

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Barnabas Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Jubilee Terrace, Leeman Road, York, YO26 4YZ

Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	York
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Local authority	York
Date of inspection	23 March 2017
Date of last inspection	May 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	VC Primary 121473
Headteacher	Karen Boardman
Inspector's name and number	Judy Jones 797

School context

St Barnabas primary school is smaller than average, with 156 children aged between 4 and 11. The school serves an urban area near the centre of York. Most children are of White British heritage but the proportion of children whose first language is not English has risen to around ten per cent over the last six years. The proportion of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities is slightly above average, as is the number entitled to additional support through pupil premium funding. The head teacher was in post at the previous inspection.

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

- Children make good progress in lessons and their personal development is excellent because the school lives up to its aim 'to help our children to develop and live by a personal set of well-founded moral values based on Christian beliefs.'
- The school is an exceptionally warm and friendly community where relationships at all levels are rooted in the clearly expressed Christian values of community, friendship, forgiveness, truth, courage and thankfulness.
- Children's experience of school is greatly enriched by the support of the local church and by the York diocese.

Areas to improve

- Give children more first-hand experience of meeting people from other faiths and cultures than their own.
- Make the classroom reflection areas more distinctive and inviting so that children choose to make greater use of them.

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

Christian values of community, truth, courage, friendship, perseverance and forgiveness are at the heart of all the school does. As a result, the school is a secure environment where children feel safe and comfortable about speaking out or trying new ideas. Relationships are excellent amongst all ages in the school and children enjoy lessons and make good progress. Attendance is close to the national average and rising. Individual differences are respected and help is promptly provided for children with particular needs. A number of children whose home language is not English have joined the school in recent years. There is exceptional care for such pupils. Children and adults alike support and help the newcomers to join in, speak English, and play a full part in school life. Children speak confidently of the way the school's values, such as perseverance, help them in their lessons. They are clear that without such values their school would be a less happy place and they would not have so many friends. They have a secure idea of the Trinity and their knowledge of the Bible is good. Hence they understand that the New Testament gives an account of the life and ministry of Jesus and they can link Bible stories to their own lives. For example, children see how the story of Zacchaeus the tax collector gives us an example of forgiveness and explain the importance of forgiving in their own lives. A typical reason children give is that 'if you don't forgive the bitterness stays within and it just goes on and on.' Support for children's spiritual development is excellent, particularly in the way they are encouraged to think deeply about issues such as right and wrong that affect their lives. This happens at many times including in collective worship (CW) and religious education (RE). For example, in RE children compare and contrast the Christian and Humanist view and arrive at exceptionally mature and personal accounts of the idea of 'conscience.' Children have very strict views of behaviour and are highly critical of any activity that does not meet their exacting standards. Consequently, behaviour is very good and severe punishment such as exclusions is virtually unknown. The school tries to widen children's experience of other cultures and faiths through RE lessons and through charity work such as the Toilet Twinning charity in which children have collected money to provide a toilet for a school in one of the poorest areas of the world. This project appeals the children and they are proud of their effort, but it cannot replace direct contact with people from other faiths and cultures. At present, such contact is limited.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship is an important feature of every day and plays an outstanding part in establishing the Christian ethos of the school. All teachers attend and children play a key part in worship sessions. Older children help with the organisation and management and do so with seriousness and confidence. The well planned worship is based on Biblical teaching and includes very good singing and well integrated opportunities for reflection. Most whole-school worship is led by the headteacher or visitors, with considerable help from the children who form the 'worship committee.' This group also organises the music and candles for worship. Worship sessions are well used to emphasise the school's Christian values through retelling related Bible stories in a variety of ways. Worship routinely involves Anglican responses. Children say they enjoy the stories and like being asked to comment on them. They enjoy even more the class worship in which a class prepares and presents the whole of the worship to the rest of the school or Key Stage. They are keen to do more. They greatly appreciate the chance to choose the theme and devise a play or other presentation on a perceived need. Some spoke with enthusiasm about the worship they had presented illustrating the problems and consequences of name-calling. Whatever the form worship takes, prayer is central. Children understand the purpose of prayer and offer to improvise prayers for the whole school during worship. Children are keen to volunteer, and the rest listen respectfully. As a result, prayer is part of many children's everyday life and they often add prayers to the books in their reflection areas. Some of these areas are not easily distinguished from other displays in the classroom so their impact is limited. However, the common reflection area in the centre of the school is well used by children who can add prayer leaves on the prayer tree in their spare time. The local church is very supportive of the school and the former vicar regularly conducted worship. Currently there is a vacancy but church members have stepped in to help, and this has led to the formation of a parents' prayer group. The development and planning of worship is supported by comprehensive evaluation by governors and children.

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

The outstanding impact of the school on its children is due to the clear vision and excellent leadership by the headteacher and her team of senior leaders. This ensures the school's Christian vision is clear to all and guides all aspects of the school. Consequently, Christian values are evident throughout the curriculum and recreation of the school and changes and improvements are embraced by all. The recent pilgrimage of Archbishop Sentamu, followed on line by the children, and his visit to the school reinforced the vision memorably. Parents are pleased with their children's education and value the distinctively Christian ideals, whether or not they themselves are committed

Christians. This is partly the result of attending the weekly celebration assemblies which are Christian in nature and give parents a good idea of the vision and ethos of the school. Evaluation of RE and CW is rigorous, so that teachers and governors are well aware of what works well and where there are challenges. RE is given prominence as a core subject and the RE leader is one of the senior teachers responsible for leading RE throughout the school. Changes to the curriculum, due to the imminent introduction of a new syllabus and the appointment of a new RE leader, are being approached enthusiastically and training is well underway for all staff. Training and guidance by the diocese contributes effectively to the school's planning and for its support for leadership in church schools. Governors are diligent in their work with the school. The foundation governors are deeply committed to the Christian nature of the school and have moved in admirably to fill the gap during the wait for a new vicar. They form an effective link with the diocese and ensure the school benefits from the support the diocese gives. The governing body ensures the school observes statutory requirements, including the need to provide RE and a daily act of worship.

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