

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Breage Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School	
Trewithick Road, Breage, Helston, Cornwall TR13 9PZ	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese	Truro
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Name of multi-academy trust	Southerly Point Cooperative Multi-Academy Trust
Date of inspection	13 June 2017
Date of last inspection	15 June 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Aided Primary 143967
Headteacher	Andrew Orme
Inspector's name and number	Revd David Hatrey 844

School context

Breage Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary is a smaller than average school. The majority of children come from a White British background. The number of children who are entitled to pupil premium funding and those who have special educational needs are below national averages. In June of this year the school became part of the Southerly Point Cooperative Multi-Academy Trust.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Breage Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary as a Church of England school are good.

- Children have a good understanding of Christian values and what they look like in daily life and are beginning to appreciate their Christian distinctiveness.
- Children have a good understanding of Christian festivals, explaining these in some depth and articulating their significance for Christians.
- Religious education (RE) is rapidly improving and is now enjoyed by the children because they share their ideas, listening and shaping their beliefs, so they perceive the relevance of RE for their daily lives.
- Children behave well and make good relationships which is shaped by the school's Christian ethos.

Areas to improve

- Ensure there is a formal approach to monitoring and evaluating all aspects of being a church school involving all stakeholders which leads to ongoing improvements.
- Enable children to lead, contribute regularly and evaluate worship so that they develop greater ownership.
- Develop an agreed understanding of spirituality to enable more planned high-quality experiences that provide opportunities for pupils to develop spiritually.

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

In 2014 all members of the school family determined their core Christian values. They identified; respect, happiness, forgiveness, trust, care, friendship and honesty. Leaders ensure these have a high profile in daily life. Children explain what these values mean and look like in daily life and can give examples of where they use them. Golden awards are given by staff to children who show these values in their own lives, this helps develop a deeper understanding of how Christian values make a difference to other people's lives in different contexts. Increasingly children are developing a distinctive Christian understanding of these values relating these to Bible stories which reflect their meaning. Children can explain the view that values are given to us by God and that Jesus shows us how these values help us to "do the right thing." Staff demonstrate and live out these values in their own relationships. Children recognise these values in staff and think about how they can use them for themselves. They feel part of a family with each treated as being special to God. Children's behaviour is of a high standard, there are few instances of bullying or name calling. Older children spontaneously seek to resolve minor disputes of younger children by referring to the values. They naturally support them in different ways without having to be asked. A number of children who have joined from other schools talk openly about the differences particularly in terms of feeling part of a family and their relationships. At present however, children are not confident to relate their behaviour to Christian values, rather recognising that this is the behaviour the school expects. Standards at the school are generally in-line with national expectations and there are examples of where some groups of children make even better progress. Effective support for disadvantaged children enables them to make positive progress and develop good attitudes to learning. Issues relating to attendance have been thoughtfully followed through which reflects the school's care. The headteacher recognises that the school is at the start of their journey to deepen children's spirituality, staff have discussed and considered their understanding of spirituality. More opportunities of reflection have been introduced with children responding to such questions as, 'What is God like?' and 'Who is the Holy Spirit?' They are confident to share ideas in this safe atmosphere knowing their responses will be valued. There are indications of children's ideas deepening where they have been challenged. However, this is not yet embedded in planning or identified in other subjects. There are insufficient high quality experiences to extend their thoughts further. The school takes seriously the importance of helping children understand other world faiths. Visitors help bring these alive explaining celebrations through first hand experiences and artefacts. This leads children to show tolerance and respect for those who hold different views to their own. At present children have a limited understanding of Christianity as a multi-cultural faith. Whilst RE contributes well to spirituality, opportunities to enrich children's understanding of the core values are not always taken.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

The impact of collective worship is good. This is because the planning of themes for worship has improved since the last inspection becoming more detailed. An understanding of Christian values is deepened through worship with an aspect being developed each week over a half term. Biblical material is now identified which supports children's understanding of the values. Planning enables all staff and other leaders to contribute to this. Children appreciate the variety of different approaches and enjoy these. They are eager to join in 'Open the Book' worship and dramas with which they are engaged. These stories are recalled in some detail and children share how they have tried to respond to these messages and challenges. Planning covers the main Christian festivals in some depth. They are often celebrated in church and children can explain them by relating these to Jesus' life and consider their significance for Christians. Children take a leading part in these. The Easter experience is a good example of church and school working together to provide workshops and experiences which deepen children's understanding of festivals. Older children led these for other schools and the community. The monthly Thursday services are prominent acts of worship often linking to seasons in the church's year. Parents and the community join to make these special occasions. The coordinator has made improvements to maintain the impact that worship has using his weekly evaluation notes. This has seen the introduction of new worship songs, more detailed planning, a focus/altar table and beginning children's evaluations. Celebrating St. Breaca after whom the village is named, involves dancing in the street followed by a unique church service in which children play their role. Collective worship has a prominent place in daily life, children appreciate it is a time for the family to come together and share. The senior member of staff leads a large choir who sing enthusiastically, reflecting their new status as a 'Cornish singing school'. There are opportunities to contribute to small dramas which engages them. Children can recall some acts of worship which have influenced their thinking with some children able to do this with greater confidence, though this is still developing. Younger children talk about Jesus and give examples of His teaching through parables linking these to Christian values. An appreciation of the Trinity is developing with older children wrestling with these ideas and considering what the Holy Spirit might mean for them. Prayer is generally well taught, children use it as a way of sharing ideas with God which many are eager to do. A reflection area created in consultation with children uses a variety of objects to stimulate prayer. Children's feedback indicates that they value this area which gives them brief

moments of calm and time to share with God. It was difficult to evaluate the impact of prayer due to the limited number of prayers seen. Children have begun to evaluate worship, but this is at an early stage of development. Governors monitor informally, but it is difficult to trace the impact this has had. The coordinator's evaluations, along with the questionnaires, contribute to this leading to targets for improvement. The school is aware that worship needs to be more closely related to the needs of older children and that children do not feel that they have an ownership in this area and is addressing this.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

The headteacher's review of RE led him to take action raising the profile of the subject and ensuring it has a good impact on teaching and learning. He now teaches RE in all classes providing continuity and progression. A new scheme of work has been successfully introduced, 'Understanding Christianity', with an enquiry based approach to learning. Children are encouraged to share their ideas and reason through these as well as listening to new ideas which deepen and shape their own beliefs. They explore questions such as, 'What is God like?' they are supported to relate these ideas to their own understanding and to what they might mean for them. Although at an early stage of development there are positive indications of children thinking at deeper levels and using some of the higher order thinking skills. Children's feedback confirms that they enjoy this approach, they feel their ideas are important and increasingly they perceive the relevance of these ideas to daily life. Some aspects of Kerwenek, which is Cornwall's unique RE syllabus are used to explore their rich Cornish Christian heritage. For example, children consider different types of Cornish crosses, why they were used and their significance today. The headteacher has created an effective assessment system to monitor and track individual progress. This information has informed planning, targeting children who require further support. Data provided indicates that attainment in RE is slowly rising with more children achieving age related expectations. Standards in RE are comparable with other core subjects. Teaching and learning are generally good with some positive aspects emerging, such as the quality of questioning and collaborative learning. A book scrutiny has indicated that marking and feedback to children still needs further development to give clearer strategies to children about how they could improve the quality of their work. Good use of professional training has been well focused on how to raise standards in RE. The head's evaluations are ongoing and lead to actions being added to the development plan. For example, the school has purchased Bibles to try to develop greater biblical literacy. At present governors rely on the head's evaluations rather than have identified monitoring focuses. The school provides the appropriate time allocation for RE and ensures Christianity has due emphasis.

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

The leadership team is now well established and give direction to the work of being a church school. A cohesive staff team have been created who are committed to this. Together a new vision statement has been agreed; 'Children are a heritage from the Lord.' Leaders articulate a clear Christian vision; they feel children are a gift to them from God and their parents. They see it as their duty to provide children with the best education they can, surrounded in God's love. Their model is to enable each to grow in spirit, wisdom and grace, just as Jesus did. Children have some understanding of this talking about being special to God. Their understanding is growing as the vision is relatively new. The vision is seen clearly in the school's care for the needs of all children. There is a range of support available for pupils' well-being to which the school gives a high priority through adult intervention. Case studies indicate that these have been effective in meeting diverse needs enabling children to overcome issues. Religious education and collective worship have a high profile which fully meets the statutory requirements for these. Monitoring of pupil progress is systematically undertaken and actions quickly taken to address any identified needs. Governors play a full part in this, they are committed to the school and seek to do the very best monitoring the impact of new initiatives to raise standards. However, the monitoring of the school's Christian distinctiveness is undertaken at a more informal level and it is difficult to find evidence where this has led to improvements. For example, they are not fully aware of the impact of the provision for prayer or Christian values have for the pupils. Relationships with the diocese remain strong notably drawing upon their expertise for focused training. The school took part and enjoyed the Bishop's Lent challenge regarding reading Bible stories. The church makes a good contribution to the life of the school, notably through governance, with the vicar investing considerable time into the role of Chair of governors as well as leading worship and celebrations. This school is at the centre of village life and leads and supports a range of local events which enable children to display their skills and talents.