

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Bampton Church of England Primary School			
Address	School Close, Bampton, Devon EX16 9NW		
Date of inspection	4 February 2020	Status of school	Voluntary aided primary Alumnis multi-academy trust (MAT)
Diocese	Exeter	URN	145762

Overall Judgement	How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?	Grade	Good
Additional Judgements	The impact of collective worship	Grade	Good
	The effectiveness of religious education (RE)	Grade	Good

School context

Bampton is a primary school with 99 pupils on roll and 26 in the nursery. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. No pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is above national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above national averages. All of the teaching staff have joined the school in the last five years. The school joined the Alumnis MAT in October 2018.

The school's Christian vision

Believe Belong Become

"Through Christian values, together we inspire individuals to celebrate their uniqueness and empower them to become confident, aspirational, inquisitive and resilient, to flourish in the modern world."

Key findings

- The school has developed an inclusive Christian vision which clearly shapes policies and the curriculum. The wide-ranging biblical roots of the vision are still being explored with pupils.
- The MAT, and particularly the chief executive officer, ensures that the school's development as a Church school has a very high priority.
- The new leader for religious education has put in place effective systems for assessing and monitoring pupils' progress so that all are enabled to flourish.
- Inclusive and invitational collective worship embodies the vision. Pupils currently have few opportunities to plan or lead worship. The recently-formed local school committee (LSC) has not yet undertaken formal monitoring of collective worship.
- The school's rich provision for spiritual development is rooted in its vision and Christian values. The current staff team has not yet formally considered how to plan for progressively deeper spiritual experiences.

Areas for development

- Embed the vision still further in order to enable pupils to explain in simple terms the Christian roots of 'believe, belong, become' and how this affects the daily life of the school.
- Enable pupils to take more responsibility in leading and planning worship. Ensure that formal monitoring systems for collective worship are sufficiently robust to enable the LSC to monitor effectively and with confidence.
- For the staff team to make explicit in planning what spiritual development looks like in everyday life in order further to enrich the school's provision.

How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?

Inspection findings

Following the previous inspection, school leaders acted swiftly to put in place a set of Christian values. These are now well established and evident in pupils' attitudes to learning as well as in relationships. Working closely with the incumbent, the school summarised its vision as 'believe, belong, become'. Bampton's work in this area has influenced significantly the vision of the whole MAT. The regular involvement of the incumbent in the life of the school means that pupils and adults can access his support as they continue to explore the multi-layered meaning of the vision.

The theology of 'believe, belong, become' is very clearly rooted in a Christian narrative – for example John 3:16 and Ephesians 2:8-9, Micah 6:8 and James 2:14. The school makes it a priority to encourage pupils to explore and articulate their own beliefs. RE teaching embodies the vision. Teachers promote sustained discussion and deep consideration of beliefs, of Christianity and of other major faiths. Pupils say they enjoy 'really long conversations about what we believe'. These are characterised by respect and trust, evidence of well-established Christian values.

The Lord's Prayer is at the heart of the school's vision for belonging. Pupils of all ages eagerly volunteer to lead the whole school in saying the prayer during collective worship. School leaders are careful to ensure that worship is highly inclusive at the same time as being explicitly Christian. One teacher uses Makaton to enable all pupils to participate. Teachers' support for one another is evident. A team of pupils handles the practical aspects of setting-up for worship and managing sound and the projector. They do not however regularly plan or lead worship. Adults encourage pupils to share their opinions with one another and to expect to find that some people might disagree. Pupils listen attentively and respectfully. Collective worship led by the incumbent and the Open the Book team from church reminds pupils of their place in belonging to the wider community. Some pupils choose to belong to the village and church communities through their participation in the bell-ringing team. As a result of the school-based J-club, some older pupils have chosen occasionally to attend Sunday church worship themselves. The second 'b' of the vision, 'belong', also shapes policies such as the admissions policy, which reflects a clear commitment to including as a priority local children. *Valuing all God's Children* shapes current thinking in the school and staff have received Stonewall training.

The third 'b', 'become', is linked to Jesus' teaching about the kingdom of God and of making a difference to the world. Pupil councillors lead the school in successfully tackling various issues, such as reducing plastic use, improving friendship opportunities and recycling. Their remit also includes Christian ethos. Their monitoring of collective worship led to the creation of a system of prayer boxes in classrooms. Links with Thika, Kenya and supporting a Ugandan child to go to school, enrich pupils' understanding of the world. The school encourages individual pupils in fundraising for their own identified causes. Recent examples include cancer research and protecting giant pandas.

Leaders at all levels in the MAT ensure that there is a clear focus on developing the Christian character of the school. In this they are strongly led by the chief executive officer (CEO). Her regular involvement in a diocesan committee ensures that the MAT is fully aware of current Church school thinking. Strong monitoring systems are in place for the recently-formed local school committee (LSC) to report to the MAT board and its dedicated ethos committee. However, the LSC has not yet formally monitored collective worship.

Supportive partnerships with other MAT schools have helped the school to develop further, for example in RE and worship. Teachers comment on the additional benefit for their wellbeing of shared professional development opportunities. In the short time since his appointment, the RE leader has ensured that systems are in place which enable all staff to assess progress and attainment. His involvement in the MAT hub for RE has resulted in innovations such as 'blocked' or concentrated teaching of RE at the start of each term to enable deeper learning.

Pupils in all groups are enabled to make good progress. Pupils flourish as a result of a rich and exciting curriculum. The Ariss project, where pupils contacted the International Space Station, is one example. Parents highly value the varied and inclusive programme of residential visits. Curriculum planning is underpinned by the vision, with

RE units of work woven throughout. One pupil explained, 'It often goes back to RE'. Induction for new staff enables them quickly to understand the Church school character. New teachers speak warmly of the support of the headteacher and of the MAT and give examples of creative support for staff wellbeing.

The school's rich provision for spiritual development is rooted in its vision and Christian values. The policy references love for God and for one another (Mark 12:29-32). High priority is given to understanding others' beliefs, challenging injustice and encouraging deep thinking. All of these are evident in the school, particularly in teaching. Interactive marking in RE, for example, results in pupils giving individual responses, such as, 'For someone to be so powerful is quite a thing!' Teachers are skilful in using spiritual opportunities within the curriculum and in classrooms. The current staff team however has not yet formally considered how to plan for progressively deeper spiritual experiences.

Pupils' questions to the astronaut on the International Space Station reflect a range of spiritual insights: 'If I were to be blind or have a disability, would I still be able to become an astronaut?'; 'Is there anything that disappointed you about space?'; 'Do you dream differently in space?' One pupil asked the astronaut whether climate change was visible from space. Leaders make explicit links between prayer and reflection and positive mental health. The Key Stage 1 teacher's provision of both a specific prayer station and a more general reflection corner is typical of the school's concern for everyone to belong.



The effectiveness of RE is Good

Rigorous assessment and monitoring show that teaching and learning is good. Pupils in all groups make good progress. Careful monitoring by the subject leader, who works closely with teachers, ensures that particular achievements of vulnerable pupils are noticed and celebrated.

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