

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Quinton Church Primary School

Hagley Road West, Quinton, Birmingham B32 1AJ

Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese	Birmingham
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Date of academy conversion	January 2017
Name of multi-academy trust	The Barchelai Academy Trust
Date/s of inspection	4 October 2017
Date of last inspection	3 October 2012
School's unique reference number	143439
Executive Headteacher / Head of School	Samantha Cosgrove/Jane Bruten
Inspector's name and number	Jane Martin 646

School context

Quinton Church school is smaller than average. It became an academy in January 2017, joining the Barchelai Multi-Academy Trust. About one fifth of pupils are supported by the pupil premium grant. The proportion of children with Special Educational needs or disabilities is similar to the national average. Many faiths are represented in the school community. There have been significant staff changes but these are now stabilised. The Executive Head has been in post for three years and the Head of School for one. The incumbent has been in post since the last inspection.

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

- The school is committed to ensuring achievement for children from all backgrounds and uses its expertise and resources with strategic precision to narrow any gaps in learning for individuals or groups of learners.
- Religious Education enables learners to explore and demonstrate Christian values alongside developing their understanding of faiths and beliefs in the school and wider community.
- Leaders are making Christian distinctiveness a priority in the development of the school as part of a multi-academy trust. They are taking time to identify a set of core Christian values that are just right for their community.
- Links with Christ Church, Quinton are very strong. The clergy are making a very positive contribution to the Collective Worship and other aspects of the school's distinctiveness that impact on learners.

Areas to improve

- In order to give children greater opportunities to flourish spiritually, work out a definition of spirituality that can be widely understood in the community, planned for and encountered consistently in Collective Worship
- Ensure that the Christian values agreed upon are rooted in biblical teaching (including that of Jesus Christ) so that the whole school fully recognises their theological significance, and the transformational impact they can have on lives of individuals, and of the community.

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

The Christian character of the school is recognised, appreciated and encountered by most members of the school community. They acknowledge the impact of this on the daily life and work of the school in particular in the care given to the uniqueness, achievement and well-being of individuals. This is evidenced in outcomes that are broadly in line with the national picture, and where focussed actions are being taken to further improve, based on incisive data analysis. There is a nurturing warmth about the school which touches the lives of pupils and adults and which expresses the school's Christian foundation. 'Children are not just here to be [academically] educated but to learn how to be in the world and how to live with others', a parent rightly observes, reflecting the schools' wider aspirations. Having recently joined the Multi-Academy Trust, the school is taking a thoughtful, considered approach to developing core Christian values, exploring which are 'just right for Quinton'. Although this work is at an early stage it is clear that it is integral to the development plan for the school. With the support of the clergy the school is searching for the biblical and theological basis of the values that make them distinctively Christian and through which individuals might have the opportunity to 'be changed into the likeness of Christ'. Engaging with this search for biblical values has enabled pupils, working with an artist in residence, to produce impressive designs for a school stained glass window that will make a powerful statement about what the school stands for.

The school's loving and inclusive approach has ensured that behaviour is very positive. Any disagreements are resolved in a reconciliatory manner with pupils supported to 'deal with fallouts by ourselves', though they are confident to seek help when needed. Attendance is good because pupils are keen to come to the school where they feel part of a friendly family. 'It is a privilege to be here', they say.

Pupils and staff are encouraged to be still and to reflect and there are reflection spaces in every classroom enabling all to step out of day to day busyness to peacefully consider personal, global and community situations. Religious Education lessons offer spiritual moments, for example by using video and music to create awe and wonder and a thoughtful atmosphere as pupils create impressions of the sixth day of Creation. Religious Education is developing pupils' knowledge of Christianity through the implementation of 'Understanding Christianity'. Pupils talk in some detail about the Bible and the Christian narrative. Values and dispositions are taught in the context of exploring faiths and beliefs enabling pupils to develop moral, social and cultural understanding. Regular use of 'Newsround' enables children to think about world events and to wrestle with big questions, sometimes from a Christian perspective. Inter-faith week, charity events and learning themes contribute to the pupils having deep respect for one another's cultures and beliefs and compassion for the wider world. These aspects are fully reflected in the encouraging and positive relationships across the school community.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship is a valued part of every day in school and all members of the community recognise the impact it has for them as individuals and for ensuring that the community is characterised by loving, compassionate and inclusive relationships and attitudes. Pupils readily identify worship as offering space to 'have time for ourselves and to think about changing'. Bible stories and moral stories are often the vehicle for teaching pupils about generic Christian values and pupils are familiar with the focus values for the half-term. These are set in an explained biblical context particularly when the clergy are leading. Exploration of the biblical language in Psalm 104 with relevant visual images opened up the text to encourage pupils' thankfulness for the created world and to respond to the invitation to 'shout out' in praise the things they were thankful for. Pupils express their desire and willingness to participate in worship with enthusiastic, energetic singing, eagerness to offer thoughts, ideas, questions and reverent attention to each element. They respond to some themes in charitable ways with each class raising money for a chosen charity or cause that has worldwide, local or personal significance.

Themes for worship are well planned, some across the Multi-Academy Trust, using the Roots and Fruits values programme as a basis. The clergy, who make a very strong contribution to the worship of the school on a weekly basis, support the planning of themes and also actively support staff in their preparation to lead worship, developing their confidence and understanding. As a result pupils have a growing understanding of the bible including the life and person of Jesus. They describe the Holy Trinity as three people in one 'God looking over, Jesus connecting and Holy Spirit watching'. They readily identify and describe the significance of some Christian rituals and symbols including the cross, the Lord's supper and baptism.

The clergy led a workshop called 'Thy Kingdom Come' which enabled learners to consider prayer as a way of communicating with God and to take part in creative ways for doing this. Prayer and reflection both formally and informally, including saying the Lord's Prayer and school prayer (recently written by the GLOW group, God loves our worship) are helping pupils to deepen this understanding. In class reflection time each week, pupils reflect on their actions, school values or world events and contribute prayers. They appreciate this smaller, more intimate setting for worship. A small group of parents meet regularly in church to pray for the life and community of the school.

Regular services in church are enabling children to understand the pattern of the Christian year and to celebrate its important festivals. Pupils demonstrate a deepening understanding of the significance of these for example as they describe Jesus being mocked in Holy Week and the symbolism of the crown of thorns. Some Anglican traditions are reflected in class and school worship such as lighting candles and the liturgical colours. When clergy structure the worship, by using greetings and responses, pupils respond appropriately. Learners are very enthusiastic about their contributions to, and ownership of, worship achieved through the recently established GLOW group. They take an active role in setting up the worship table and choosing the music for gathering and leaving, and also some songs. They are also involved in the weekly evaluation of worship and have identified that they think there should be bible stories in every act of worship, that every class should introduce a favourite song and that there could be a better way of choosing who lights the candles! There have been recent, but significant, incremental changes in the pattern of worship that promotes pupils' understanding of theological ideas and symbols of God's presence which, as they are embedded, will form and strengthen the sense of spiritual encounter in worship. The strong involvement of the clergy and greatly strengthened links with the church are a powerful and effective model and resource for deepening the spiritual experiences offered in each act of worship throughout the week. Positive partnership with Church of England, Birmingham can also help to strengthen this aspect of worship.

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

Leaders, including clergy and governors are making the Christian distinctiveness of the school a priority, following reorganisation, and are determined to work it out deeply, thoughtfully and in a way that is bespoke to the school community. The living out of the Christian vision is important to the school's leaders who have a clear sense of wanting everything they do to reflect Jesus in a deep way; 'more than niceness', and this can be seen in the significant place given to Christian distinctiveness in the school improvement plan, which is evidence based and well-resourced in time and finance. Also, the Ethos committee minutes evidence some deeply theological discussions about what makes values distinctively Christian and about admissions policy. Leaders are committed to the uniqueness of each and every child and this is borne out in the attention given to each child's well-being and achievement especially for those who are vulnerable. There is a strong feeling among staff that they are 'setting pupils up for life' whatever their background, and targeted support for the vulnerable is an important feature of the school's provision securing good outcomes over time for most groups of pupils. This is taking place against a backdrop of impressively positive relationships across the school and a strong, vibrant contribution from the clergy team. There is therefore good capacity for Christian distinctiveness to continue to grow.

The curriculum, RE and worship promote Christian values which are taught and referred to at every opportunity. As a result, behaviour and relationships in the classroom and on the playground are overwhelmingly positive and there is strong respect for, and understanding of, diversity in faith, culture and race.

A newly appointed leader with an academic background in theology is making an impressive impact on teaching and learning in Religious Education, taking a tenacious approach to developing the theological awareness and understanding of colleagues using Understanding Christianity and with the support of the curate. The school is supporting her development through post-graduate studies with a focus on the Christian nature of the school. The school is open and welcoming and the wider community bring a richness to the curriculum and character of the school. Partnerships across the Barchelai Trust, with the church and with Church of England, Birmingham have had a tangible impact on the teaching of RE, collective worship and the developing of a values based Christian vision. The school prioritises professional growth for all staff who say they are very well supported whatever stage of their career they are at. Joining the MAT has created opportunities to grow and then use new leaders in both of the church schools, and this is an effective way of creating and sustaining effective leadership.

Leaders are ensuring that the Christian character is continually evolving and developing in a way that can impact on everyone. With the individual pupils at the centre of the school's strategic work and growth, leaders are bringing life and vitality to their vision that 'together with Christ' they are 'striving to achieve the best for every child'.

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