

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Bourne Elsea Park Church of England Primary Academy

Sandown Drive, Elsea Park, Bourne, Lincolnshire. PE10 0WP.	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Lincoln
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Not applicable
Date of academy establishment	September 2014
Name of multi-academy trust	Abbey Academies Trust
Date of inspection	12 June 2017
Date of last inspection	Not previously inspected
Type of school and unique reference number	Primary 140214
Executive Headteacher	Sarah Moore
Inspector's name and number	Anne Lumb 333

School context

This is a new build academy which opened in September 2014. Built in response to the increase in numbers of children locally, the academy serves the growing community of Elsea Park from which the majority of the current pupils come. Bourne Elsea Park has not replaced any existing schools. The academy is a member of the Abbey Academies Trust, along with Bourne Abbey Church of England Primary Academy. The Executive Headteacher leads a partnership of the two schools and has been in post since January 2016. The proportion of children with special educational needs and of children who speak English as an additional language are broadly in line with national averages. The school has grown rapidly in the last twelve months at the request of the local authority, consequently pupil and staff mobility into the school have been high. At the end of July 2016, there were no year 2 or year 6 pupils and therefore there is no data from statutory assessments for the academic year 2015-16. The academy had its first Ofsted inspection in April 2017. There are close links with the local church situated 1.5 miles away.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Bourne Elsea Park Church of England Academy as a Church of England school are outstanding

- This is a deeply caring school community where Christian values are rooted firmly in biblical teaching so that all its members have the opportunity to fulfil their God-given potential.
- The school's Christian values are being lived out daily which impacts positively on the wellbeing, attendance and progress in learning of all children.
- Well planned and inspirational teaching on the Trinity ensures that children are able to express age-appropriate understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Areas to improve

- Ensure that children at all stages have opportunity to ask and discuss 'big questions' in order to develop an understanding that there are not always definite answers to spiritually challenging questions.
- Integrate the *Understanding Christianity* resource within the religious education curriculum so that children have more opportunities to develop their questioning skills.

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

This is an extremely caring 'family' school where all children are valued as unique children of God so that their God-given talents are recognised and celebrated and individual learning needs are met. The academy's leaders have acted quickly and effectively to establish a clear Christian context in which all the children's learning takes place. Core Christian values of creation, friendship, perseverance, forgiveness, trust and thankfulness have been placed at the centre of the academy's development as a church school and these, along with the *Valuing All God's Children* document, clearly inform policies, planning and practice. The Christian values are explicitly rooted in biblical teaching and are clearly connected to all areas of school life; 'We are thankful to God for our food, water and clothes which we all have a right to ... for creation and the world.' Christian values are deeply embedded so that all members of the school community recognise, articulate and truly live out these values. Consequently relationships at all levels are excellent and the children feel safe and happy in their learning; 'This is a safe place to make mistakes. No one gets cross. We persevere and learn from our mistakes.' Parents comment that their children have 'blossomed' and become 'more confident, kind and caring, willing to talk about feelings and there is an emphasis on being kind to others.' A well-developed Peer Mediator system has been so successful that the year 5 children who are mediators comment that they are no longer needed because the children have learned to resolve difficulties themselves. Attendance is excellent since the children want to come to school to learn and they feel accepted whatever their individual needs might be.

Excellent academic achievement and progress in learning are at the heart of the academy's self-evaluation and improvement planning, with robust systems in place for tracking individual children's progress. However, this is not at the expense of children's wellbeing and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development. Leaders refer to offering 'rigour with care' and this is reflected through the embedding of SMSC opportunities across the curriculum. High quality reflection areas throughout the school ensure that children have appropriate opportunities during the school day to engage in experiences which develop a personal spirituality; 'Using reflection areas gives us time to speak to God.'

Links with Nyansakia Primary School in Africa and visits into school by the local Roman Catholic priest, ensure that children have a good understanding of Christianity as a multicultural world faith. There are several children in the school of different faiths who are highly respected and who make their own distinctive contribution to developing the understanding of all children about their faith. Staff state that, 'Children of all faiths are not just tolerated, they are celebrated and welcomed as part of our family.' Children comment that 'it is one of our values to welcome and embrace all faiths and religions.' Children speak about valuing the school's church status because 'we can believe in the God of our choice and follow the religion of our choice.'

Religious education (RE) is well managed and led so that children are excited and challenged in their learning by good and outstanding teaching. They enjoy learning words such as 'omnibenevolence' and 'omnipresence' when exploring the character of God. Christian values are explored throughout the curriculum with children learning in RE that the woman in the parable of the lost coin was 'thankful' when she found the coin and went and told her neighbours, and relating this to their learning in Maths when dividing and sharing coins. Although the children are often engaged in answering and discussing questions there are fewer opportunities to discuss 'big questions' asked by the children themselves.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship is central to the life of the school and is a highly valued activity for the whole school community since all members of the community engage positively with collective worship such that it makes a significant contribution to the development of personal spirituality. Children comment that 'We can worship God' and staff recognise that 'our special family (seen in collective worship) combined with our Christian values help to cultivate our spiritual gifts.' Collective worship is well led by staff and by a variety of visitors from the local churches, including Open the Book. Leaders of collective worship effectively explore biblical teaching and there is a strong focus on the person of Jesus. There are opportunities for learners to relate the Bible stories explored to the school's Christian values and to their own lives; Daniel was thankful to God that he and the Israelites had been kept safe in Babylon; Zacchaeus was thankful when 'Jesus forgave him.' Parents comment that often they have conversations at home which follow on from collective worship in school where Christian values help 'to answer (my daughter's) questions, give her tools to work out life's mysteries and understand a little more the sadder and harder parts of life.'

Together, teaching in RE and collective worship enable children to develop an age-appropriate understanding of the Christian teaching of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit; 'The Trinity is about God being three in one. God above is the Father, God on earth is the Son and the Holy Spirit is God everywhere, omnipresent' (year 5 pupil).

The establishment of a Collective Worship Council has had a positive impact on the planning and delivery of collective worship since it engages a group of pupils directly in this process. Evaluation of collective worship has led

to the establishing of a 'Bible story' collective worship where all the children sit round in a circle together. There are often opportunities for children to deepen their understanding through discussion in their classroom reflection areas. Personal prayer and reflection are valued by all members of the school community as an integral part of the school day. The children learn about different kinds of prayer and there are opportunities to express their worries, to record acts of kindness shown by other children and contribute to a 'chain of thankfulness', all of which are 'calming for us'. Year 5 children are encouraged to engage in extemporary prayer in response to Bible stories and children talk about 'saying a prayer in a bad situation' which gives them a sense of peace. Planning and delivery of collective worship is enhanced by the input of local clergy, rooting the school's Christian values firmly in the Bible and encouraging the use of appropriate Christian liturgy within collective worship.

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

School leaders confidently and consistently articulate, live out and promote a vision distinctively rooted in Christian values. They ensure that all members of the school community are enabled to achieve their potential 'within a caring Christian environment' where they all help each other. School leaders have effective monitoring and evaluation procedures in place which ensure that they have a thorough understanding of the school's performance. These procedures have been quality assured externally as well as within the Academy Trust. A Governor Open Morning focussing on Christian distinctiveness and Christian values highlighted the impact of Christian values on the school's strategic development; 'On this visit, I saw evidence that staff and pupils not only understood but could also articulate the Christian distinctiveness of the school.' There are good systems in place to allow staff to access appropriate training opportunities, including that provided by the diocese, and to gain wider experience through the close partnership with Bourne Abbey Church of England Academy. This secures significant benefits for the leadership of both schools into the future.

There is a positive and developing partnership with the local church such that clergy are viewed as part of the academy community rather than as occasional visitors; clergy comment that 'I left (after a governor visit) encouraged and feeling that the presence of both governors and clergy is valued.' There are links between the school and church websites and parents view the local church as 'their church'. This partnership benefits both communities by demonstrating an 'enriching school and a positive and welcoming church'. Children now have the opportunity to prepare for confirmation in school and a recent joint service with Bourne Abbey Church of England Academy enabled year 5 children to experience Holy Communion; receiving Holy Communion, if they were confirmed, or a blessing. A year 5 pupil commented that the blessing 'made me feel God is closer.' The school is at the heart of the new and growing local community. Consequently, the focus of church school distinctiveness draws in the community; 'the best of all the values brings together the whole community.' Visits to a variety of places of worship for different faiths enhance the children's opportunities to engage with a diversity of religious faith perspectives. In addition, the children visit several local churches of different denominations thus widening their experience of the Christian faith. Religious education and collective worship meet statutory requirements. The school is well placed to continue to develop as an outstanding church school.

SIAMS report June 2017 Bourne Elsea Park Church of England Academy Bourne Lincolnshire. PE10 0WP.