

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Bishop Tufnell Church of England Infants School	
Pennyfields Felpham Bognor Regis West Sussex PO22 6BN	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese	Chichester
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local authority	West Sussex
Date/s of inspection	10 March 2017
Date of last inspection	27 May 2011
Type of school and unique reference number	Infant VA 126050
Executive Headteacher	Shane Morton
Inspector's name and number	Hilary Ferries 276

School context

Bishop Tufnell CE Infants School serves the local area of Felpham. The school is broadly average in size when compared to primary schools nationally. The proportion of pupils entitled to pupil premium, with English as an additional language, or with special educational needs is below the national. In March 2016 Ofsted judged the school to require improvement.

The previous headteacher and deputy headteacher retired in July 2015 and the headteacher of Bishop Tufnell CE Junior school became executive headteacher in September 2015. He has appointed a head of school who started in January 2016. The governors are consulting with the community on the two schools federating. The parish priest has been in post just over a year.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Bishop Tufnell CE Infant School as a Church of England school are good

- The leadership of the school at all levels knows the school well and uses this information to maintain and improve the Christian character and distinctiveness.
- Prayer is an important part of school life, contributing well to the many opportunities for spiritual development.
- There is a powerful Christian ethos of care that permeates the school and makes everyone in the school community feel valued. It is not yet fully making an impact of academic standards.
- Pupil voice is sought on all areas of school life and listened to, which has led to improvement in worship and religious education (RE).
- The new lively and creative RE curriculum engages pupils and staff, but assessment is not fully embedded.

Areas to improve

- Improve achievement in RE through the development of an assessment system for the new curriculum.
- Ensure that the Christian ethos makes a significant contribution to raising pupil achievement.

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

The school mission statement; 'Learning together, to serve God, His World and all His People – always our best because everyone matters!' is lived out by the school community. It is part of the worship focus area in the hall and referred to often in school life. Everyone is aware of and can articulate it. It is underpinned by 15 Christian values that inform policy and practice, displayed in every classroom and used in the creative and engaging curriculum and in worship. A recent development in school is the display of passages from the Bible around the school that support the values. Pupils refer to these as something that makes their school special. One pupil said, 'we use the Bible to find out about God'. Leaflets about each of the Christian values are sent home when the children are in reception year and are on the school website for parents' and carers' reference. Parents interviewed talked about how they found these helpful. Parents value the Christian ethos of the school and say they often learn things themselves from the school about Christianity. One parent said, 'they have good knowledge and they share things with me'. All members of the community talk about the very powerful Christian ethos of care in the school demonstrated through the warm and approachable staff, the positive relationships and reflected in the excellent behaviour in school and the high attendance. The executive headteacher and his team are now linking the Christian ethos to the pupils' achievement and there is demonstrable progress in this area but this has not yet been fully explored. Parents, whilst saying that they have always been happy with the school, are noticing the focus on academic success and are supportive of it.

Pupils are given many opportunities to develop spiritually through the wide-ranging curriculum, prayer corners and collective worship based on the Christian values. They say they feel valued and special and the learning environments reflect this; for example, a classroom display of raindrops with words about God, 'showers us with God's love'. There are also systems such as 'playground friends', based on Christian values which ensure all pupils are included and have someone to play with. The school is always looking for ways to support the more vulnerable. Programmes such as 'Achievement for All' and a range of interventions including 'Lego therapy' are used to ensure pupils can do their best. Parents talked of the extra mile that staff go to support children with special educational needs. There is a prayer garden that pupils use for reflection and the recent introduction of Forest School gives pupils a further opportunity to experience and learn about God's world.

The school leadership is keen for pupils to appreciate the diversity that exists, both within the local community and beyond and to understand the multicultural nature of Christianity. Recent focus days have been held with every classroom turned into a different country to explore Christianity as a world faith which gave pupils the opportunity to appreciate the breadth of Christianity. They remember the day and many could talk confidently about their understanding of this.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship is very important to the life of the school and marks the start of each school day. A recent pupil questionnaire showed that they are very positive about worship. One pupil said he liked it because, 'we learn new things about God and each other'. Worship is very well planned with weekly themes based on Christian way of life. They are linked strongly to the school Christian values, with different values explored each week. These are published on the school website for parent and carers' information, to enable them to discuss these with their children and to attend if they wish. Parents say they find this helpful. Many parents and carers attend the regular class assemblies, in which pupils share their work and learning. The pupils say that they enjoy their class assemblies. Recent evaluations have shown that they want to be more involved in leading worship and staff are supporting them to plan content and to lead from the front. Clergy from the two parish churches also lead worship and the pupils say they enjoy these assemblies too. During the inspection, one of the parish priests engaged the pupils with a story about the shape of the pretzel and how it reminded Italian children how to pray. Pupils say they value the range of worship and the different styles of the different leaders. A Christian greeting and response is part of each worship and an attractive focus area brings together the theme and recent thoughts and prayers. There are regular visits from other local ministers which gives pupils a broad experience of different faith traditions. Collective worship is evaluated each day by staff who comment on the theme, engagement and potential impact on the children. These are used by governors along with the results of pupil conferencing and questionnaires and changes have been made as a result. Governors have attended worship and reported their findings to the governing body. These reports are fed into the continuing review and development of worship to ensure that it remains relevant and alive.

There are many opportunities for prayer and reflection. In addition to collective worship each day, children say prayers before lunch and before going home. Every classroom has a quiet prayer area in which, as one pupil said, 'you can reflect and talk to God'. Prayer spaces are a feature of the school and pupils value these opportunities for quiet times. A member of staff has started a staff prayer meeting to which all staff are invited to pray for the school.

Pupils have been introduced to the concept of the Trinity through worship and talk about God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The parish priest has plans in place to explore this further with them next term.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

Religious education (RE) in the school is seen as a core subject and is very well led and managed. The subject leader has led training to support teachers with their subject knowledge. Teachers say they have found this helpful and results of monitoring of RE lessons show that the quality of teaching in RE has improved. Regular observations and work scrutiny are undertaken by the subject leader and she returns to classes to see that any areas identified for improvement are addressed. This focus on teaching and learning has led to the teaching and learning in RE as good, with some aspects of outstanding and this is reflected in the good standards and progress. The school is a pilot school for 'Understanding Christianity', material that develops a more challenging question and enquiry approach and pupils interviewed say they enjoy RE and the exciting lessons they have. Pupils are fully engaged in well planned lessons with activities matched well to pupil needs. In one class, there was a discussion about what pupils thought was special to them and then they went on to explore what is special to Christians. They shared photos of special people and listened to a member of staff talk about her faith, which made it real and accessible to them. The RE curriculum has an appropriate balance of Christianity and other world faiths. It provides good opportunities for pupils to learn about world faiths and pupils talked confidently about Hindu creation stories that they had been studying. Pupil conferencing and their written work shows that they achieve well in RE and the regular use of post-its with quotes from the pupils enables staff to see and record individual progress, but the changes to the RE curriculum mean that the existing assessment system is no longer relevant. The RE subject leader has identified this as an area for improvement.

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

Governors and the school leadership team articulate a clear Christian vision for Bishop Tufnell. They ensure that the very strong levels of Christian care and wellbeing are applied to attainment and this is resulting in improvements in pupil outcomes. Governors know the school well, through a range of effective monitoring activities and reports about RE and collective worship from the spirituality committee. This analysis informs the school's thorough and accurate self-evaluation and strategic planning. The school improvement plan reflects this by including the areas for development. The executive headteacher has further developed aspects of the Christian character of the school through the sharing of resources between the infant and junior school, such as Forest School. The two school communities are currently consulting on whether to make the partnership more formal through federation. Parents are positive about the school as a church school and appreciate the Christian values and the open and warm approach the school has to their children and their learning.

The school is on the boundary of two parishes and has positive relationships with the clergy and congregations of both churches. Clergy provide good support to the school, leading worship, contributing well to the RE curriculum and offering pastoral support. Pupils, parents and staff all talked positively about this. There are very good links between the school and the diocese, which have led to the school becoming part of a pilot for the Church School Leadership Programme. This is supporting the development of future leaders in the area. The executive head works closely with other local Church of England schools in the deanery and membership of this project, which has enabled the school to share and learn from the practice of other successful schools and develop and improve further.

The arrangements for RE and collective worship meet statutory requirements.

SIAMS report March 2017 Bishop Tufnell CE Infant School, Felpham, Bognor Regis PO22 6BN