

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Morville Church of England Primary Academy

Morville, near Bridgnorth, Shropshire WV16 4RJ	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese	Hereford
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Date of academy conversion	September 2014
Name of multi-academy	Bishop Anthony Educational Trust
Date of inspection	15 June 2017
Date of last inspection	2 July 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Academy (former Voluntary Controlled) 141180
Executive Headteacher	Sue Blackburn
Inspector's name and number	Andrew Teale 770

School context

Morville is a small academy in Bridgnorth with 44 children on role. The school became a sponsored academy in 2014. The academy is sponsored by the Hereford Diocesan Multi Academy Trust, known as the Bishop Anthony Educational Trust (BAET). The academy has an executive headteacher who also leads Coalbrookdale & Ironbridge CE Primary School. That school is not a member of the multi academy trust. The two schools have worked closely together since 2014 and a number of staff carry out work in both schools. Children are currently taught in two classes. The academy has not yet received an OfSTED inspection.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Morville CE Primary Academy as a Church of England school are good

- Morville provides a nurturing and supportive environment for children and families underpinned by Christian values and strong links with the local community.
- The close partnership between the school, local church and clergy significantly enhances the Christian life, especially the worship, of the school.
- The Christian ethos is evident and is clearly having impact upon the whole school community.

Areas to improve

- Plan more frequent experiences within the curriculum, to provide opportunities for learners to experience enriched reflection and spirituality beyond worship time.
- Complete full implementation of the new Understanding Christianity programme in order to improve teaching and learning in religious education (RE).
- Make effective use of monitoring and assessment in religious education in order to facilitate increased achievement levels for all pupils.

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

The school's mission and practice makes it explicit that core Christian values of respect, thoughtfulness, friendship, trust and perseverance are central to the work of the school. These have a clear impact on the academic and personal development of all pupils. Children are taught as part of the 'Morville Way' to treat others as they would like to be treated. Their excellent behaviour towards each other at playtimes and in lesson times shows how they embed this into their daily lives. The relationships between different year groups are extremely strong and this contributes powerfully to the nurturing ethos that sits at the heart of the school's distinctive character. 'We are like this one, big family', reported a year 6 child. 'We use our Christian values outside with one another. We are kind and respect each other a lot'. Morville is clearly a school which values all God's children.

Children talk with confidence about how the school's core values affect their lives in school and are able to draw inspiration from Bible stories. One child clearly explained how the parable of the Good Samaritan teaches us that we mustn't judge people by their appearance or what we've heard about them. Attendance is high because children enjoy coming to school. Links with the partner school have very clearly had positive effects on staff development and training. This leads to significant improvements in the achievements of learners across the school. The village and church community clearly cherishes its school and makes a very important contribution to the experiences of learners. The children also evidently bring a vibrancy and energy to the church community. Parents and children report that, though problems are rare within the school, those that do occur are dealt with quickly and sensitively by staff. One parent reported that, 'children know about the core beliefs which sit at the heart of the Christian faith.' There are some engaging displays, such as the values board in the hall, which encourage spirituality through consideration of values themes. The school has made the decision to have one central reflection space for the school rather than separate spaces in classrooms or other areas. This has meant that opportunities for age-appropriate spiritual reflection and prayer outside of worship are limited. Moral and cultural development of children is clearly a strength. Some curricular experiences are provided, including a strong Forest School programme, which are used to encourage thoughtful contemplation and focus on the natural world. The creation of spiritually enriching opportunities, in a distinctively Christian sense, is still an area for development. Children are empathetic towards the needs of others and are determined to make a positive difference where they can. Children raised an impressive £600 towards Sports Relief through a sponsored walk with the 'Asthma Dragon'.

Religious education is an important part of the curriculum but standards in RE do not yet match those in other subjects. The school does not yet offer rich opportunities to learn through Christianity and other faiths. This limits the development of children's understanding of their place within a diverse world.

The children's survey and discussions showed that they value the distinctive ethos they experience in school and greatly enjoy their termly visits to St Gregory's church, as well as the work with the ministry team. Good achievement is supported by a determined focus by all staff on the learning needs of individuals and the creation of a purposeful and nurturing environment. Within this, the children feel safe and cared for. Governors accurately describe the school as being at the very core of the local community.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

The whole school community is included in a worship cycle, which centres on its close partnership with St Gregory's Church and the ministry team. The incumbent plays a central role in the organisation and planning of themes, which underpin the rich opportunities to worship in the school. Parents are welcomed to worship with the children in church for the Anglican festival services and high attendance ensures these always take place within a full church. The newly-established, whole school Christingle service was a popular event with children, staff and the church community. Children's work is regularly displayed in the church and this further strengthens the links between the church and school communities. A wide range of adults and children are given opportunities to plan and lead worship. Children now experience worship delivered by members of the wider community, through the new 'Open the Book' programme. Children take an active role in preparing the assembly hall for worship everyday. The school has, in response to self-evaluation, changed its music for worship so that more distinctively Christian songs contribute positively to acts of worship. Collective worship at Morville nourishes the prayer life of the community. Children are comfortable when joining in with prayers and are able to recite the traditional form of the Lord's Prayer with confidence. Prayer outside collective worship, such as at lunchtime or in personal moments of reflection, is currently not well enough developed to secure an outstanding judgement for worship. The leadership team, with valued support from the incumbent, maintains an effective coordination and strategic overview of worship. School worship provides a strong framework for children's understanding of Anglican practise within a broader context of Christian traditions. Children show some understanding of God as the Holy Trinity. The monitoring cycle for the different forms of worship in school is not yet fully systematic and sufficiently rigorous. The

school has made valuable contributions to larger, county-wide, worship events such as the 100th Anniversary of the Battle of the Somme Remembrance Service. The life of the school and the behaviour of all members of the community is shaped and influenced by the strong worship traditions.

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

Conversion to a sponsored academy within the Bishop Anthony Education Trust (BAET), close partnership with Coalbrookdale and Ironbridge CE Academy and skilled leadership from the executive headteacher are clearly having a transformative effect on the school. Parents report that the changes have given them 'confidence in a stronger structure, without the loss of the small school, family feel'. Sponsorship by the BAET includes access to specialist diocesan training and regular support from church school improvement advisors. This strengthens leadership and provides effective monitoring of the much-improved progress of learners. Continued staffing changes within the small team means that leadership continues to evolve. Governors, in partnership with the executive headteacher, are directing these changes to good strategic effect in ways which reinforce the Christian foundations of this school. School documentation, and the recently re-designed website, articulate a vision for the school which is rooted in Christian values and the Church of England's own vision for education. Parents therefore recognise the distinctive Christian ethos and this is a factor which influences their choice of school. Morville encourages children to make a meaningful contribution to church school leadership and they have played an active part in choosing the core values to be at the heart of its distinctive character. The school also engages in careful self-evaluation with consideration of pupil views as part of this process. Not all areas identified as priorities for the development of the school's Christian character feature prominently within the school development plan. The school is careful during staff appointments to ensure that successful applicants recognise the importance of the school's distinctive church school character. Christian values, such as friendship and perseverance, have contributed strongly to the leadership of school and the relationships which exist between key stakeholders. The work with the partner school has created valuable opportunities to develop future leaders of church schools through the cooperative school improvement work across the two establishments.

The school recognises that the quality of provision in RE remains an area for development. Leaders have recently attended the diocesan 'Understanding Christianity' training and the school is at the early stage of introducing this programme, including its associated assessment materials.

Worship provides the hub for involvement of the church and wider community in school life. The leadership team also recognises that the further development of spirituality beyond worship time, into all areas of school life, is a priority. Plans for leaders to attend diocesan training on this aspect of church school life are now in place.