



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Bottesford Church of England Primary School

Silverwood Road
Bottesford
NG13 0BS

Previous SIAMS grade: Outstanding

Current inspection grade: Outstanding

Diocese: Leicester

Local authority: N/A

Dates of inspection: 9 June 2015

Date of last inspection: 10 March 2010

School's unique reference number: 138905

Headteacher: Louise McGrory

Inspector's name and number: Penelope Kluver

QA assessor: Lyn Field 151

School context

This is an average sized primary school, serving the village of Bottesford and smaller neighbouring villages. The school converted to become an academy in November 2012. It has a growing intake, with two new classrooms and a hall extension planned. The school has an above average proportion of children with disabilities and those with special needs. Pupils are mainly from White British backgrounds and the proportion of disadvantaged pupils is very low. The church has been without a vicar for two years.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Bottesford as a Church of England school are outstanding.

- Pupils clearly articulate Christian values that they live out in their daily lives both explicitly and implicitly.
- There is a high level of spiritual development that has actively enhanced the schools Christian character.
- Pupils have a high level of respect for the diverse society in which they live, due to the Christian values that they uphold.
- Governors play a key part in driving the strategic planning of the school, as a church school.
- The church school partnership has strengthened during a long period of interregnum.
- Effective leadership has successfully developed and raised the profile of RE and worship as major elements of the distinctive Christian character of the school.

Areas to improve

- To give learners frequent opportunities to plan and lead collective worship, both class based and for the whole school, with evaluation tasks to develop and enhance their skills.

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

This school shows a deep rooted commitment to the values that Christianity upholds. Children, staff and parents feel that they are valued and cared for and parents appreciated the consultation they had, to help the school review the teaching and focus of their Christian values. Staff and governors are united in their understanding of the importance of the school's distinctively Christian character. Attendance that was already higher than most schools, has improved further this year, from 97.45% to 97.55%. Children make good progress during their time at Bottesford and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics has risen to be above or at National Level in both Year 2 and 6. Children articulate many values that they have learnt about and relate them to biblical teaching. One child said that 'Jesus gives hope to people, he would never give up on them and that everyone is treated the same'. Children articulate a clear understanding of prejudice and relate this back to their Christian values. The school's vision of 'Aspiring and Achieving Altogether', is clearly embedded in the whole school community, and shows an all-encompassing passion for equality and respect for others. The 'Golden Child Award Board' shares the successes that children have had at school that uphold distinctively Christian values, and the 'Lunchtime champions' help and encourage others in times of need. The behaviour and attitudes to learning are exceptional, and children show a high level of spiritual understanding. This coupled with the 'Spirited Arts' competition for 'Love is the Golden Rule', and the schools approach of 'Windows, Mirrors and Doors', gives a deep and layered understanding to develop spirituality. Displays of children's work show a clear focus on Christianity as a multi-cultural faith. This has been developed through a 'Global Christianity' day and learning how different religions promote the same values. Children recently made Mexican community crosses that were hung up in the church for the whole village to see. RE is given a high priority and the school has made clear steps to develop and embed links with other cultures, countries and faith groups. Children think deeply and ask big questions in order to understand the very nature of the multi-faith world around them. Visiting a Sikh gurdwara, a Jewish synagogue and meeting a practising Sikh and Hindu have given the children the opportunity to ask big questions and link the values of the Christian faith to other religions. Children are challenged by their RE lessons and record their thinking and work in a variety of ways. They show great enjoyment of what they are learning about and the opportunity that they have to contribute. 'I like to write poetry in RE, and learn about other characters in Christian stories, like Judas and why he betrayed God'.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Daily acts of worship enrich both the lives of the children and adults, they are central to the school community. Planning focuses on specific themes, which tie in with the school's core values and evaluation of collective worship takes place, with both staff and children. Children's attitude towards worship is very positive due to their active engagement and Diocesan themes of worship are imaginatively used to interest and challenge. Children do not just listen to biblical stories, but learn to link Christian values to Jesus' teaching and are actively encouraged to think and question at a higher level. In the collective worship story of the wise man and the foolish man, they reflected on the question 'Who is your rock?' Visitors from a range of denominations are welcomed to lead acts of worship. Children speak enthusiastically about their enjoyment of collective worship and have understood difficult concepts that have been taught in a creative way. The rich and varied experiences that worship offers leave a lasting impression on them. Worship takes place at St Mary's church several times in the year, including Christmas, Easter and Harvest. Worship is consistently and recognisably Christian and children are developing a good understanding of local Anglican practice. Singing, prayer and reflection time form an integral part of worship, and children enjoy saying a variety of prayers, including their own school prayers, and choosing from ones that children in the school have written. The school's current focus on the value of 'Hope' is clearly displayed in the hall, in which children are encouraged to write their prayers related to this theme. One child enthusiastically described

their enjoyment of the interactive part of prayers in saying 'I like to be able to write and share my prayers and look at what other people have written'. Classroom reflection areas are well used and children enjoy the different reflective spaces that they have. Children recognise and talk about the Trinity and the symbols that they have developed to represent it. One child explained 'The Trinity is powerful altogether, it's like three stages of water. Ice is the Father, God the water and the Holy Spirit is the steam'. Children take an active part in saying and singing responses and lighting a candle in worship. In spite of the good level of understanding children have of worship and Bible stories, they do not have a clear role in the planning and delivery of worship. Children have, however, been asked for their feedback on acts of worship and this has been used effectively to make improvements that benefit all, such as seating arrangements in the hall.

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

Bottesford has continued to develop as a church school, since the last inspection. Despite changing to academy status and the difficulties of not having a vicar over the past two years, the school has maintained and developed its Christian identity. The leadership team and governors alongside various members of local churches have continued to build a now flourishing relationship, with mutual benefit that enriches collective worship. All leaders articulate a distinctively Christian vision and they are clear how Christian values inform the whole curriculum. The headteacher is committed to driving the school forward as a church school and governors hold the school to account, taking responsibility for the clear strategic planning of the school as a church school. Feedback is gathered from all groups in the community to inform the next planning cycle including the review of Christian values. Leaders of collective worship and RE have a clear understanding of where strengths lie within the school and areas for development. This has led to the implementation of reflection spaces and visits and visitors from a wide range of cultures. The foundation governor carries out monitoring visits and evaluations of collective worship, which have led to the improvement of practice and spirituality. RE and collective worship have a significant impact on pupils development. Senior leaders, including governors give these areas high priority in the school curriculum and development planning. Staff professional development is considered a priority and is welcomed from the Diocese or through local partnership schools. Time is given to share new developments with both teaching and support staff, and put into practice. Staff consistently go the extra mile to ensure the needs of all learners are met, within an encouraging and secure environment, where all children are valued. Parents speak highly of the school and its inclusivity. They feel welcome to share ideas and feel included in what is happening in school. The active school Friends group has developed strong links between the school and the wider community through various fundraising and social events. Parents commented that 'the head is very approachable and there is a real sense of community here'. Parents speak confidently about the Christian values learnt at school, and feel secure and confident in school developments to enhance their children's knowledge of different faiths, within a Christian context.

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