

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Welbourn Church of England Primary School

High Street Welbourn Lincoln Lincolnshire LN5 0NH

Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese	Lincoln
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Date of inspection	21 March 2017
Date of last inspection	27 February 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Controlled 120542
Headteacher	Vicky Cook
Inspector's name and number	Fiona Griffiths 705

School context

Welbourn is smaller than the average size primary school with 86 pupils on roll. Children come from the surrounding area and are mainly of White British heritage. The proportion of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is in line with the national average. The number of children entitled to receive the pupil premium is below the national figure. Attendance is above the national average. The school has experienced significant changes to staffing since the last inspection. At the time of the inspection, the school was under the leadership of an acting executive headteacher from a local school, whilst the substantive headteacher was on maternity leave.

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

- Explicit Christian values have become more firmly established throughout the school community and impact on the quality of relationships and increasingly to children's attitudes towards learning.
- Acts of worship are an important time in the school day where an inclusive sense of belonging is creating an ever stronger community that worships and prays together.
- The high priority placed on religious education ensures that its contribution to the Christian ethos is valued and celebrated and is developing children's tolerance and respect of other faiths and beliefs.
- Close relationships between church and school enhances the Christian foundation of the school community increasing the opportunities for developing skills in leading church worship.

Areas to improve

- Ensure that pupils have quality time to reflect at a deeper level on their spiritual development by giving them greater opportunities to explore big questions.
- Involve all members of staff and children in planning and evaluating acts of collective worship so that they feel empowered to lead worship as an important aspect of their spiritual life.
- Develop the skills and abilities of leaders and managers, including governors, to gather high quality evidence of the impact of the Christian ethos and use that to identify further challenging areas for improvement.

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

Welbourn is a nurturing and inclusive Christian family where the wellbeing of all children and their families is of great importance. There is a shared understanding by all groups that the school moves forward in a Christian way, supporting each other positively and practically. Seven core values are firmly established as the central expression of the school's Christian ethos. Service and stewardship, justice, peace and forgiveness, generosity, thankfulness, equality and love and compassion are well known to children and adults in school and are promoted through collective worship, moral and social development and the way the school manages children's wellbeing. Children grasp how these apply to their own lives both inside and outside of school. They make a significant contribution to the children's positive attitudes towards learning and the enthusiasm in which they engage with their work. These have contributed to the recent improvements to raise the quality of the children's education and the standards they achieve. Children say that they feel happy and safe in school and that adults look after them and support their learning, as a result attendance levels are high. One child commented 'we like to make our teachers proud'. Children are encouraged to express their thoughts and ideas with confidence knowing that they will be listened to with respect. They have recently been given the opportunity to explore 'big conversations' relating to faith and religious beliefs and have responded well in the limited time given. By extending these opportunities children will gain a greater appreciation of the lives of those from other cultures and traditions. Children talk excitedly of their class links with children from a different country and how they show their values of generosity and compassion to a child they sponsor in Uganda. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) is a major focus and central to the broad and balanced curriculum. Its provision is enhanced by a wide range of visits and visitors to the school each widening learners understanding of diversity. Displays in the school hall and classrooms reflect how Christian teaching underpins the meaning of these values and are presented in a visual way to further support the children's growing understanding of them. Bible stories are introduced through 'Godly Play' sessions in order that children learn about Jesus and what He taught us. During a lesson on 'the feeding of the five thousand' children were given the opportunity to discuss the compassion Jesus showed to the people whilst gathered to hear Him talk. Adults treat children with kindness and consideration based on modelling the core values and children respond likewise with respect for each other. A member of the school council commented that, 'you can share your ideas with other people and nobody will get mad at you for your opinion'. Religious education makes an important contribution to the development of moral and social development through opportunities to discuss issues based on faiths and belief where they will challenge one another's views but also learn from them. Parents chose the school for its strong Christian ethos and its good reputation for nurturing all learners.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship has a central place in the life of the school and makes a good impact on the SMSC development of the school community. Worship themes are based on the school values and the Church calendar. Prayer, song and reflection are key features of each act of worship. A focal point of a candle, cross and prayer book are laid on a cloth which reflects the liturgical colour of the season. Children of all ages demonstrate high levels of participation confidently making contributions and increasingly making connections between Christian values and biblical teaching. Talking with a partner supports children in their exploration of concepts such as peace and forgiveness. During morning worship children gave examples of how a wrong could be put right through simple actions ensuring that friendships were restored. Children comment that they enjoy the input from the variety of presenters who lead worship throughout the school year. All staff attend collective worship which allows for follow up in classrooms of issues raised during worship. At the moment there are too few opportunities for children and staff to engage fully in worship and take ownership of how worship themes are explored. Since the last inspection there has been an increased focus on participation and evaluation of worship by the children, gaining the views and observations of those present. This system now needs to be reviewed in order that evaluations are used to ensure the collective worship experience has relevance and meaning for all who participate. Parents enjoy attending special worships with the children at church. A recently introduced Harvest service was said to be 'a moving event which inspired young and old alike'. The school is proactive in seeking support from the diocese and the year 6 children participate in the church schools festival. Together with the regular presence in school of the incumbent this deepens the impact of collective worship. The school is fortunate to have the services of a proactive Bishop's Visitor. Children are knowledgeable of some Anglican traditions and they are growing in their understanding of the Holy Trinity through worship and RE. Prayer takes place throughout the school day and children write prayers which are said at governors meetings. The collective worship team have written a school prayer which is present in many areas of the school. A display table in the front entrance of the school encourages children to think about different types of prayer and a tree prayer is located in the school hall.

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

Members of the school community are aware that the school has a vision rooted in Christian teaching and that this has a positive impact on children's attitudes to learning and their approach to relationships. The teaching of explicit Christian values is developing a shared understanding of spirituality. School leaders and staff show great passion for their duties and the focus on raising standards has not stopped the development of the school as a church school. Governors are committed to training for all staff and the deputy headteacher, who is the RE leader is a good example of this. She is currently engaged in implementing the 'Understanding Christianity' project, exploring teaching Christianity at a greater depth. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have worked hard to develop close links with the church and community and have been proactive in developing the number of opportunities children worship in the church. The current school leaders have a clear grasp of what needs to be done to continue developing the distinctive Christian ethos and have the full support of the governing body to do so. The governing body as a whole now understands the need for all leaders to develop their skills and abilities in continuing to challenge the school as a church school. A nominated governor works alongside the RE leader to identify further areas for improvement. Governors take seriously their role in appointing senior leaders who support the church school ethos. The school has benefited from clear advice from the diocese which has helped to evaluate their performance as a church school and given appropriate challenge. The RE leader ensures that the subject has a high profile in the school and is delivered in an exciting way. She has a good understanding of developments in RE and is clear how to take the subject forward. Children comment that RE is one of their favourite subjects as 'you can work as a class or in a group and record your thoughts in many different ways. There isn't just one way of doing it'. Pupils' views make an important contribution to the life of the school and they are encouraged to take on roles and responsibilities. Parents support the school's ethos because they feel that it encourages children to explore what faith means to them in a natural way. They are fully supportive of the executive headteacher and consider staff 'go the extra mile' to ensure they meet the needs of the children. They say their children love school and attribute this to the school's Christian values saying that it is 'like one big family'. The vicar makes an important contribution to the life of the school and is a familiar member of the school community. She regularly leads acts of worship and welcomes children to the church to celebrate services such as Harvest, Christmas and Easter. The school meets the statutory requirements for RE and collective worship. The development issues from the previous inspection have been successfully achieved.

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