



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Barnham Broom Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Norwich Road
Barnham Broom
Norfolk
NR9 4BU

Previous SIAMS grade: Good

Diocese: Norwich

Local authority: Norfolk

Dates of inspection: 27 January 2015

Date of last inspection: 22 March 2010

School's unique reference number: 121199

Headteacher: Heather Benson

Inspector's name and number: Stephen Green 809

School context

This is a small rural school with 115 pupils taught in five mixed-age classes. The headteacher has been in post for two years. The local church is difficult for children to walk to because of its distance and the nature of the roads they would need to walk along. The rector has been in post for two years and covers 15 parishes and three schools. The proportion of pupils with special needs is average and those attracting Pupil Premium funding low. An arson attack destroyed, amongst other things, most of the books in the library.

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

- The school is very effective at translating its Christian values into spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. As a result behaviour is excellent and pupils are well behaved. They respect each other and the adults they come into contact with.
- Relationships within the school community are of a very high standard and clearly reflect the school's Christian ethos and the values it is choosing to encourage.
- Collective worship, the school's ethos and its Christian values have led to a very high level of individual spirituality amongst the pupils.
- Pupils appreciate and value the ideas and feelings of others, and are confident when expressing their own thoughts.

Areas to improve

- In order to provide leaders with a better understanding of the approaches to worship that the pupils find most effective and enjoyable, pupils should be given a role in the monitoring and evaluation of worship.
- Increase the range of visitors representing other Christian groups to the school so that pupils have a greater understanding of the diversity of traditions and backgrounds within the Christian faith.
- Use the opportunities provided by Collective Worship to improve pupils' understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

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

In 2014 the Diocese helped the school to review its mission statement and ethos. They now reflect its Christian values and can be seen embedded in every aspect of school life from displays and policies to relationships and the way it communicates with parents. The mission statement (“Reach for the stars-trusting, believing, growing”) accurately reflects the school’s desire to challenge pupils to achieve the most they are able to whilst developing their trust and religious beliefs. The school places great value upon the work it does developing pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural education (SMSC), and ensures that this is based firmly upon Christian values (particularly developing a respect for the opinions, beliefs and feelings of others). The impact of this can be seen in the impressive standards of behaviour and relationships that exist within the school. Whilst testifying to the significant effect the school’s values have upon the lives of his children, one parent said that relationships were the main reason he had transferred his children there from another local school. Parents and governors are keen to ascribe these relationships to excellent teaching and the key Christian values being emphasised by the school. Pupil progress and attainment are generally better than in most schools, and school leaders attribute this to good teaching and the values of mutual support and respect encouraged by the school. Religious education (RE) is stimulating and challenging, with pupils having a strong understanding of Christianity and other world faiths. However they have less understanding of the different backgrounds and traditions which form part of the Christian community. The school has been keen to devolve responsibility to the pupils and has used the School Council and house captains to fulfil this role and give pupils a greater voice in the running of their school. In recent years they have demonstrated their empathy and compassion by organising fundraising for a variety of charities. This has been linked by the school to thankfulness and genuine appreciation for the opportunities they have been given. These are active student bodies, having helped to design an adventure trail in the school grounds, and developed the use of certificates to reward pupils as they earn house points. Its work is co-ordinated by the Chair of Governors who liaises closely with the headteacher. Pupils have shown that they are willing and able to accept responsibility, and have a genuine desire to help others. Examples of this were seen in the way pupils support each other in lessons and in the playground, as well as in their efforts to raise money for charity. Parents speak of the substantial contribution that RE and CW make to both the character of the school and the pupils’ development. Pupils’ behaviour and attitudes are excellent. The 2014 Ofsted report stated that ‘Pupils’ conduct is outstanding. They are polite to each other, adults and visitors. They feel happy and safe in school.’ When asked, parents and governors spoke enthusiastically about the pupils’ very positive attitudes towards their school. This is reflected in their attendance, which at 98.5% (2013-14) is better than most schools.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Worship is an important part of the life of the school. All pupils spoken to said they valued it, and older pupils were able to reflect upon the contribution it makes to the ethos of the school and to their own SMSC development. Children spoke about their enjoyment when being given the opportunity to take leading roles, and their parents and teachers were able to explain the considerable effect that it has upon their wider lives. Staff and governors place considerable value upon CW, and the pupils said that most teaching staff regularly attend along with their classes. School leaders spoke of the important role that it has in developing the school’s Christian values. Many parents described the positive impact the school’s Christian ethos, as promoted through CW, is having on their children. Several parents spoke of how their children’s growing spirituality is being reflected in their lives outside school, and the co-ordinator cited an example of a parent who recently contacted her to ask for further information about a recent theme so that they could reinforce it at home. Parents appreciate the worship newsletters that the school sends home to ensure parents are aware of the theme

being concentrated upon and any events and services that may affect them. The programme of CW is distinctively Christian in nature and has an appropriate focus upon the life and teaching of Jesus Christ. Pupils have a good knowledge of the life and teachings of Jesus, but less understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. By visiting the church regularly and celebrating major Christian festivals there, they are developing a sound understanding of Christian traditions. CW is led by many members of the school community, and is supported by the rector every month. Other visitors have enriched the programme of CW (e.g. Open the Book and Barnabas in Schools). The reflective nature of this worship helps pupils to develop an impressive level of personal spirituality which has been noted and spoken positively about by their parents. Worship explores and explains the school's Christian ethos and values which are further reinforced in RE and the wider curriculum. Private prayer and reflection are provided for during CW and by creating specific opportunities for pupils to reflect on what they are learning in the wider curriculum. The school has identified this as an area it wants to develop, and most classrooms have areas and displays to encourage reflection and private prayer. Computer technology is used effectively by pupils to bring a focus to the front of the room and to stimulate thought during worship. CW is well-planned. The co-ordinator has an overview of the long-term scheme and advises those leading acts of worship. Pupils have been given a chance to participate in this, with each class now planning one act of worship each year. Comments from pupils demonstrate their appreciation of this and older pupils would appreciate and learn from the opportunity to do so more regularly. Worship is mainly evaluated by the co-ordinator, supported by governor and Headteacher inputs. Lack of pupil input into evaluation means there is no explicit understanding of which approaches they find the most effective and meaningful.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

Standards of achievement in RE are at least good and sometimes better. Older pupils are responding very well to the new enquiry-led approach, and this has led to both a willingness to express their thoughts and opinions and a mature respect for those being expressed by their peers. This approach encourages pupils to develop higher-order skills, with many examples being seen of pupils being asked to say what they think, what their observations tell them, and to question why things might be as they are. The quality of teaching is good and at times outstanding, and pupils enjoy and respond well to the opportunities they are being given. RE makes a strong contribution to pupils' understanding of Christianity and Christian values, which are identified and focussed upon in a rolling programme. The school places considerable value upon RE, and pupils of all ages study the key elements of other major faiths. Work that the pupils have done during the year demonstrates both the breadth of their learning and the opportunities they have been given to reflect upon it and work independently. RE makes a very significant contribution to pupils' tolerance and empathy for the views and beliefs of other people, which are immediately evident to those visiting the school, by observing the way pupils interact, and from speaking to the children. The subject is well-resourced. One consequence of the unfortunate fire in the school has been the need to re-provision the library with new books, and this has been done comprehensively, with a good range of high-quality books to support RE and CW. RE is led enthusiastically and knowledgeably and the co-ordinator has a good record of professional training. The Diocese and local church provide support for the school, and the well informed co-ordinator has been influential in helping staff to introduce a more enquiry-led approach to teaching and learning. Assessment procedures are in place and inform teachers' future planning. The co-ordinator is being released to carry out observations and target further support wherever it is needed. A recent example of where this has been done effectively is in rolling out a more enquiry-led approach to teaching. The existing action plans demonstrate that the school intends to continue this programme in order to raise standards even further in the future.

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

School leaders are very committed to the school's Christian ethos and have worked hard to

find meaningful ways to integrate this into the everyday life of the school. One parent spoke of the school environment being enriched by the faith of its leaders, and this was agreed with enthusiastically by others. The school's Christian values have had a marked impact upon wellbeing and standards of achievement, which are high. Recent improvements in the school are having an obvious impact, driving better relationships, greater empathy and creditable respect for the views and feelings of other people. Parents and governors testified to the considerable impact recent changes have had. The governors have been successful in developing their role, and offer challenge and support to the school staff on a regular and effective basis. The governing body is heavily involved in the day-to-day life of the school (e.g. playing a leading role with the School Council) as well as maintaining a strategic view. Governing body meetings regularly reflect the school's Christian foundation. The minutes show that foundation governors have been very active on many issues, particularly those relating to the development of the school's ethos in 2014, and prayers are regularly said at meetings. Strategic planning is based upon accurate and insightful self-evaluation which has been led by the headteacher but involved staff and governors at all stages. The School Improvement and Development Plan includes detailed and well planned sections on the school ethos, on CW and RE. There is a separate committee of governors which meets termly to review progress in achieving the points identified in the plan. As a result all school leaders have an accurate understanding of where the school is and what it needs to do to improve further. Staff and governor training is thorough and extensive, and is targeted by school leaders where it will be most effective. The RE and CW co-ordinator has recently attended valuable training provided by the Diocese, and used this to help develop more enquiry-led learning across the school. Staff have reacted well to opportunities that have arisen for them to develop their leadership skills. Subject co-ordinators prepare action plans, work with governors and have to work within tight budgets. Despite the distance from the local church and the difficulty walking children to it, the school has managed to make regular use of the church buildings so that pupils are comfortable there and understand how the community makes use of the church for its worship. The Rector and lay reader are both involved in the life of the school, leading CW and being on the governing body. Parents are very appreciative of the professionalism, dedication and care which the headteacher has brought to the school since she arrived two years ago. Governors and school leaders demonstrate a determination to support the school and to improve it still further. Arrangements for RE and collective worship meet statutory requirements.

SIAMS report January 2015 Barnham Broom CEVA Primary Norwich NR9 4BU