

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Brampton Abbots Voluntary Aided Church of England Primary School	
Brampton Road, Ross-on-Wye, HR9 7FX	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese	Hereford
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Local authority	Herefordshire
Date of inspection	4 July 2017
Date of last inspection	24 May 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Aided 116867
Headteacher	Daniel Brearey
Inspector's name and number	Colin Howard 517

School context

Brampton Abbots Church of England Primary School is a smaller than average primary school serving the market town of Ross-on-Wye. There are 125 pupils on roll. Almost all pupils are of white British background. There are a higher than average number of children eligible for free school meals and pupil premium. There are a higher than average number of pupils on the special educational needs register. The school is currently led by a head teacher who now provides leadership for another local church school.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Brampton Abbots as a Church of England school are good

- The head teacher, governors and staff provide strong leadership to consistently promote high levels of Christian values in school life.
- The inclusive nature of the school where every child is valued, safe and cared for.
- Pupils' enthusiasm for religious education, allied with their depth of understanding for biblical study and Christian values, serves to enhance their understanding of what it is to be Christian.
- The high quality of teaching and learning in RE reflects the Christian foundations of the school and enables pupils to have a sense of their place in our multi-cultural world, seen in their support for local and overseas charities.

Areas to improve

- Involve governors in systems for monitoring and evaluating the school as a church school to further enhance its Christian character, RE and collective worship.
- Provide formal opportunities for the whole school community to evaluate acts of collective worship so that they can be more fully celebrated.
- Create a wider and more fully shared understanding of spirituality so that all members of the school community may experience spiritual growth.

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

Christian values such as peace and hope permeate the life of this happy, caring school. Its mission statement: 'Brampton Abbotts' Christian ethos nurtures every child to reach their individual potential' encapsulates its truly inclusive nature. Parents speak of a school where pupils are happy together and where positive relationships help all children to thrive. The mutual kindness and respect between staff and pupils are clearly evident in the daily life of the school. This provides the cornerstone upon which the warmth and care of this Christian family is founded. Children behave well in lessons and when moving around the school. Pupils have a very good understanding of Christianity as part of a world faith. Pupils' understanding of diversity is enhanced by planned visits to a variety of places of worship such as a Hindu temple. Faith-based days enable individuals to explore Christianity as part of a wider faith community. Children are also exposed to a range of other Christian denominations through visits to Baptist and Catholic places of worship. Such opportunities provide for meaningful ways in which pupils are allowed to consider and develop an awareness of the multi-cultural and multi-faith nature of the world. Pupils feel safe and they enjoy learning. Pupils are reminded of the significance of their school's Christian character by the high quality of displays around the school. These serve to constantly remind children of the school's shared core values of friendship, respect, honesty and happiness. Children are proud of the posters they create to help others in the school to reflect upon the importance of the current value. Classrooms provide opportunities for reflection both in the form of visually engaging displays or through areas such as reflection tables. The school's vision states 'Brampton Abbotts will be an exceptional school where happiness is created by achievement and achievement is created by happiness'. This serves to illustrate the school's commitment to its continued future success. New members of the school community are valued and welcomed to form part of the 'Brampton Family'. This is achieved by the giving of a pebble to signify their place in Brampton Abbotts school family. Parents noted that such a gift is 'heartfelt and accepted'. This, allied with the school's open door policy, makes Brampton Abbotts a 'special place'. The school has implemented strategies to improve the attendance of vulnerable groups of pupils. These strategies have had a positive effect upon pupil attendance. This work also supports the school's success in achieving expected levels of pupils' academic progress. 'Values gems' are awarded to promote the importance of using the core Christian values. Such tangible rewards play an important role in acknowledging the pupils' drive to emulate these values. Class values books capture the children's ideas and provide a means to reflect upon their importance in their daily lives. The school has worked hard to secure its development of spirituality. This has been undertaken through whole school training on 'What Spirituality means to us'. Opportunities are provided in and around the school to extend the children's sense of spiritual awareness. However, there is currently only a limited shared understanding of this concept. Opportunities to promote a shared Christian mission between the church and school are provided for by items such as the 'Quest Club' and 'Café Church'. These provide pupils and their families with an opportunity to engage more fully with Christian teachings. The school has worked hard to make tangible its 'Christian footprint'. This now allows the children to more fully appreciate the Christian foundations on which this school's commitment is built.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

The regular planned acts of collective worship, led by staff and the local clergy, are clearly linked to biblical study. Worship provides a focus for Christian festivals, beliefs and other faiths. The current collective worship policy is easily accessed by the school website. This indicates that worship is given a developmental part in whole school planning. The local church of St. Mary's is visited for a range of occasions and services such as at Easter. Parents value and have the opportunity to attend acts of worship. Children join in spontaneously to the guitar accompaniment as they enter worship. Candles are lit and a focus table is prominently placed in the school hall along with other worship symbols. This table displays items linked to the current value alongside pebbles given to new members of the school community. Such pebbles signify that the pupils are valued members of the 'Brampton Family'. During collective worship children are extremely well behaved, calm and respectful. They play an active role in the celebration of worship. On the day of the inspection, pupils sang eagerly and were keen to join in discussion with their peers. Pupils were still during quiet moments and these allowed them time to reflect upon the overtly core Christian value being celebrated. The whole school community lacks formal opportunities to evaluate what they have experienced and to suggest ways the worship could be improved. Pupils have an awareness of the Trinity and they are able to start to talk about this idea with some measure of understanding. Such a concept is reinforced by the lighting of a tri-wick candle during collective worship. The use of a prayer tree reminds visitors of the value placed on prayer during school life. Pupils are proud of the prayers they have created and these are available for others to read in the school's prayer book. Pupils talk of prayer as a means to 'talk to God in heaven'. Brampton Abbotts school is striving for excellence in worship and this is evident by its willingness to learn from the practice of other schools.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

Religious education (RE) is outstanding at Brampton Abbots School and it plays an important part in making children aware of biblical study, Christianity and other faiths. The school follows the Hereford Agreed Syllabus and has recently integrated 'Understanding Christianity' into their detailed planning for this subject. The school is rightly enthusiastic about this recent development and is extremely positive regarding the impact it will have on children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC). The pupils are given excellent opportunities for learning in RE lessons. RE provides many opportunities for promoting debate and discussion amongst its pupils when learning about this subject. The teaching of RE is outstanding and lessons provide many stimulating means to explore biblical study. For example, older pupils' use of digital technology to help them reflect upon and report about the ten plagues of Egypt. Children respond extremely positively to such experiences, allowing them to share ideas and reflect on the core Christian message. The quality of display around the school is excellent and allows pupils to reflect on other aspects of their RE study. The subject is well resourced and given prominence in whole school development. The current RE policy is up to date and easily accessed through the school website. Staff receive whole school training on items such as 'Understanding Christianity' and 'Effective RE Teaching'. This promotes current good practice and high standards of professional development. Standards in RE are broadly in line with national expectations. This represents good progress from the pupils' initial educational starting points. Detailed tracking of the pupils' achievements against 'core questions' in RE allows leaders to monitor the progress of standards in RE. This continually promotes pupil progress in this subject. The comments made on pupils' work allow them to consider how to improve on and extend what they have written. The monitoring of standards is undertaken by scrutiny of samples of pupils' work and observation of lessons to support the quality of the teaching. Excellent joint co-ordination allows for a comparison of standards to that of other curricular subjects. This promotes an excellent understanding of children's attainment. The joint co-ordinators of RE attend regular training. They are committed and knowledgeable about their subject and champion the place RE should play in the curriculum. Such excellent leadership ensures that children are enthusiastic about RE and have an impressive understanding of biblical study and of other faiths. RE has a high profile at Brampton Abbots School and this secures the many outstanding elements of its practice.

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

The school is well led and managed. The commitment and drive of the head teacher, staff and governors lead to strong leadership. This ensures that there are high levels of understanding of Christian values and consistent application of these in school life. Documentation, in addition to information on the school website, shows that the leadership and management of Brampton Abbots School places its Christian ethos at the centre of this school's life. The positive, strong links between the local clergy and the school serve to enhance the Christian and worshipful life of the school. Pupils support the community through items such as a 'Brampton Abbots tea party'. Pupils are involved in supporting other national charitable works with the pupil RE monitors currently organising a 'Toilet Twinning' project with the Tear Fund as well as fundraising for the World Wildlife Fund. All of these examples show how pupils support the school's Christian mission. Parents talk of a school that has an 'open door policy' and which is extremely inclusive. They are able to speak of the school's core values with ease. Their comments are extremely positive towards this aspect of the school's work and they readily acknowledge the vital role it plays in their 'whole children's' development. Parents clearly value the support they receive from the school with issues that may arise from time to time in their lives with regard to their children. The use of the school's Facebook page provides an immediate and valuable way in which parents can monitor and celebrate their children's achievements. RE is given an extremely high priority by the school leadership and this allows for priorities to be set for its future development. The joint RE and collective worship coordinators, head teacher and governors have the opportunity to go on relevant training. This supports their leadership roles by allowing them to reflect on effective current practice. Governors provide support to the head teacher and leadership in promoting the school's Christian values, vision and mission. Governors regularly visit the school and are committed to the school's wellbeing. However, governors have insufficient systems in place to formally monitor and evaluate the school as a church school to further enhance its Christian character. The school's leadership has successfully addressed the issues raised in the previous inspection. Self-evaluation as a church school is detailed and accurate. Members of the school council support their peers as well as supporting the selection of the school's values. The head teacher's recent support of leadership for another local church school is seen as being mutually beneficial. This development is testament to this school's continual drive to improve and develop.