



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Bispham Endowed Church of England Primary School

Bispham Road
Blackpool
FY2 0HH

Diocese: Blackburn

Local authority: Blackpool

Dates of inspection: 14th November, 2014

Date of last inspection: 17th May, 2010

School's unique reference number: 119411

Headteacher: Jo Hirst

Inspector's name and number: Carol Berry NS 324

School context

Bispham Endowed Church of England school is a larger than average voluntary controlled primary school of 406 pupils. It is situated in an area with higher than usual levels of deprivation. There is a slightly larger proportion of pupils than usual with special educational needs and disabilities. The number of pupils in receipt of the pupil premium is above the national average. Most pupils are of white British heritage. During recent years there have been a number of long term staff absences due to personal circumstances and health issues.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Bispham Endowed as a Church of England school are good

- Caring and inspirational leadership from the headteacher and senior leaders, with the result that every challenge is seen as an opportunity and there is a vigorous drive for school improvement.
- Pupils' profound understanding of Christian values and the way in which they put these values into practice. Christian values have a very positive impact on their relationships, their behaviour and their enjoyment of their school life.
- Supportive pastoral care for pupils and staff which results in the school community feeling like a family.
- The strong and mutually beneficial partnership with the local church.

Areas to improve

- Governors to attend training regarding their role in a church school in order to equip them to effectively challenge and support the school.
- Pupils to take more responsibility for leading parts of collective worship in order to develop their understanding of the nature of worship and their engagement with it.
- Implement a variety of developmental self-evaluation strategies to evaluate and record the impact of collective worship, RE and the school's Christian character on pupils in order to inform development planning.

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

Distinctive Christian values permeate all aspects of school life. They provide inspiration for behaviour and inform relationships at all levels. Consequently relationships are excellent, the school is a very happy place to work and it provides a secure family atmosphere for vulnerable pupils. In recent years achievement has sometimes been below national expectations, but is improving. Children refer to values such as endurance when discussing how they aim to achieve their best. Vibrant displays around the school demonstrate the depth of pupils' thinking about Christian values and prompt them to reflect further. Children confidently interpret Biblical teaching to explain why Christian values are important. They explain the value of generosity in the light of the generous forgiveness offered by Jesus and the Eco-Group refer to the story of creation as they explain that they are working to make God's world a better place. The curriculum is distinctive and enhances pupils understanding of Christian values. Children in Year 4 evaluated the life of Robin Hood as they reflected on the values of justice and compassion and planning provides many opportunities for awe and wonder. Spiritual development is outstanding and pupils have an excellent ability to be still and reflect. During the 'We're on a Mission Week', each class created a sculpture or work of art to express their own ideas about the vision encapsulated in the school's mission statement. They then enjoyed a reflective walk around the art gallery they had created. As a result, they have a profound understanding of the Christian vision for the school and older pupils are able to articulate the importance of vision in achieving aspirations. RE makes a good contribution to the school's Christian character. Work on other faiths, which includes a visit to a Hindu Temple, results in respectful attitudes to people who have different beliefs. Pupils' understanding of diversity is developed through a variety of global links. Some Year 6 pupils gained an understanding of the contribution of Muslim, Hindu and Sikh soldiers to World War I through a project which included a visit to French and Belgian battlefields.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship engages children. It inspires them to relate Christian values to their own lives and relationships. Planning is very effective and secures consideration of a broad range of Christian values, beliefs and festivals. Consequently, children gain a good understanding of Christian beliefs about God as father, Son and Holy Spirit. Pupils take responsibility for the development of collective worship through the 'Values Group'. They carried out an audit of the reflective worship tables in classrooms and the school's leadership provided a budget to deal with their concerns immediately. The contribution of collective worship to spiritual development is excellent. Pupils are used to being silent to reflect and one pupil said of the two minute silence on Remembrance Day 'It sent a tingling sensation down my spine.' Children's evaluation of collective worship makes a very good contribution to its development. On one occasion, worship involved appreciation of God's creation through a reflective walk around the school's nature trail. Pupils' evaluation of this resulted in the development of an outdoor worship area with a focal cross. However, although self-evaluation of worship involves all stakeholders and leads to improvements, it is often informal and is not always recorded. Children have a sense of reverence for worship spaces and this was demonstrated by the way older pupils explained appropriate use of the outdoor worship space to younger pupils at playtime. Prayer is very important and pupils contribute their own prayers to the 'Prayer and Praise boxes' in classrooms. However, although pupils lead parts of class worship and regularly participate in worship, they do not take responsibility for the leadership of aspects of whole school worship. The partnership with the church greatly enriches worship. Many pupils have achieved the 'Rector's Certificate' which involves them learning the Lord's Prayer and saying it to a pupil member of the Values' Group who checks their learning. They are very enthusiastic about the drama used in the Rector's weekly worship and this gives them a very good understanding of the meaning of the prayer. Parents and carers provide good support for special services in church and say that the school's nativity plays are very special.

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

The headteacher provides inspirational Christian leadership. The dedicated staff model Christian values in the care and support they provide for all members of the 'Bispham Endowed family'. Prayers for staff in need are a regular feature of staff meetings and teachers say that the prayers of work colleagues have proved a great source of strength in difficult times. Parents and carers say, 'The door is always open!' Leaders view the last OFSTED report as a positive challenge. There has been a very effective response to the focus for development from the last SIAS inspection and work on the mission statement is exemplary. The school's Christian vision is understood by all members of the school community. Staff have been supported by helpful training with the result that they share responsibility for developing the school's Christian ethos. Formal procedures for self-evaluation are embedded within the school improvement cycle and include consultation with all stakeholders. Informal self-evaluation and subsequent action planning are integral to school life for both staff and children. However, although self-evaluation always takes account of pupils' views, pupils' opinions are not always recorded. This means that sometimes there is not a detailed record of the impact of initiatives on pupils. As a result, this is not secured for the future because understanding is dependent on individual staff members. Governance is effective. Governors know the school well and have made a good contribution to the school's development, both in terms of raising achievement and in developing the school's Christian distinctiveness. However, they have not recently attended training for their role as governors of a church school. There are excellent and mutually beneficial partnerships with the church and the local community. The church makes a valuable contribution to collective worship and some of the school's global links, such as the link with Sri Lanka, have been formed with the help of the church.

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