Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

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| **Belbroughton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School** | |
| Bradford Lane  Belbroughton  Stourbridge.  DY9 9TF | |
| **Current SIAMS inspection grade** | **Outstanding** |
| **Diocese** | **Worcester** |
| Previous SIAMS inspection grade | Outstanding |
| Local authority | Worcestershire |
| Date of inspection | 9 March 2017 |
| Date of last inspection | 1 May 2012 |
| Type of school and unique reference number | 116782 |
| Headteacher | Clare Bishop |
| Inspector’s name and number | C. Ann Stone NS812 |

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| **School context**  Belbroughton Primary School is a smaller than average sized primary school set in a rural location. Numbers in the school have fallen since the closure of the nursery class in 2013 with the school having 153 children on roll. The vast majority of children are of white British heritage and numbers with special educational needs and those eligible to receive Pupil Premium funding are low. The headteacher and deputy have been appointed since the previous inspection. The school has close links with Holy Trinity Parish Church which is without a priest at present. |
| **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Belbroughton VC Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding.**   * The ability of all stakeholders to articulate and promote a vision for the school which is rooted in Christian values with the result that every member of the school community feels valued. * The children’s understanding and articulation of Christian values which have a significant impact on their daily lives and achievements. * The great value placed on worship which is linked to Christian teaching and values and impacts positively on the life of children and staff. * The religious education lessons which challenge children to think for themselves leading to outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. |
| **Areas to improve.**   * Further develop the shared understanding of spirituality so that children are engaged in a range of spiritual experiences allowing them to deepen their own personal spirituality. * Formalise the monitoring and evaluation of collective worship in order to ensure that children and governors are fully involved in the process. |

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| **The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is outstanding.**  Christian values permeate the whole life of the school and create an ethos that enables children to flourish in their potential as unique individuals. The motto of ‘to open the door to the future’ and the Christian values of respect, responsibility, reflection, honesty, thankfulness and perseverance are clearly understood by all stakeholders. The children readily acknowledge the impact of the school’s Christian values within their daily lives and confidently explain the links to Christian teaching. For example, a child talked about perseverance and how that gave him an image in his head of his future.  The behaviour of the children is of the highest standard and excellent relationships are consistently attributed to the Christian nature of the school. Children talk about how they are encouraged to reflect on what they may have done wrong and can link this to the teachings of Jesus. An example given was how forgiveness was an important part in the story of the prodigal son and linked this to how they should try to forgive when disagreements happen.  Children have opportunities to deepen their understanding of spirituality through the use of outside spaces and the opportunities provided in the curriculum. Not yet fully developed by all stakeholders is a shared understanding of spirituality which would allow children to make their own links between beliefs, practices and Christian values.  The relationship between the local community, parish church and school is strong and is characterised by mutual respect and a genuine sense of community. The school is involved in the village ‘Scarecrow Festival’ and events such as the ‘Big Breakfast’, organised by the Parents’ Association, ensure that the local community is fully involved in the life of the school. Through varied experiences children understand the need, and have the ability to put others before themselves. One child remarked that raising money for others less fortunate than themselves was important but it was also important to pray for them. In all these ways, the Christian character of the school has an impact on the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all children.  Parents comment that they are welcomed into school and consider themselves to be valued members of the school community. One parent talked about how, ‘The Christian element of school life runs through everything.’ Christian values and Bible stories are regularly discussed at home and parents link this directly to the Christian distinctiveness of the school. The care and support shown to a new child in school with learning difficulties was directly attributed, by the parent, to the Christian caring values of the school.  The religious education (RE) subject leader is enthusiastic and well informed and ensures standards are high and lessons challenging. Children enjoy their RE lessons and are able to question and develop their understanding of the impact religion has on others. They are beginning to develop an understanding that Christianity is a multi-cultural world faith and have a good understanding of the diversity and difference within and between other faith communities. This was a development point from the previous inspection. |
| **The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding.**  Collective worship is central to the life of the school and its impact on individuals is readily and clearly articulated by all. Children speak with confidence about the way in which worship shapes their thinking and actions. Planning is detailed and refers to Christian values, the seasons of the church’s year and relevant world issues. Symbolic artefacts are displayed on a worship table and children are able to articulate what they mean to Christians. A coloured cloth to reflect the church year is also used but children are not yet confident at explaining the significance of this.  All teaching staff lead worship and see it as a way to demonstrate their commitment as a team to promote the Christian values of the school. A foundation governor has led ‘Open the Book’ style worship and has committed to continue this whilst the parish is without a priest.  The religious education and collective worship group (CREW) have a major role in the development and delivery of worship. They are involved in every act of worship by introducing the theme, leading prayers, music making and preparing the hall. Children are not yet involved in the monitoring and evaluation of worship.  Children talk about the reflective areas in school and outside which enable worship to extend far beyond the confines of a set time and place. Children are confident at explaining the importance of these spaces as a place to reflect and ask God for his help. One child talked about visiting an outside space to talk to God following the death of her grandfather.  Worship makes a significant contribution towards the spiritual development of all children by creating an atmosphere of stillness, challenging children to ask questions and reflect upon their own experiences. Children have a clear understanding of prayer. The school prayer, written by children, incorporates the six school values and is said at the end of the school day. The ‘Lord’s Prayer’, the ‘Grace’, learning about Jesus Christ and an understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit enables children to make links between the Bible and lessons for their own lives. Children are able to talk with confidence about the ‘Last Supper’ but are not yet able to link this to the Anglican practice of Eucharist.  Strong links exist with the parish church which is used to celebrate major Christian festivals such as Easter, Harvest and Christmas. These are supported well by parents and governors, thereby enhancing the schools distinctive Christian character.  Parents see the messages from worship played out in the behaviour of the children at home, for example saying a prayer before mealtimes. Parents are invited to ‘Gold Book Assembly’ which acknowledges achievements of all and reinforces the Christian values needed to achieve.  Some feedback of collective worship occurs but the lack of formal systems of evaluation mean that continuous improvement is limited. |
| **The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school is outstanding.**  Under the inspirational leadership of the headteacher and with a highly supportive team of staff and governors, there is a clear Christian ethos within the school which is subject to continuous review and development. The understanding of all adults of how Christian values and spiritual development make a difference ensures that these are at the heart of the school’s vision and school improvement. Governors know their school and articulate well the understanding of their role as strategic leaders of a church school. They are an intrinsic part of school life and are also involved in school fundraising events, parent forums and informal contact with parents on the playground.  Parents know that their concerns are dealt with efficiently and sensitively and link this to the Christian distinctiveness of the school. They comment that the Christian values shared by all leaders and staff contribute well to behaviour management and the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all children. One parent commented that ‘kindness and compassion shines through the staff.’ They know their views are welcomed and valued and feel privileged to be part of the school.  Members of a well established ‘Parents’ Association’ volunteer their time and talents as well as giving financial support to the school. For example, all new parents are specifically welcomed to the school by a member of the parents association enabling new parents to quickly become involved in the life of the church school.  The RE subject leader attends diocesan training, disseminates information to staff through formal and informal meetings and has a clear action plan to increase the effectiveness of RE within the school.  The development of all staff and governors is achieved through individual support, attendance at diocesan training and mentoring and support of each other which leads to a positive impact on the Christian distinctiveness of the school. An example given was that the chair of governors meets all new governors personally ensuring they feel welcome, well informed and valued members of the governing body. Governors support and encourage the development of staff as future leaders of church schools.  Mutual respect and support between the parish church and school enable them to flourish and fulfil their mission to the school, the local community and beyond. Leaders and governors ensure both worship and religious education meet statutory requirements. The supportive relationships between all members of the school community are clearly rooted in Christian values, providing an excellent example of a school which is both distinctive and highly effective. |

SIAMS report March 2017 Belbroughton VC Primary School DY9 9TF