by members of the school community and is considered as a key part of each day. All staff attend collective worship on a Monday morning which indicates the high profile it has in the school. Children and staff engage in worship and most participate with enthusiasm. The school uses Roots and Fruits to plan worship which ensures that it is securely based on Christian values. This was chosen to support teachers in building on the focus value each week in class which has reinforced the embedding of Christian values throughout the school. Children are invited to be still and reflect during worship which provides them with some opportunity for spiritual development. Worship is Christian in nature and reflects some Anglican traditions including the lighting of a candle which the children identify as signifying 'God is with us'. However, children's understanding of collective worship as something they do to worship God is underdeveloped. Children are not able to articulate how worship helps them in their lives or what it means to them although they do say that they enjoy it. Children respond with respect and reverence to prayer but their understanding of its purpose and potential impact is limited. Learners have some understanding of the person of Jesus Christ and can talk about some new testament Bible stories and what they teach us. For example, 'Jesus taught us to forgive when he died on the cross'. The children are unaware of the Holy Spirit because the Trinity is not referred to regularly as part of collective worship. Learner's understanding of God in three persons is therefore restricted. The oldest children lead celebration worship on a weekly basis and they do so confidently and with enthusiasm. They have some involvement in the planning of this. All members of the school community speak highly of the Open the Book team who plan and lead collective worship weekly. Children are able to recall some of the Bible stories they have learnt through these acts of worship and enjoy having the opportunity to take part in them. As a result of informal monitoring, some improvements have been made to collective worship. These include moving the time of Monday worship to enable all staff to attend and allowing children to choose the hymns they like in order to further engage them. There is limited evidence of formal monitoring and evaluation of collective worship and, therefore, of any resulting improvements in the quality of worship and its impact on learners.

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

The headteacher is a passionate leader who shows elements of outstanding church school leadership. She is very well thought of by governors, staff, parents and children alike. One member of staff said: 'She embodies all you would want a head of a church school to be.' She has a very strong sense of love and compassion for the children, staff and all members of the school community and articulates clearly her vision of valuing each child as a child of God, who is a unique individual and deserves to flourish. She speaks ardently about learners who have described the impact the school has had on their lives as a result of school staff meeting their individual needs. It is clear, through discussions, that school leaders and staff share the vision which appears to emanate from the headteacher. This vision, however, has not been explicitly established resulting in it being difficult to ensure an entirely cohesive approach which actively promotes it and secures its consistent impact across the whole school community. The headteacher is well supported and challenged by a committed governing body who are well known in the school by staff, children and parents. They clearly know their school very well and spend a lot of time helping out with events on a regular basis. Governors therefore have a good informal overview of what is happening in the school. The chaplaincy group have a role in monitoring and evaluating the impact of church school distinctiveness and collective worship which, whilst having some positive impact, are not yet sufficiently rigorous to bring about sustained improvement. The executive principal has shown great commitment in familiarising herself with the SIAMS agenda and the concept of a Christian education since taking on this role in April 2016. As a result she is able to effectively support the headteacher in this regard. Together with the support of the former chair of governors, a diocesan appointment to the board of trustees, she is in a good position to be able to lead the school, at trust level, in further enhancing its Christian distinctiveness. The school has close links with the local church and community and they regularly put on joint events or participate in each others'. Several special services each year are held in the church and the children talk positively about these and their involvement in them. Members of the community report how much they appreciate the children's presence in the local area. The school speaks highly of the support received from the vicar in his participation on the governing body, leading worship and supporting with RE lessons. Recently, the vicar has been unable to be as proactive in the school as he has been previously. As a result, school leaders have made it a priority to actively seek the support of the incumbent from another local parish in order to preserve the visible presence of a vicar in school. School leaders and teaching staff have engaged in some diocesan led professional development since the last inspection. Impact of this is evident through development work being carried out on the RE curriculum but has not had an impact upon collective worship. Further development of RE has been identified by leaders as an area for improvement and work is underway to address this. The statutory requirements for RE and collective worship are met.

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