

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Bishop Carpenter Church of England Academy

School Lane, North Newington, Banbury, OX15 6AQ

Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese	Oxford
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Date of academy conversion	1 August 2015
Name of multi-academy trust / federation	The Warriner Multi Academy Trust [MAT]
Date of inspection	29 March 2017
Date of last inspection	January 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Academy 142191
Headteacher	Claire Clark
Inspector's name and number	Lizzie McWhirter 244

School context

Currently there are 108 pupils on roll in this small rural primary school. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding or who have special educational needs is below average. There have been significant staffing changes since the last inspection, including the headteacher who was appointed in September 2015. In August 2015 the school converted to become a member of The Warriner Multi Academy Trust.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Bishop Carpenter as a Church of England school are good

- This is a nurturing Christian family community where the Christian ethos is very strong. Consequently, every child is known and valued, grows in confidence and achieves well.
- The partnership between church and school, notably through its parish priest, enriches the worshipping life of the school community.
- Religious education [RE] excites and challenges pupils who enthusiastically demonstrate good knowledge of the Christian story of salvation which enriches their spiritual journeys.
- The level of engagement with parents is good. As a result, parents speak of the generosity of staff who enable them to feel welcomed and partners in their children's education.

Areas to improve

- Extend the regular and rigorous monitoring of collective worship and RE by governors, including pupils' viewpoints, so that everyone is informed about these key aspects of Christian distinctiveness.
- Enable pupils to plan and lead collective worship to ensure they grow in their understanding of The Trinity, key times in the church year, and their founder, Bishop Carpenter.
- Deepen pupils' awareness of Christianity as a worldwide faith and their encounter with people of other faiths to support their spiritual and cultural development.

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

Bishop Carpenter's strong Christian ethos nurtures everyone through its commitment to caring, competence and confidence, known as the three C's. Underpinning all school policy and practice are its chosen Christian values of endeavour, respect, curiosity and love. All pupils in this small rural primary school are known and valued. They grow in confidence, thrive and achieve well. For example, Critical Thinking Days with the Warriner partnership support more able pupils. Relationships are excellent. There is a commitment to the wellbeing of all in this family community where all achievement, including musical success, is celebrated. Attendance is good because families want the caring, nurturing ethos of a church school. The school is very proud that over time such support has included families with significant needs, such as looked after children. Where behaviour may be challenging, the importance of forgiveness is emphasized, and having the courage to make mistakes, go forward and try again. All groups of pupils at Bishop Carpenter make good progress and the school is now the top performing primary school in the MAT. For example, last year's results in reading were very good, with 100% success rate. The school attributes this to the Christian values underpinning the support and intervention programmes for pupils as well as experienced staff modelling lessons for newer staff. This is because the church ethos ensures resilience for pupils within a nurturing environment. Worship, Christian values and RE all make a good contribution to the school's Christian character and to pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Links with Tanzania, Kenya and The Falklands all help raise pupils' global awareness. In addition, there are Salvadoran crosses on display throughout the school and a growing link with a former Korean local curate and his church in South Asia as well as singing songs from the worldwide church. Pupils and the school want to develop such links so that understanding of the worldwide Christian faith is deepened, nurturing pupils' spiritual and cultural development. RE is given high priority and makes a significant contribution to pupils' personal and spiritual lives.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Pupils say the most important part of worship is 'gathering together and being as a family'. They say, 'When we light the candles it feels like Jesus is in the room with us.' They go on to say, 'Getting closer to God teaches us to say sorry and confess for what we have done wrong.' Significantly, pupils comment that, 'Church services always feel part of the school community'. This is because there is a strong partnership between St Mary's Church and Bishop Carpenter, through their parish priest. Some pupils have taken their first communion and can explain the symbolism of bread and wine. Key festivals in the church year, such as Advent, Christingle, and Pentecost are marked in church, with leavers' service and picnic also taking place in the grounds of Broughton Castle. Parents enjoy these events as well as the family services which take place in school on Fridays. As the parish priest puts it, 'this is what we do so parents can be part of the life of the school and share its journey. This is the engagement of the church in its widest sense.' Pupils' knowledge of the church year is good, although they are less secure in their understanding of Ascension-tide or their founder, Bishop Carpenter. The school acknowledges this is as a future area for development. Worship time is a time to reflect and stop and think. For example, some pupils choose to stop and look at a Rembrandt painting which their parish priest used to illustrate the story of The Prodigal. Pupils say they 'get to know God more when we pray', with some recounting how they pray in their bedroom at home. When they reflect on the Bible stories they hear in worship, they are encouraged to, 'be yourself and do what you think is right to do'. Some pupils say, 'I usually go home and read my Bible after school.' Pupils use their own prayer books in class worship, which is more personal. They enjoy worship outdoors to commemorate Remembrance-tide. Pupils have experience of planning and leading worship, but pupils and adults alike want to do more. To this end, the Year 5 pupils are being trained to take on this leadership role. Currently, pupils say they like to choose Bible stories which are less familiar and they find 'intriguing'. In addition, the local 'Open the Book' team were recently trained at the school, and the parish priest has used 'Godly Play' to support class worship. Pupils are growing in their understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. They speak of God as a spirit and he lives in us. Jesus is also God and he is always near us, even when we are scared. He is like a guardian angel.' They are looking forward to exploring this mystery in a deeper way

with their parish priest, who speaks of The Trinity as 'a creator God, redeemer God and sustainer God'. Governors often attend worship, but recognise that they need to monitor worship more formally.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

RE is seen as an important part of the school week which excites and challenges pupils who enjoy this key subject with its themed weeks and focus days. Good teaching ensures pupils learn effectively about all faiths. Pupils' knowledge is very good. For example, they can explain Muslim dress in detail as well as relate the Christian story of salvation very well, especially the Christmas and Easter narrative. Key Stage 2 pupils explore the ways different faith traditions commemorate death. Pupils comment, 'our topic is funerals and we ask questions, such as 'what happens when we die?' Key Stage 1 pupils focus on the words of Jesus at the Last Supper, pondering how the disciples might have responded to their 'best friend going away to die' as well as the job Judas had to do. In addition, the parish priest has had good conversations about women bishops and how pupils might imagine their soul. Bishop Carpenter have begun to use 'Understanding Christianity' resources, with its enquiry based focus for learning. The RE subject leader carries out termly lesson observations and book scrutinies and attends training led by the diocesan RE adviser with other schools in the Warriner partnership. Monitoring and assessment is in place. Bishop Carpenter is now using a new format for reporting to parents, which includes levelled assessments. Progress and achievement is in line with other core subjects and in some cases, exceeds mathematics and English. The school has identified embedding the new RE resources, which are making a difference. The school also acknowledges that the school values are linked to RE lessons, but parents are more aware of the Bible references on the fortnightly newsletters. There is a programme of visits to the local mosque and synagogue in place and visitors, such as St Mary's parish priest, who is a welcome and regular guest. However, pupils say they enjoy such activities and the school identify they would like to extend this, to nurture pupils' spiritual and cultural development.

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

In two years the headteacher has worked hard, with the support of clergy, governors and staff to maintain the Christian values underpinning everything the school does. This is especially seen in the increase in pupils' confidence, one of the school's three C's. The support for families in need and the commitment to personal care and frequent interventions where necessary is very good. As a result, academic and personal achievement results in success. Governors are reflective in their practice and challenge where needed for future development. Areas from the previous inspection have been addressed. RE is integral to the school development plan. Both RE and collective worship are well led, managed and resourced and meet statutory requirements. New governors are involved in learning walks and are keen to be involved in the more formal monitoring, which the school has already identified they need to do more frequently for RE and collective worship. Governors attend training themselves and support staff in their leadership responsibilities for new and experienced staff alike. The relationship with the MAT is good as is the level of engagement with parents, who are amazed and impressed with the atmosphere of this very nurturing school. Parents especially praise the 'generosity of staff' who have welcomed them so they feel partners in their children's education. They also speak highly of how the older pupils care for younger ones and of how each child is valued. Parents attend coffee mornings at school and cite how training is provided for needs, such as supporting a family whose child was diagnosed with diabetes. Parents also say their pupils come home and relate their interest in other faiths. Staff too speak highly of the love they have experienced here and new members of staff say they have found Bishop Carpenter 'incredibly warm and welcoming'. Church and community links are good and support Bishop Carpenter's foundation.

SIAMS report March 2017 Bishop Carpenter CE Academy, North Newington, Banbury OX15 6AQ