

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Powick Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School	
42, Malvern Road Worcester WR2 4RT	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese	Worcester
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local authority	Worcestershire
Date of inspection	18 October 2017
Date of last inspection	2 October 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Primary 116841
Headteacher	Anthony Dixon-Gough
Inspector's name and number	Marcia Harris 856

School context

Powick CE Primary School is a semi-rural school on the outskirts of Worcester, with 196 children on roll. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is low. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language are low. The current leadership team has been in place for just over two years and there is currently no incumbent in the parish church.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Powick CE Primary School as a Church of England school are good

- Relationships between all members of the community are strong and supportive.
- As a result of a focus on Christian values, children are well behaved, respectful and considerate of others.
- Religious Education (RE) makes a positive contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development.

Areas to improve

- Involve all stakeholders in the reviewing of the school's vision and values to ensure that the Christian character of the school can be articulated by all and has a significant impact on the life of the community.
- Develop a clear definition of spirituality that is shared across the school community so that staff can plan a range of high quality spiritual experiences for all learners.
- Establish a formal system for monitoring and evaluating the Christian character of the school involving all stakeholders which leads directly to further improvement of the school's distinctiveness.

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

Through a focus on the six core Christian values of trust, generosity, perseverance, thankfulness, compassion and courage, leaders have established a culture where children are cared for, nurtured and encouraged to be the best they can be. Parents speak warmly about Christian values which are a 'way of life' at Powick and appreciate seeing them lived out daily by committed staff. They describe with conviction the difference the values make to the lives of their children. One parent explained how her young child is more determined when tackling a problem and regularly talks at home about the need to 'persevere and be resilient'. Parents appreciate the care, guidance and support for children and families. Pupils are confident that their worries or concerns will always be dealt with appropriately. Children are proud of their school and enjoy learning in an environment where they feel safe and are comfortable to take risks. As a result attendance is good and there have been no exclusions. One child commented that, 'Being at this school makes me think I can do anything I want.' Achievements of all types are celebrated, with staff praising positive attitudes and the daily living out of the school's Christian values. Consequently children's self-esteem is high, they make good progress and standards are rising.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of pupils is supported by a curriculum designed to 'inspire and encourage children to aspire'. This is underpinned by the commitment of leaders to offer experiences which widen the horizons of children beyond the 'Powick bubble'. The visit to West Malvern Outdoor Education Centre in particular has a positive impact on children who say that they come back 'feeling like a family'. Experienced staff are confident to 'seize the moment' and nurture awe and wonder in the daily lives of the children through spontaneous reflection time. However, there is no shared understanding of what is meant by 'spirituality' and as a result, there is not always depth to the quality of experiences offered to learners.

The Christian character of the school is reinforced constantly throughout the environment. Christian values are displayed prominently in the hall and in classrooms, where they are used as the basis for worship and as a focus for discussion. The imaginative and creative work produced during the recent week exploring biblical ideas about creation has resulted in striking art work. This celebrates the school's Christian heritage and enhances the learning environment further. Children enjoy RE and recognise its importance in their lives. Through the RE curriculum children are encouraged to link the school's core Christian values to Bible stories and apply them to their own lives. For example, when studying the story of Adam and Eve children were encouraged to consider times when they had been tempted and to reflect on the value of forgiveness. The effective Religious Education (RE) curriculum is enhanced by a comprehensive programme of visits to a variety of places of worship. As a result, pupils develop a secure understanding of others and respect for diversity and difference, including Christianity as multi-cultural world faith. Consequently, RE contributes well to pupils' SMSC development and the Christian character of the school.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship at Powick is valued by all members of the school community. Regular invitations to join the school in worship are welcomed by the parents and children say that worship provides them with, 'a time to reflect and think ahead'. In particular, children enjoy worship where they are able to participate in drama and singing and talk confidently about how this helps them to behave well. One child commented, 'I've learnt not to push in line, not to run in the corridor and not to tell lies'. As a result, the worship experience offered impacts positively on children's personal development, leading to children who are kind and considerate of the feelings of others. Collective worship is planned around themes based on the school's six core values and includes Bible stories, a focus on Anglican festivals and celebrations from other major faiths. Children are able to relate values to Christian festivals. For example, one child explained how, 'Harvest is a time to be thankful for what we have.' The lighting of three coloured candles signifies the start of worship and supports learners in their developing understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Consequently, the worship experience offered is distinctively Christian and contributes to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of learners.

Pupils respond well in acts of worship and demonstrate appropriate respect and reverence when it is time to pray. Even the youngest children participate fully in the Lord's prayer and children say they are happy to make a prayer their own by saying 'Amen'. Children respond thoughtfully when writing their own prayers and in doing so reflect on their core values. Reflections on the value of thankfulness inspired the children to write harvest prayers, which were then used during a church service, signifying to the children that their contributions are valued. Children understand the part that prayer can play in a worshipping community, but are not yet making use of prayer in their own lives. This is one reason why worship is not yet outstanding.

A range of staff lead worship regularly and the parish church participates weekly through the popular Open the Book worship. In the absence of a local parish priest, leaders are successfully maintaining good links with the parish

church, with the support of foundation governors and lay members. As a result, the church plays an important part in the worship life of the school and supports children's spiritual development. Pupils enjoy contributing to collective worship and Year Six are increasingly taking responsibility for leading and planning worship. Pupils await their turn to lead worship with excitement and anticipation and are happy to give up their lunchtimes in preparation. The monitoring and evaluation of collective worship by leaders is in its early stages and as a result does not yet lead to improvements. This is another reason why worship is not yet outstanding.

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

The leadership team has a vision for the school built on Christian values, where all children are encouraged to 'aspire and be inspired'. This vision, which is currently under review, underpins the approach to several aspects of school life and in doing so has a positive impact on the well-being of the community. An example of this vision in action can be seen in the effort leaders have made to ensure that physical barriers put in place to safeguard children have not had a negative impact on community relationships. Events such as inviting parents into lessons and the recent 'creation' parade have had a positive impact on home and school partnerships. Parents firmly believe that such events are responsible for the sense of community. They describe how small gestures such as morning gate greetings strengthen the relationships between home and school. As a result, relationships with parents are strong. A meaningful partnership with the parish church is also being maintained despite there being no incumbent at present. Children enjoy attending the after school clubs and holiday clubs organised by members of the church, who in return appreciate services led by the children. Links have been made with other faith communities through visits to a variety of places of worship, ensuring that the previous focus for development has been addressed. However, school does not currently engage with global communities in a way which positively impacts on the lives of the children.

Recent school development plans have been focused on improving standards across the curriculum. As a result of interventions by leaders, standards are rising and children make good progress. However, this cannot be directly attributed to the impact of the school's vision. Leaders, including governors, have only recently begun to monitor the Christian character of the school and evaluate its impact on learning and learners. Self-evaluation evidence does not involve input from groups across the school community and is not always recent, relevant or focused on the impact of the school's Christian distinctiveness. Consequently, strategic planning for the development of the school as a distinctive church school is limited. Leaders recognise this and have taken actions for improvement. Plans for foundation governors to be involved in monitoring and evaluation are now in place. Leaders have recently attended diocesan training to support future improvements, thus demonstrating their commitment to further developing the Christian character of the school. Leaders are also preparing to join the Diocese of Worcester Multi Academy Trust, securing the future of the school as a distinctive church school.

The leader for RE and worship has attended regular diocesan training and actions taken as a result have had a positive impact on provision for learners. For example, the use of the 'Understanding Christianity' resource has led to school-wide improvements in the teaching of Christianity. Equally, the introduction of children leading worship has resulted in a richer worship experience. As a result, both collective worship and Religious Education contribute well to the school's Christian character and the school meets the statutory requirements.

SIAMS report October 2017 Powick CE Primary School, Malvern Road, Worcester, WR2 4RT