



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Barrington Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

12, Haslingfield Road

Barrington

Cambridgeshire

CB2 5RG

Diocese: Ely

Local authority: Cambridgeshire

Dates of inspection: 10/10/2014

Date of last inspection: 20/11/2009

School's unique reference number: 110781

Headteacher: Mrs Francesca Catterson

Inspector's name and number: Stephen Green 809

School context

Barrington is a small village school close to the city of Cambridge. Most pupils live in the villages of Barrington and Shepreth, with the school being adjacent to the church in Barrington village. There are 96 pupils on roll, with a slightly higher proportion than normal (12) being on the register of pupils with special educational needs. The headteacher has been at the school for 5 years. One of the rectors has been in post for 3 years, but there is an interregnum in the other parish. Pupils are taught in 4 classes, with 2 year groups in each.

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

- Christian values are at the heart of the school's work. They have a considerable impact especially in developing positive attitudes, relationships and behaviour in pupils. These are clearly identified at the start of the school's Integrated Spirituality policy.
- The very strong Christian ethos is obvious to every visitor and pupil. This is evident in very effective displays (many of which encourage the children to think about Christian values), the documentation the school produces and the quality of its relationships.
- A wide circle of adults contribute very effectively to enhance the life of the school. They do this by leading worship, being on the parents' support group or governing body, and supporting children in lessons and extra-curricular activities.
- There is a strong and well-developed relationship with the local church and its clergy. Pupils are at ease with the Rector and speak confidently about visiting the church.

Areas to improve

- Review the school's aims following changes to staff and the governing body, so that they reflect the vision and Christian ethos of the current leadership and staff teams and have the commitment of the wider school community.
- Build relationships with other denominations, in order to develop learners' understanding of the similarities and differences between these and the Anglican Church.
- Develop the role of pupils in leading and monitoring collective worship, so that their views and ideas are more frequently incorporated into planning and evaluation.

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

Attainment over a period of 3 years is at least that expected for all schools, and in some years is considerably better. Excellent and improving attendance reflects the pupils' enjoyment and pride in their school. Parents and governors were able to explain how the school's Christian values had an impact upon these. They comment upon the positive relationships whereby all pupils feel loved and cared for, respect others and have perseverance when things are challenging. The Rector pointed out that "the Christian ethos and religious education are developing the pupils as thinking people." The Philosophy Club led by the Rector is an example of this. Christian values, particularly justice, courage, forgiveness and compassion, lie at the heart of the school's ethos. These are developed in religious education and collective worship and impact upon the pupil's relationships and attitudes (as can be seen in the way they work and play together). The School Council has produced a booklet for new starters explaining what is best about their school and trying to address possible concerns new arrivals might have. Pupils play well together, and there was much evidence of older children helping younger ones to play well. A foundation governor explained that the children look after each other and are aware of each other's feelings. He maintained this was a direct result of the prominence given to the development of Christian values. Pupils demonstrate perseverance and independence. They are encouraged to think for themselves (e.g. the Philosophy Club), and to be friendly and polite to each other. Parents recognise and value the role that Christian values play in shaping the pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships with other members of the school community. They are very aware of the school's Christian ethos, and recognise the difference that being a Christian school makes to their children's lives both at school and at home. There is an ethos of mutual support between all members of the school community, including staff support for each other when the need has arisen. Parents and governors praised the excellent relationships that exist within the school, attributing them largely to the school's Christian values and ethos. As a result of effective teaching in religious education, pupils have a good understanding of Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith. Pupils and their parents recognise the importance of religious education, which they say plays a major role in determining the character of the school, by teaching pupils about tolerance, respect for the faiths of others and forgiveness. Effective and high-quality displays around the school demonstrate what pupils have been learning in religious education and frequently encourage them to think further. They make a significant contribution to pupils' developing spirituality. Pupils have a good understanding of Christian traditions and the role of the Church.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Parents, governors and pupils all bear witness to the way collective worship is valued, and parents especially speak of the positive impact it has upon pupils, affecting their relationships and attitudes both at school and when they go home. Collective worship makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual development. As a result, pupils have learned to reflect upon what they see and hear, using the school's many reflection corners, and to pray together and on their own. They are confident to share these thoughts, opinions and prayers aloud, and enjoy singing and praising God together. Worship regularly involves Biblical material and Christian teaching, and learners successfully relate these to their own lives. The Rector explained that the aim is for "pupils to lead us in worship, rather than to join in a performance." Consequently they regularly and confidently take roles in services, and write contributions for them. These undoubtedly make worship more meaningful for all pupils. However, although they confidently read aloud, suggest and say prayers, and offer opinions when asked to, they have not yet gained much experience of planning or leading the worship themselves. In addition to daily worship in school, services are held at least termly in the adjacent church, and are well supported by parents. Pupils have a good understanding of Christian traditions and Anglican festivals. In their reflections on the value of worship to the life of the school, the School Council said in addition to learning about Christian traditions and Anglican festivals, they sing and pray together. "By doing these things we learn to communicate with others, be respectful and appreciative...and to think of others." However, their knowledge of other Christian denominations is more limited. There are many opportunities

for pupils to engage in reflection and personal prayer in informal contexts, and pupils freely contribute prayers to collective worship. Leaders of worship and pupils spoke of the importance of these opportunities. School leaders also recognised that personal prayer has a meaningful role in many pupils' lives. There are collections of pupils' own prayers in most classrooms and on display in the hall. Pupils have an appropriate understanding of the Holy Trinity, and good knowledge of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. These would appear to initially stem from religious education but are reinforced in collective worship. Worship is planned and led by a variety of adults from the school and community, including the local clergy. Since the last inspection, regular monitoring and evaluation by staff, pupils and foundation governors has been introduced. This provides leaders with a better understanding of where further improvement needs to take place. There is an integrated spirituality policy and an annual Raising Achievement Plan where the need for any improvements are discussed and decided upon.

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

The headteacher's drive and vision, the dedicated staff team and the committed governing body, have created a very effective school which is highly valued by pupils and parents. They articulate and promote a vision based firmly upon the Christian values listed in the Integrated Spirituality policy (e.g. truthfulness, forgiveness and compassion). They have a sound understanding of where the children are and what they need to do next to improve further. The statutory requirements for RE and worship are currently being met, and RE and worship are being co-ordinated by members of the school's Senior Leadership Team. Effective use has been made of opportunities that arise for professional development. When the headteacher was recently out of school for an extended period of time the rest of the Senior Leadership Team willingly and effectively took over most of her administrative and management functions. As a result of this experience the team developed skills and understanding which they would probably not have gained otherwise. All members of staff are encouraged to contribute to school improvement planning. School self-evaluation, as a church school as well as from an academic standpoint, is accurate and insightful, and produced by the whole staff team, with the support of the full governing body. The school's Christian ethos has been a major influence upon pupils' attitudes and behaviour, and upon their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is seen in the ways pupils relate to and support each other, in their excellent behaviour, and by their perseverance and patience when things do not go as they first plan. Many parents, volunteers and the local clergy have a regular involvement in the day-to-day life of the school. Many volunteer as helpers to support lessons and trips, some lead collective worship and some have more formal roles on either the parent school group (FOBS) or the Full Governing Body. This involvement reinforces much of what the teachers are saying, and enables pupils to make good relationships with a wider circle of adults. This support has been of considerable benefit to pupils, the school and the community, and made it a school that is very much at the heart of its church and the communities it serves.

SIAMS report October 2014 Barrington CEVC Primary CB2 5RG