



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

South Bersted Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Church Lane
Bognor Regis
West Sussex
PO22 9PZ

Previous SIAMS grade: Good

Current inspection grade: Good

Diocese:

Local authority: West Sussex
Dates of inspection: 8 March 2016
Date of last inspection: 6 October 2009
School's unique reference number: 125973
Headteacher: Chris Kronda
Inspector's name and number: Julie Burnett-Kirk 748

School context

South Bersted Primary School is situated in a residential neighbourhood in the town of Bognor Regis. There are 200 children taught in seven classes. There is a higher than national average proportion of children who have special educational needs and 21% of children are eligible for pupil premium. 22% of children speak English as an additional language. A new headteacher took up his post in January 2015 and a new deputy in September 2015. The parish church is near to the school.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of South Bersted as a Church of England school are good

- School leaders including governors have a strong shared commitment to the school's Christian vision and action plan, which are moving the school forward and making a difference to the achievement of all pupils.
- The school's Christian values define the ethos of the school and make a significant contribution to the caring relationships in the school and to children's well-being
- Carefully planned, reflective and enjoyable collective worship (CW) enables children to develop spiritually and understand biblical teachings and the life of Jesus.

Areas to improve

- Extend the monitoring and evaluation process by leaders and governors to identify the impact of worship, religious education (RE) and the Christian character of the school on children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development.
- Provide a wider range of opportunities for children to experience prayer, so that it contributes more to the spiritual development of the school community.

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

The school's inclusive and compassionate approach to meeting the needs of all their children is seen in the commitment of staff to provide personalised learning in a 'safe, secure and supportive environment underpinned by Christian principles'. The pastoral needs of vulnerable children are met in a variety of ways such as nurture groups, breakfast club, one-to-one mentoring, learning mentors and play therapist. Examples of learning show high expectations for all children and careful monitoring of attainment and progress ensures that children in all groups are making steady progress. Children's views are important to the school and they are listened to through Junior Governors, Children's Cabinet and School Council. Christian values have a high priority in the school and children speak confidently about what these values mean. For example, children described how 'Jesus showed humility because he didn't want people to think he was better than others and he served others by washing their feet. We can be like Jesus by showing you care.' Children show care and respect for each other and there is an established culture of forgiveness, so that children see that they can start each day anew. Governors explained that Christian values are being flagged up all the time e.g. 'thankfulness' and asking what that looks like. However, although governors are looking at where they see Christian values in action on their monitoring visits, they are not yet examining the impact of the schools' Christian values on the children's spiritual development. Governors' visit reports focus on the impact of Christian values on the behaviour of children and on how the values are approached in collective worship such as 'the children had a good grasp of the Christian value, Koinonia and it was linked to life in school.' RE is interwoven with other subjects and their enquiry approach is encouraging children to explore deeper questions and to make links between the Bible and their lives. One of the children explained that "when Jesus calmed the storm and said to his disciples 'where is your faith?' he meant we have faith in Jesus and he will help us in our lives'." Children talk about how important it is to respect other peoples' ideas even if they are different to their own. The school and classroom environments reflect the Christian character of the school and a welcoming culture is created for children and parents by the senior leadership team and staff at the beginning of each day.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Children speak excitedly about collective worship in school and in the church. They remember many examples of worship, particularly with their local vicar and how it has made a difference to their lives. For example, children referred to their vicar as 'helping us understand and learn about creation and deepen our understanding based on Bible stories.' They then related this to how they care for the environment and their Eco Schools Award. The church is used throughout the year to celebrate special services, which are regularly attended by many families, who value the close links with the church. Collective worship is carefully planned in discussion with the headteacher, foundation governor and the vicar. This framework links the school's Christian values and the teaching of the Bible and Jesus Christ. Worship is systematically monitored by governors and the headteacher, who evaluate content and quality of delivery, an issue in the last inspection. This has led to changes that incorporate a greater contribution by children through readings, drama, music, prayers and art both in school and in special church services. There is a time for reflection and prayer in times of worship and children are familiar with prayers such as The Lord's Prayer, the Prayer of St Richard, St Francis and St Patrick. The school has recently created a prayer space inside the school, where children can be quiet and write prayers. The children love the stained glass window created for the prayer space by a teaching assistant and talk about using it 'to write prayers' and 'to talk to a friend when worried and upset and it helped.' The prayers are read at the end of the week by the headteacher and used in the Monday collective worship as appropriate. They are then taken to the church by the foundation governor. The church is planning to work with the school to have a prayer week during the year. Children have some understanding of the Trinity. In the observed worship time the vicar linked the story of St Patrick to an explanation of the Trinity linked to the three leaf

clover image. Children interviewed spoke about the 'threeness' and 'oneness' of the three leaf clover. Parents expressed how much they value being able to share in the special services in the church and that the vicar 'makes it really fun and that children relate to him really well.'

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

Children referred to the Christian value of koinonia and how they work together in teams. This is central to the leadership approach of the headteacher, his senior leadership team and the governors. The whole school community has worked together to review the school's Christian distinctiveness and its mission statement and to create their new vision based on Christian values. This was an issue from their previous inspection. Staff were involved through discussions on an INSET day and staff meetings, which were followed by the headteacher and RE subject leader and two foundation governors working with the Diocesan Advisory Service. Subsequently this was discussed at the parent forum meeting, reviewed with children and the governors. As a result, there is a sense of shared values and aims throughout the whole school community. Governors and the leadership team are determined in their desire 'to develop a community within a Christian ethos, which demonstrates co-operation and mutual respect, where everybody ... feels safe, supported and encouraged to achieve their best.' High expectations and tighter systems are showing improvement in children's standards of achievement and their wellbeing. Governors and staff meet in teams to share strategy plans and developments. Governors and staff participate in diocesan training and have visited other Church of England Schools to learn from their experiences. The RE subject leader in particular has benefited from specific advice from the diocese and has put in place an improved RE curriculum framework, monitoring and evaluation processes and reports to governors. This has strengthened RE subject leadership and there is improved quality of teaching and learning in RE. The school uses the church school self-evaluation toolkit to focus on what and how they are doing, with some information about impact. The arrangements for RE and worship meet statutory requirements. The close relationship with the church was exemplified by the vicar who referred to working with the school as 'a gift – a relationship we want to offer what we do and see it as a privilege.' Their five years of Messy Church with the school is viewed as a 'hugely significant partnership'. Education Sunday is also used as a time to work with the church and this year the church invited the school community to join them for a special Sunday service. This was well attended by both the church and school community. The vicar, foundation governors, parents and the headteacher described it as an enjoyable event, which they want to do again next year. Parents view the school as giving the children a 'good grounding in religion and morals' and value especially the way the school communicates with them, how they are welcomed and supported by the school.

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