

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St. Budeaux Foundation Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior School	
Priestley Avenue, St. Budeaux, Plymouth, Devon PL5 2DW	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese	Exeter
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Local authority	Plymouth Devon
Date of inspection	22 June 2017
Date of last inspection	23 May 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Junior 113483
Headteacher	Cathy Drage
Inspector's name and number	Revd David Hatrey 844

School context

Saint Budeaux Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior is a smaller than average school. The majority of children come from a White British heritage. The number of children who are entitled to pupil premium funding is in line with national averages, whilst the number of children who have special educational needs is just above national averages.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St. Budeaux Foundation Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior as a Church of England school are good

- Collective worship promotes children's thinking leading to deeper questions being considered which develops their understanding.
- Clear direction to being a church school and ensuring religious education (RE) and collective worship have a high profile have been established by the new headteacher and leadership team.
- An enquiry based approach to RE is well established which challenges children's thinking so they are increasingly seeing the contribution this can make to their daily lives.
- Children have a good understanding of Christian values and are beginning to appreciate their distinctive Christian meaning.

Areas to improve

- Establish a children's ethos team enabling them to plan and lead worship so they have a greater sense of involvement.
- Ensure opportunities for spirituality, including high quality experiences, are identified in planning enabling children to develop a personal spirituality.
- Embed a rigorous and systematic approach to monitoring and evaluation of all aspects of a church school involving all stakeholders which leads to ongoing improvements.

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

Christian distinctiveness is good because Christian values are firmly embedded into school life and have a high profile. All members of the school community explored the distinctive Christian meaning of a number of values before agreeing which were fundamental to them. They identified; love, forgiveness, respect and joy. Children quickly develop an understanding of Christian values in a community that lives by these. A new initiative encourages children to recognise others who show values in daily life. To make an award children move photographs of peers to the value shown on the display board. Children explain their reasoning why they have given this award so all appreciate how values influence lives in different ways, which deepens their understanding. Children have a growing understanding of distinctive Christian values linking these to biblical stories which reflect their meaning. A common understanding was that using values helps us to become better people by following Christian teaching. Staff demonstrate values in their own lives and interactions with children, treating each as special to God. The impact of these values is evident in the degree of respect and care children show for each other. A good example of this is the link with 'Freshfields', a home for those with dementia, where children share time enriching the lives of residents. Sponsoring children in other countries enables children to appreciate different cultures and faiths supporting these through fund raising. This provides some opportunities to consider how Christians show their faith in different ways. Bullying and name calling are rare and where they occur swiftly dealt with often referring to values and what Jesus would want us to do. However, children were not confident to articulate the link between their behaviour and the Christian values. Attainment has risen well in recent years and is in line with national expectations. Progress made by lower ability children stands out where effective support has raised their confidence enabling them to develop good attitudes to learning. The provision for spirituality is still emerging, but with some good examples. Children are encouraged to reflect on issues arising from worship, they are confident to share these as they know they will be valued. Children pose challenging questions on post-its such as; "How did people discover badness?" and "Why do people die?" These are then considered in worship leading to a greater depth of understanding. Every week children use Christian meditation to reflect on various issues, their feedback shows they appreciate this providing moments of calm which are valuable. At present opportunities for spirituality are not identified in planning, nor do they always cover a range of aspects which would deepen their understanding. First hand experiences of different places of worship supported by visitors from other world faiths enable children to understand how they celebrate their faith. This leads to children showing a high degree of tolerance and respect for those who hold different views from their own.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good.

Collective worship is good because children have a variety of experiences which engage and challenge their thinking. Planning for worship is created by the headteacher, coordinator and vicar ensuring themes are well matched to biblical references. This developed an aspect of a value over a term, however, children requested a sequence of stories which explores biblical characters and Jesus' life and teachings over a number of weeks. Children are supported to consider where Christian values are evident in stories and their significance. They are supported to find links between these and their own lives and how they might respond. Planning enables a number of adults to take responsibility with a range of approaches which children appreciate. Some acts of worship are closely linked to children's ages and experience so they are relevant to their needs. There are opportunities for small groups to enjoy Christian meditation in the chapel. Collective worship has a high profile in the life of the school, children recognise this is time to share with God and celebrate their achievements as a family. Worship themes provoke a good number of questions many of which are quite deep. Whilst worship responds to these the leadership team provide time to support children with individual issues which nurtures their understanding. This is a particular strength of the school. Singing is lively and contributes to celebrations of Christian festivals. Children do not feel that they have ownership of worship as there are no opportunities for them to plan and lead. A recurring response from children was that they would like to become more involved in worship with opportunities to make a fuller contribution. The school recognises that this has not fully been addressed. A good understanding of Jesus and His teaching is shown with children sharing responses in some depth. Children have an appreciation of the Trinity where teaching in RE supports this. Christian festivals are explored, children link these well to Jesus' life and explain their meaning for Christians. The coordinator seeks children's responses to worship and how this can be improved. This has resulted in changes in planning with more leaders being involved, the conversion of a room into a chapel and the introduction of after school groups. Children have a good understanding of prayer as a way of sharing their ideas with God. Different types of prayers are explored and this is progressively developed. This has led to the prayers of older children showing signs of greater maturity with some recognising the contribution it can make to daily lives. Class reflection areas contribute to this with children feeling these help, enabling them to, "pass on my worries."

The effectiveness of the religious education is good.

Religious education is good because of the ongoing initiatives the coordinator is introducing which are having an increasing impact on teaching and learning and children's attitudes to the subject. The coordinator is dedicated with a good level of expertise. She has launched the 'Understanding Christianity' project and effectively supported staff in planning. This has seen an enquiry based approach established and engaging children in learning. A big question is posed and children are encouraged to share and reason through their ideas whilst listening to and considering the ideas of others shaping their own thinking. Children respond to this recognising the importance of their contributions. This enables them to wrestle with questions of meaning and purpose as well as faith with more children indicating in the questionnaires that they are beginning to perceive the contribution RE can make to their daily lives. New ways of recording their ideas such as through art or drama have been introduced which children appreciate and can readily be engaged, responding creatively. The quality of teaching and learning is generally good with some that is even better. A book scrutiny undertaken indicates that teaching and learning has improved with ideas being explored at a deeper level. This has meant that more children are now achieving the higher levels of attainment. Observations of RE lessons have a high priority with specific actions agreed to develop and raise the impact of this further. Work is well matched to the needs of children, with teaching assistants providing focussed support through good questioning which enable children to do well. Marking has improved with constructive feedback to children. There are extension questions given arising from children's individual responses, these are deepening children's thinking often requiring them to use some of the higher order thinking skills. Teacher's questions challenge children considering why and how not just requiring picking out information. There are regular opportunities to develop children's understanding of Christian values. Reflections on the values enable children to demonstrate the depth of their understanding as well as what they mean for them. The school has addressed one of the previous inspection targets which was to 'strengthen systems of monitoring and assessing religious education.' A new system is in place which records what children understand collated at the front of children's books so they are aware of progress as well as what they need to consider. These assessments show that children are making good progress in their work, with disadvantaged children able to express their understanding in various ways.

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

Leadership and management are good due to the high priority given to the importance of being a church school. The headteacher appointed in September 2016, has brought new focus and direction. There has been renewed emphasis on Christian values and how these underpin and influence decisions. A new leadership is established who share her dedication taking responsibility for different aspects of being a church school. Together they articulate a clear vision based soundly on Christian principles and values. This is seen in the way that values are lived out in the community. They point to Jesus' teaching which shows us how we can live these out and influence the person we can become and the choices we make. They have inherited a vision; 'Care, courtesy and control.' which is part of the school logo. Children find this vision difficult to explain. The school's Christian distinctiveness is clearly evident in the sense of being a family and the degree of respect shown to one another which comes from the Christian values. It stands out in the provision for the well being of each child, through a dedicated team of counsellors and mentors who support children and the guidance offered to families. Staff often go the extra mile as they treat every child as precious to God. The monitoring of pupil progress is rigorously undertaken with governors fully involved in tracking individual children's progress. Governors are committed to the school providing appropriate challenge. An ethos team comprising of governors and members of the trustees have responsibility for evaluating the work of a church school. Currently their monitoring lacks the focus to identify strengths or areas to develop further. For example, there has been no evaluations of the school's Christian distinctiveness, or of the impact of the provision for spirituality. Governors have recognised this and are in the process of putting in systems to fully evaluate all aspects of being a church school. Opportunities to grow future church school leaders are now in place with leadership being distributed so they gain the necessary experience. Continuing professional development for staff is well focused on identified needs. The school's relationship with the diocese is growing where adviser support is now used to shape lesson observations. The church makes a full contribution to school life notably through governance as well as leading worship and celebrating Christian festivals. A dedicated church worker plays an influential role leading lunchtime and after school clubs enabling children to explore Christian faith in different ways which attracts a number of children. Parents recognise the contribution school makes to children's lives and the quality and care offered. The school meets the statutory requires for religious education and collective worship.