



## Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS)

<b>Beckley Church of England Primary School</b>	<b>Main Street Rye East Sussex TN31 6RN</b>
<b>Current SIAMS inspection grade</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Chichester</b>
Previous SIAS inspection grade:	Outstanding
Local authority	East Sussex
Date of inspection	6 October 2016
Date of last inspection	January 2011
School's unique reference number	114490
Head of School	Simon Thurston
Inspector's name and number	Pamela Draycott (161)

### School context

Since the previous denominational inspection this small rural school has undergone significant changes, including six headteachers; the current head of school has been in post since the beginning of September 2016. In April 2016 the school became part of the Beckley and Peasmarsh Primary School Federation. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs or for whom extra funding is received due to social disadvantage is below the national average. Links with the parish church of All Saints are in the process of being refreshed.

### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Beckley primary school as a Church of England school are good

- The recently formed federation is already impacting positively on school life and work and is providing some stability as it emerges from an extended period of turbulence.
- Governors and the new executive leadership team have a shared and clear vision for further development as a church school and have structures and planning in place to implement this, in collaboration with its stakeholders.
- Based on key values such as kindness, forgiveness and perseverance, explored within a Christian context, there is a calm, purposeful learning environment where pupils are valued as individuals. Pupils' behaviour both in classrooms and around the school is positive and mutually respectful.
- The varied worship programme makes a good contribution to supporting and extending the school's Christian foundation and to the good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils, irrespective of their faith or non-faith position.

### Areas to improve

- Take the opportunity provided by the new federation to refresh and redefine the school's Christian ethos and values so that they consistently and positively drive forward developments in the next stage of its life as a church school.
- Provide more planned opportunities within worship for pupils to develop a deeper appreciation of the Christian belief in God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- Re-energise positive links with the parish church.

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

The school's mission statement places the importance of learning, progress and personal growth firmly within its Christian foundation, 'based on the loving example of Jesus Christ'. It is summarised as 'achieve, believe, care' and demonstrated through the pupils' thoughtful and positive behaviour. Academic attainment is broadly in line with the national average as is attendance. Pupils of different ability levels make at least good progress from their various starting points.

Christian understanding of a range of values such as honesty, forgiveness, generosity and love are well explored and impact well on pupils' behaviour and attitudes. Relationships between pupils are strong and mutually respectful. There is currently a high percentage of new teachers at the school. However, there is still a consistency of expectations with regard to behaviour and attitudes evident which supports pupils' learning and is establishing strong relationships. There is a calm and purposeful learning environment in evidence around the school. This is well supported by high quality displays which celebrate pupils' achievements and the school's Christian foundation. Throughout the period of leadership instability, its Christian foundation has been a constant. It strongly supports the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of pupils through the curriculum and extra-curricular activities. Pupils' well-being has a high priority based on the Christian foundation. Worship and RE make positive contributions to pupils' SMSC development, especially enabling pupils to reflect deeply on key issues of religious and spiritual concern. RE makes a good contribution to pupils' academic and personal development. It contributes well to the school's Christian and inclusive ethos by, for example, exploring and appreciating the variety of faiths represented across Great Britain, including Christianity. It contributes to helping pupils recognise difference and diversity and to 'respect others' views, even when you don't agree with them', as one Key Stage 2 pupil said. Another commented on the importance of learning about a range of faiths, 'RE is not just Christian, it's about other faiths too which informs us about different beliefs. That is a good thing'. However, understanding of Christianity as a world-wide faith is under-developed.

## **The impact of collective worship on the school community is good**

Worship is held daily and pupils also worship in class, saying prayers before lunch and before going home. Thus prayer is given a high priority within school life. Reflection areas in each classroom are used well to promote calmness and prayer which contributes strongly to pupils' behaviour and attitudes. Pupils know the Lord's Prayer and say it regularly as part of worship along with a specially written school prayer. Adults and pupils recognise the importance of prayer and worship in school life seeing it as a clear way in which the school's Church of England status is well expressed. As one Key Stage 2 pupil reflected, 'Prayer is talking to God and it helps you to feel peaceful and calm. I pray sometimes at home as well as at school. I think God listens when we pray'. Prayer contributes positively to pupils' sense of spirituality and also influences actions such as, for example, praying for an issue raised in a news item. A Key Stage 1 pupil reflected, 'Asking God to help people who are poorly or who are being bombed is important when you pray.' Worship is enjoyed by pupils and staff. The singing of Christian songs and the regular use of Bible stories, linked to the school's Christian ethos, enhances the understanding of pupils about Jesus and his importance for Christians. However, there are missed opportunities to regularly address Christian belief about God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Pupils have a clear understanding of the cycle of the Christian year through the celebration of various festivals, such as Harvest, Christmas, Easter and Pentecost. Pupils develop some appropriate understanding of Anglican aspects of worship. This includes the use of a cross or crucifix as a focal point for worship and the lighting of a candle to represent 'Jesus, who is God's light in the world'. Their periodic visits to the parish church of All Saints enhances this understanding further. Local Anglican clergy have recently re-engaged positively with the school's worship programme and their involvement is welcomed by staff, pupils and parents. Some pupils from the school regularly attend the church choir and hand-bell ringing group as well as a regular children's group based on 'Messy Church' principles. This is successfully building

further links between the school and the parish church. Worship is explicitly Christian but is also inclusive of the whole school community. For example, pupils are given the opportunity to pray about or reflect on the topic, story or value being focused on.

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

Although the governing body has been recently reconstituted because of changes brought about by the federation, many members have been constant in their strategic and practical support for the school over a period of instability and change. Aply led by an effective chair of governors, their steadfast and committed approach is driving development as a church school. Governors are working closely with the new head of school and other colleagues to ensure that the federation vision is embedded quickly and effectively across its life and work. There is a sense of freshness and a strong commitment to further progress which is already impacting on pupils' attainment and progress and is clearly evident in the school's effective and focused development planning.

Parents are regularly and well informed about their children's progress. They are clear that the Christian ethos impacts well on their children's behaviour. It helps them to be happy and feel secure in school, despite the many changes over the period since the previous denominational inspection. The school has very recently gathered parents' views about the impact of its Christian foundation. The vast majority of these responses are positive. These reviews have yet to be fully analysed and used for enhancing the school's Christian ethos further.

Links with the church are satisfactory and improving rapidly. Local clergy now lead worship regularly and visits to the church are increasing. This is much appreciated by pupils, parents and staff. Community links through the church and the local horticultural society for example enhance the relationship between the school and its locality. Links with the Diocese and with the local authority are good as shown through attendance at courses. Despite the turbulence in leadership since the previous denominational inspection, the school has adequately addressed the key issues for improvement. There is a clear plan to focus further development in place. The school meets statutory requirements for RE and collective worship. Both these areas are given a high profile and impact positively on school ethos and values. Staff are increasingly well supported for working in a church school. Collaborative working across the schools in the federation is an example of this. It means that, for example, there is shared leadership in RE and opportunities to monitor assessments made of pupils' work across the two schools. This improves teacher confidence and enhances provision. Chances for governors and staff to discuss the federation's vision and how it impacts distinctively on the different school's involved is also productive in driving forward developments as a church school.

SIAMS report (October 2016) Beckley CE (VC) Primary School, Rye, TN31 6RN