

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Brenzett Church of England Primary School

Straight Lane, Brenzett, Romney Marsh, Kent, TN29 9UA

Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese	Canterbury
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Date of academy conversion	1 October 2016
Name of multi-academy trust	Diocese of Canterbury (Aquila)
Date of inspection	04 July 2017
Date of last inspection	28 November 2011
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Controlled 143517
Executive Headteacher	Ian Witts
Inspector's name and number	Jane Garrett 618

School context

Brenzett is a smaller than average primary school whose pupils are mainly of white British heritage. They come from the surrounding rural area. The percentage of children who have special educational needs and those whose family are in receipt of pupil premium are below the national average. The executive head has been in post for three weeks, although as headteacher of Kingsnorth school he has worked with the school since January 2017 together with Aquila. The majority of teaching staff have joined the school since September 2016.

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

- The school is very successful at creating a caring, Christian environment, with mutually supportive relationships between staff, parents, pupils and governors.
- Religious education (RE) is starting to have a positive impact on the Christian character and values of the school and challenge children.
- The school learning environment supports the Christian ethos of the school and reflects the school's values.
- Aquila and Kingsnorth School have provided strong and active support for the school, resulting in strengthened Christian distinctiveness and leadership.

Areas to improve

- Make Christian values explicit in written documentation and the school website, in order to communicate the Christian ethos of the school clearly to parents and the wider community.
- Ensure pupils have opportunities to plan and lead collective worship, (this is a development point from the previous inspection).
- Develop the monitoring of collective worship by pupils, staff and governors so that it impacts on future planning.

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

The school is a happy, friendly, inclusive and welcoming community that works hard to demonstrate the school's values of compassion, friendship, trust and forgiveness. Pupils know these well but they are sometimes unsure as to the Bible stories they relate to. Children are given wristbands with the value written on it if they show evidence of one of the values in their behaviour. This helps to embed the values into the life of the school. However the behaviour policy does not yet refer to these values. Pupils feel loved and cared for and they show kindness and respect for one another. This is modelled by adults and adopted by the pupils. For example, if anyone is distressed other pupils will offer care and support them. Staff work very much as a team to provide emotional support for children and families. The school family liaison officer works with both children and parents in a variety of ways which has supported improved learning. Children from a different faith are encouraged to talk about their faith, such as Islam. This gives value and raises the self-esteem of those children. Parents now feel well informed and say that the school manages any difficult situations sensibly and compassionately. They think that Christian values come through strongly in the way children are taught. Pupil progress is now at least in line with national expectations and in some cases above. Effort is made to support pupils of all abilities and needs. A forest school and sensory room are used to address the specific needs of some children. Attendance is currently 97% well above the national average. In a key stage 2 religious education (RE) lesson on world poverty, children contributed by expressing how they would feel if others had food when they did not. This linked to the school values of compassion and forgiveness. Pupils contribute to a variety of charities including making a cross from coins which were then given to Christian Aid. There are local charitable links with the community through the Brockman Trust who have supported the school in a variety of ways.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is satisfactory

Daily collective worship is valued and seen by pupils and adults as an integral part of the school's life. It is well planned and organised on a weekly basis. Monday collective worship celebrates pupils' achievements. Links are made with the school's Christian values, but these are insufficiently explicit for all pupils to be able to articulate clearly how they can put the moral messages from worship into action in their lives. Through worship, pupils have an understanding of biblical material and Christian teaching. This includes a developing age-related understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Worship includes some elements of Anglican liturgy and singing. This is enhanced by the main seasons and festivals of the church's year. During worship children were challenged to explain what, 'clothe yourselves with love,' from Colossians meant. There are limited opportunities to experience different worship styles from other Christian traditions. The new incumbent takes worship regularly and has made Christianity more accessible to pupils. Plans to re establish worship in the local church are in place and this is something that school, church and community feel is important. Children are engaged in monitoring worship but this is at quite a basic level and as yet it is not ready to be acted upon. Pupil contribution to the planning, leading and evaluation of worship is limited. This was a focus for development at the last inspection. One parent said that her child enjoyed acting out assemblies at home, another that her child sang the songs from assembly. Prayer is a regular feature of school life. There are some creative opportunities for personal prayer and reflection through the use of reflective areas in every classroom and a spiritual garden outside. For example, a reflective Easter journey was made around the school. This involved pupils taking governors on the journey and explaining the significance of the different aspects of Jesus' journey to the cross. This had a profound effect on everyone and acted as an inspiration to the prayer life of the school.

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

The Christian ethos of the school has supported both staff and pupils through recent difficult times. Since the last inspection the school's Christian character has been made more explicit through the distinctive Christian values and vision that have started to permeate through the life of the school. This is underpinning the nurturing of the Christian faith in its pupils and providing good support for pupils' well-being. It is evident in the day to day organisation of the school and in the good relationships among adults and pupils. As yet, the school policies do not reflect their Christian values. The governors are closely involved in the work of the school, keeping informed through their 'learning walks'. The Christian vision, developed by governors, parents, staff and children is reviewed regularly. Some foundation governors are regular visitors who help with daily school activities. This makes them understand the school better and enables them to fulfil their strategic role. There is evidence of formal monitoring by governors. Regular conversations inform development of the school. Well-established relationships with multi-agency teams, the diocese, Aquila, local authority and the partner school of Kingsnorth improve all pupils' learning experiences, care and well-being. In partnership they enhance staff professional expertise, enrich curriculum

provision, support, monitor and raise aspirations and outcomes for all staff and pupils. These opportunities have strengthened the school both academically and as a church school. Relationships with parents and carers are strong. Parents 'know their children are safe, well-looked after and happy'. A parent stated, 'the school's Christian ethos and values keep the school, church and us together as a family'. The executive headteacher is both RE and worship leader. He has been proactive in bringing about improvements to the teaching of RE. Statutory requirements for religious education and collective worship are met.

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