

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Caton St Paul's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School	
Moorside Road, Brookhouse, Lancaster, LA2 9PJ	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Blackburn
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Local authority	Lancashire
Name of multi-academy trust / federation	N/A
Date/s of inspection	01 December 2016
Date of last inspection	23 March 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Primary 119524
Headteacher	Karen Price
Inspector's name and number	Gail Goodman 571

School context

Caton St Paul's Church of England Primary School is a very popular, relatively small school of 174 pupils across six classes. It serves the semi-rural villages of Caton and Brookhouse in the Lune Valley, with some pupils travelling from the University town of Lancaster. The number of pupils coming from minority ethnic backgrounds is much lower than in most schools. Since the last school inspection there have been some staff changes, with the current headteacher taking up her post in September 2012. The parish church is a short walk away through the school grounds.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Caton St Paul's as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The Christian value of God's love, through care and compassion, inspires the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of all learners.
- Links with the parish church, and all churches within the village are strong. As a result, families value the care, support and guidance that the school and church offer.
- The sustained, outstanding achievement of all children is underpinned and nurtured by the transformative Christian ethos of the school.
- The impact of collective worship (CW) encourages and challenges the thinking and day to day actions of the whole school community.

Areas to improve

- Provide experiences within the school building and grounds to promote the Christian distinctiveness of the school and places for pupils to pray and reflect.

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

Caton St Paul's Church of England Primary School places great emphasis on Christian values, which are deeply embedded in the life of the school. All members are highly aware of these values, such as compassion, forgiveness and tolerance, making the outstanding educational provision at this school so exciting. As a result, pupils excel in academic achievement and in their personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC). Staff and children respect each other, are cared for and nurtured to reach their full potential. Exemplary relationships between all learners demonstrate the key role that Christian values play within the school. Pupils comment that, 'school is always changing for the better and we are all part of God's family here'. Parents are enthusiastic about the 'impassioned and caring teachers who bring the children on'. This is witnessed in the high levels of attendance and excellent behaviour. The school has a well established charitable link with a school in Mombassa, and sponsors two local children there. This has a positive impact on children's understanding of difference and diversity. Engaging and respectful displays in school reflect an understanding of the worldwide Christian church. Pupils enjoy many extra-curricular activities, such as sports, music, arts and crafts, school choir and a worship club. This enables pupils to actively live out Christian values, such as friendship, humility and respect for others. Children are proud to be chosen as members of the school council and a highly effective worship council, helping the community inside and outside of school. Pupils who belong to the worship council are currently involved in developing the extensive and attractive school grounds for outdoor education, play, prayer and reflection. Religious Education (RE) has a significant impact on all learners' spiritual development. This is witnessed in their willingness to ask questions demonstrating insight and a deepening understanding of faith issues. A number of charities have benefitted through the school's generosity e.g. the Shoe Boxes Appeal, Children in Need and the sale of Fairtrade goods, recognised by the achievement of the diocesan award scheme for church school distinctiveness in 2014.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Inspirational and inclusive collective worship (CW) is an important focal point of this school community, permeating all aspects of school life. Worship themes, which influence spiritual reflection, are used in planning and are engaging, relevant and central to the ethics and values of the school. Full account is taken of the Christian calendar. This enables all worshippers to encounter a wide range of Anglican tradition and practice, such as bidding prayers and responses. Children, staff and governors take an active part in the daily act of worship and speak very highly of its significant value in school. Parents attend family worship each Friday in school and enjoy services in church, both on Sundays and during celebrations, such as harvest, Christmas and Easter. They say, 'we value the close link with the church community'. Monitoring and evaluation is rigorous, well structured and carried out by the whole school community keeping worship fresh and stimulating. Children enjoy planning, leading and taking part in worship. This clearly demonstrates how they have moved on from the last inspection as now, the newly formed worship committee take on this role. In one act of worship, children and staff came into the hall singing to recorded music with enjoyment and immense respect. The worship table held a cross, three lighted candles to denote the importance of the Trinity, and a carved wooden holder of gem stones representing each of the six classes. Children clearly articulate an understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Many Bible quotations are displayed throughout the school, prompting reflection and discussion. One quote explains the nature of the class names, 'I will make your battlements of rubies, your gates of sparkling jewels, and your wall of precious stones. All your children will be taught by the Lord, and great will be their peace', Isaiah 54:11-13. Prayer and reflection is of high importance to the children who say, 'we know where to go when we want to be quiet and pray in the play yard'. Pupils write their own prayers and explain the importance of rules linked to Christian values, 'we must never cover up the truth – we are all part of God's family'. The parish priests and clergy from all five village churches, including St Paul's, attend and conduct weekly worship in school, confirming and strengthening the impact of a Christian ethos upon the whole community. Parents, in particular, value this close link with the church communities, and speak highly of what is seen to be a strong and seamless partnership between church and school.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

RE has a high profile within the school's curriculum. Outstanding teaching and rigorous assessment ensure standards are exceptionally high, in line with core subjects. Planning, and monitoring are well organised by the RE subject leader. She plans a rich and varied curriculum which meets statutory requirements. The school community is taking an active part in the use of the Blackburn Diocesan Syllabus. The teaching of Christianity is given prominence. RE is monitored closely through pupil progress meetings between the RE subject leader, teachers and the governor responsible for RE. The subject leader uses a cross section of the pupils' books, plus pupil interviews, in order to properly assess standards and ensure continuing good practice. Pupils reflect upon thoughts, feelings and actions in RE and worship. Excellent examples include the discussion of Jesus as the 'light of the world', following on from the CW theme of Advent. Years 4/5 pupils were asked to consider a number of paintings of the Nativity scene and explain how the artists have portrayed the importance of Jesus in these scenes. Many thought provoking comments were captured, 'Jesus lights up our life, like the sun, only better', and 'the light of Jesus is like a torch because He brightens up your path'. The teaching of Advent is to continue with pupils experiencing important world faith celebrations, including those of Hannukah, Diwali and Christingle. Teachers use innovative techniques to make learning fun as well as challenging for all learners. Many interactive, thought provoking displays around school emphasise the impact of Christianity alongside other world faiths. For example, in a Year 6 classroom, a display stating, 'We know that all things work together for good to those who love God', Romans 8:28, highlights the importance of Christian values, such as fortitude and thankfulness, which are lived out fully and on a daily basis by all stakeholders.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school is outstanding. The explicit Christian vision that is articulated so well by the leadership team, staff and governors, is demonstrated to excellent effect by the headteacher. Her Christian commitment and love shine out in every aspect of her leadership. All learners in school aim to live out the Christian ethos which is so evident at Caton St Paul's Primary and is recognised instantly by everyone who steps over the school's threshold. Exemplary relationships across all ages show the key role that Christian values play within the school. The active involvement of the chair of governors through regular visits exemplifies the dedication of all governors in supporting the school's explicit Christian character. Highly experienced governors monitor performance and achievement and challenge and support the headteacher and staff. This includes rigorous evaluation and tracking of all learners, impacting upon the attainment and sound results of all pupils. One Foundation governor said, 'parents choose this school as God is present here'. All stakeholders can readily articulate the impact of explicit Christian values on the life of the whole school community. The Mission statement, 'One family, belonging, believing and learning together', is played out daily resulting in high standards, in academic achievement, personal development and well being. This is evidenced by a clear cycle of school improvement, including regular pupil progress meetings. All issues from the previous SIAS (SIAMS) inspection have been fully addressed. The impact of this is seen in the annual parent questionnaires, with comments such as, 'the staff are always friendly and open', and 'the children are taught very well on subjects such as friendship, integrity, trust and hope'. Parents are very proud of the school and joint events with the church and community are well attended enriching the lives of all. A strong and active link with the school and local churches, including St Paul's, benefit all learners in the community. Caton St Paul's Church of England Primary School has worked hard, and very successfully, to put children at the heart of its mission.

SIAMS report December 2016 Caton St Paul's Church of England VA Primary School, Caton, Lancaster, LA2 9JP