**National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report**

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| **Banks St Stephen’s Church of England Primary School** Greaves Hall Avenue  Banks  Southport PR9 8BL  **Previous SIAMS grade: Good Current inspection grade: Good**  **Diocese: Liverpool**  Local authority: Lancashire  Date of inspection: 14th January 2016  Date of last inspection: 3rd November 2010  School’s unique reference number: 119384  Headteacher: Sue Kenny  Inspector’s name and number: Stephen Burrow 622 |
| **School context**  Banks St Stephen’s CE is a smaller than average primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium funding is similar to the national average with the proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs being above average. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average but rising. |
| **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Banks St Stephen’s, as a Church of England school are good**  • The school environment enhances pupils’ spiritual and moral development through visible  Christian symbols, celebrations of pupils’ RE work and opportunities for prayer and reflection  throughout the day.   * The care, nurture and guidance of all pupils, where each pupil is valued as an individual, show the distinct Christian ethos of the school in action.   • Christian values are clearly expressed and demonstrated by pupils and staff, underpinning the  positive relationships between all members of the community and the pupils' excellent  behaviour.  • The strong leadership of the headteacher is based upon Christian values and ensures that pupils  and staff maximise their personal and academic achievement.   * Collective worship, through its Christian messages and daily opportunities for written reflection encourages pupils to think about their own faith and has a clear impact on their spiritual development. |
| **Areas to improve**   * Establish ways for pupils to be more involved in the planning of worship, so that their ideas and thoughts can be shared and discussed with a view to enriching the experience of worship. * Engage pupils with the Christian idea of God as the Trinity so they can talk about this belief with some degree of understanding*.* * Improve procedures for governors to monitor and evaluate church school issues to enable them to be more fully involved in future developments. |
| **The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is outstanding at meeting the needs of all learners**  The school’s loving and caring Christian ethos creates a secure context within which all pupils are enabled to give of their best. There is a strong focus on Christian values, which are exemplified and taught by the staff and displayed on the ‘Christian values tree’ as a constant reminder to everyone. Pupils, in turn, mirror the excellent role modelling of staff and as a result, relationships and behaviour in school are outstanding. Pupils treat each other and all adults with great respect and care. They feel happy and well cared for and feel safe to speak openly knowing that their views will be listened to and valued. One pupil said, ‘Our teachers show us how to live out the morals and Christian values that we are taught.’ Through worship, daily school life and a well planned curriculum, pupils have a clear understanding of diversity. This is reinforced in RE lessons which, in addition to enhancing the Christian character of the school, teaches pupils to respect the cultures and beliefs of others and enhances their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The well used reflection areas and prayer boxes in all classrooms, also make a very significant contribution towards pupils' spiritual development. Teachers know each child as a unique individual and ensure that their academic and personal needs are fully met. Pupils are supported extremely well in their learning. Attainment has risen over the last few years and pupils make good progress from their starting points. As a result of this caring and nurturing Christian environment, pupils enjoy coming to school and feel valued. This is reflected in their good attendance and punctuality. Consequently, pupils leave Banks St Stephen’s CE school as well adjusted, happy and caring individuals who have been well prepared for the next stage in their education. Because of the schools’ strong emphasis on caring for each other, pupils enjoy raising money for charities such as Comic Relief and Alder Hey Children’s Hospital. Pupils’ views are taken seriously and they have an important role in the decision making process through their active involvement in the school council. Stimulating displays around the school lift the spirit and provide both reflection and discussion opportunities, which contribute to a deeper spiritual understanding of Christian life. This is underpinned and reinforced through Christian Values lived out in daily life. |
| **The impact of collective worship on the school community is good**  Collective worship with strong Christian foundations is central to the daily life of the school, driving forward its Christian values. Through the messages given in worship, the school promotes its explicit Christian vision and provides good opportunities for pupils to encounter God. Worship is well planned with themes developed around the school’s Christian values, the Bible and the teaching of Jesus. Pupils celebrate Christian festivals and are taught about those of other world faiths. . Their good understanding of Bible stories allows them to explain Jesus’ place at the heart of the Christian faith. Worship deepens pupils’ knowledge and understanding of the life and teachings of Jesus and reinforces the core Christian values of the school. As a result, pupils enjoy and highly value their worship experiences. The differing needs of pupils are met through a range of whole school, key stage, class worship and worship in church. Pupils are involved in the delivery of worship but there is an untapped opportunity for them to become more involved with the planning. Worship is enhanced by the reverent and reflective atmosphere created by pupils entering and leaving quietly, thus allowing them time to prepare for and reflect on the theme. During the inspection pupils were involved with Bible readings and Year 6 pupils took responsibility for the music and presentation. Worship is enhanced by a stimulating table, cross and candle, which contribute to their focus and spiritual development. All staff participate in worship and support pupils in enhancing their spiritual awareness. Prayer and reflection are key features and pupils have opportunities for prayer throughout each day with special spaces around the school, including classroom reflection areas and a quiet area outside, where they pray and reflect. Pupils say that in talking to God, ‘We feel happy and it makes us better people who treat others as we want to be treated.’ The school has procedures in place to monitor and evaluate the impact of worship. Pupils place their evaluations of each day’s worship on the ‘Reflection wall’ in the hall so that these can be shared and used to influence on-going developments. At the moment, however, pupils’ understanding of the Trinity is not yet well developed. |
| **The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school is good**  The headteacher, through her strong personal Christian faith, articulates with commitment a strong vision expressly rooted in Christian teaching. This informs policy and practice in the school. She is well supported in her vision by the senior leadership team and ensures that all staff are committed to developing each pupil in the widest sense. School leaders prioritise worship as central to the life of the school and ensure that RE plays an important part in the school’s curriculum. Governors have a strong commitment to the school’s Christian foundation. They receive regular RE and worship updates from the headteacher as well as a monthly newsletter giving information on the Christian value of the month. However, governors do not have rigorous procedures in place to monitor and evaluate church school issues effectively in order to be more fully involved in future plans and developments. All staff are inducted well into what is expected of them in relation to promoting the Christian ethos of the school and they regularly consider the impact on pupils of living out the mission statement. This is supported by relevant in service training to develop staff as leaders of a church school. There is a clear focus on meeting the needs of the individual child through a well developed and effective self-evaluation process that places the uniqueness of each child at the heart of school improvement. Strong links between the school, the church and the local community exert a positive influence on the lives of all members of the school family and provide mutual support and a sense of belonging. Staff are encouraged to contribute to decisions and their ideas are valued. They have strong supportive relationships with parents who appreciate the way in which the school supports them and reaches out into the community. Parents feel that their opinions and views are valued and listened to and that problems are dealt with quickly and sensitively. They actively support the work of the school through social and fund raising events. They agree that the school’s Christian ethos is a prominent aspect of school life, allowing their children to explore the meaning of faith and belief openly. As one parent said, ‘God is the centre of this school.’ Another parent added that the school encourages their children to never give up. |

SIAMS report January 2016 Banks St Stephen’s CofE (Controlled) Primary School, Southport PR9 8BL