



Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

COALBROOKDALE AND IRONBRIDGE CE (VOLUNTARY AIDED) PRIMARY SCHOOL	Dale End Coalbrookdale Telford Shropshire TL8 7DS
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Hereford
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local authority	Telford and Wrekin
Date of inspection	13 October 2016
Date of last inspection	29 November 2011
School's unique reference number	123542
Headteacher	Sue Blackburn
Inspector's name and number	Karen Surrall 842

School context

Coalbrookdale is an average sized primary school with 216 pupils on roll. The number of children with special educational needs and disabilities is above average although those attracting the pupil premium is below the national average. The headteacher has been in place since 2009. Attainment and progress for all groups of pupils is generally good. The school has strong links with the local churches, including Open the Book volunteers. The school's headteacher also acts as an executive headteacher for another local church school.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Coalbrookdale and Ironbridge CE (VA) School as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The strong leadership of the headteacher, supported by an impassioned staff team and governors, who drives forward change so that all pupils achieve well. This has a significant impact on learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The 'Coalbrookdale Way', as laid out in the children's passports and understood by all to be clearly based on Jesus' teachings. This has a very positive impact on the behaviour and aspirations of all learners.
- A curriculum, that is underpinned by a clear understanding of the school's Christian values, that deeply influences the children's daily lives.

Areas to improve

- Enhance the school environment, both inside and out, to provide both opportunities and stimulus for individual prayer, so that pupils are able to form a personal spirituality.
- Enable staff to develop as leaders in collective worship and religious education (RE) so that there are substantial benefits to the current leadership of the school.
- Broaden the children's experience of worship, particularly through visits to places of worship, so that they have a clear understanding of the wide scope of Christianity as a worldwide faith, of the Anglican tradition and of other faiths.

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

Children achieve well at Coalbrookdale due to the strong vision of the headteacher who leads a highly committed staff and with a supportive governing body. The school's distinctive Christian character has been forged through a consultative model where all stakeholders believe in the direction of the school. People are generous with their time and energy so that pupils' lives and achievements are at the heart of the school's work.

The 'Coalbrookdale Way' successfully underpins every aspect of the school's daily life. All stakeholders have a clear understanding of how 'Respect' is based on the teachings of Jesus in the Gospel of Mark. This shows learners how this commandment to 'love others as yourself' can be lived out both at home and school. Children are very clear about this saying 'Jesus respected God and his friends and we should respect our teachers as he did'. This core value of respect is supported by other Christian values, such as love, kindness and perseverance and regular discussions are planned for in lesson times. This readily supports the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC). Learners have an impressive understanding of Christian values and readily attribute these to the life of Christ.

The internal environment is vibrant and appealing. The entrance area, whilst welcoming, does not celebrate the school's Christian distinctiveness and this is a lost opportunity in an important area of the school. Similarly, the website does not overtly promote the school's Christian heritage, although there are plenty of images showing the children at worship. There are limited places for quiet reflection within the grounds and reflection areas within the classrooms, whilst attractive, do not always enable pupils to develop their prayer life. As a result, there are limited occasions for pupils to develop a personal spirituality.

Behaviour throughout the school is excellent and has been significantly improved by the introduction of the Coalbrookdale passport, which focuses on a wide range of behaviours, both at home and at school and is based on the school's core Christian value of respect. One parent commented that it has given the children 'one clear standard that they can aspire to'. As a result, pupils are very clear about what expectations are and how they can achieve them. RE makes a positive contribution to the Christian character of the school and to pupils' SMSC understanding. Where lessons focus on the links between faiths children are excited by their lessons and all can readily articulate the importance of RE in their lives, both now and in the future.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship is planned systematically and is both biblically based and centred on the person of Jesus. It reflects not only the school's core value of respect but a variety of other Christian values such as kindness and perseverance.

There is some understanding of Anglican liturgy within collective worship with three candles lit at the beginning of each worship time. Children understand that this represents God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. One children explained this as 'they aren't each other but they are God'. This understanding is not universal, with some children relating the word 'trinity' to the local church; Holy Trinity. Because worship time is seen as 'assembly' other aspects of Anglican practice are not understood by the children as such. For example, the different cloths that have been produced by the children are seen as representing the seasons of the year, rather than having any relationship to the church calendar.

Learners enjoy worship time, particularly the Open the Book sessions which are imaginatively led and enable learners to make clear links between the Bible stories portrayed, the school's core value and their own lives. Pupils enjoy taking part in these sessions and lead year group assemblies regularly. Pupils are also encouraged to lead worship times independently and these increasingly include prayer and a Bible reading. As yet there is no effective evaluation of worship by pupils that leads to change. The visitors' book that was instituted after the last inspection is used by parents and pupils although its use in the monitoring or evaluation of worship is limited. Whilst there are several times of prayer throughout the school day, the depth and breadth of prayer as a part of daily life is not readily understood by the majority of learners so that they do not have any sense of being on a spiritual journey.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

The school uses the locally agreed syllabus of Telford and Wrekin to teach RE. This syllabus makes very effective links between all faiths and encourages learners to consider some 'Big Questions' focussing on the similarities and differences of world faiths. This results in pupils who are able to articulate their thoughts clearly and the school's development plan has highlighted the place of RE in the development of reasoning skills. Children's understanding of Christianity as a world faith and the role of the Anglican church as a worldwide organisation within it are limited.

Standards of attainment for the majority of learners are at least in line with national expectations although the school's own monitoring procedures have highlighted a lack of challenge in some tasks set. This results in written work in some classes that does not truly reflect pupils' capabilities. New assessment systems have been introduced this year and the headteacher, who leads RE, has accurately highlighted the need to include pupils' own assessment of their work in the process.

Learners generally enjoy RE, particularly where teaching encourages more discussion and evaluation. However, a significant minority find some RE lessons less stimulating than others and this hampers their progress in the subject. Where teaching is good or better, progress is high and pupils are regularly encouraged to reflect on how what they are learning impacts on their daily lives.

The headteacher has a clear vision for RE and the subject is well led. The purpose of RE is well understood by learners of all ages and contributes well to the school's Christian values and to learners SMSC development.

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

Leaders at all levels are clear about their vision for the school as a church school. It is embedded in the 'Coalbrookdale Way' which fully supports the school's mission statement: 'We are a Christian school where every child matters, is valued and is able to shine'. This is seen around the school and on the website, although not on the front page. Governors and staff readily understand the messages given in the Church of England document 'Valuing All God's Children' and this is reflected in policies.

A governor spoke eloquently of everybody being made in the image of God and therefore they need to be shown respect. Respect is at the heart of Coalbrookdale's work and is demonstrated in the standards of achievement at the school. Parents speak glowingly of the pupils excellent all round education and pupils report that 'teachers encourage you. They push us hard to do our best and to shine through our work'.

Regular, effective links with the school's Christian values are well planned for across a broad and distinctive curriculum enabling learners to develop their SMSC understanding well. As a result, pupils, parents, staff and governors can directly attribute the school's work to its distinctive Christian character.

Self-evaluation and monitoring are strategic and effective. 'The Coalbrookdale Way' was born out of governor monitoring which noted that behaviour was no longer as good as it had once been. To address this all stakeholders were involved in drawing up a set of wide ranging goals for the children. These focus not only on academic and social behaviour but also encourage the children to keep a healthy body and to try new things, helping to prepare them for the next stage in their education. Consequently, learners achieve well and the school's Christian values contribute fully to the behaviour, attitudes and SMSC development of learners.

The school has formed a mutually beneficial partnership with another local church school, sharing executive leadership. Both RE and collective worship are led by the headteacher who has a clear vision for these areas. However, the school now has the capacity to broaden the leadership team so that the headteacher can focus on her other responsibilities. There are excellent links with parents, local churches and the diocese, who ably support the school's vision and mission in the wider community. The school meets its statutory duty for RE and collective worship and has met the development points from the last inspection.

SIAMS report October 2016 Coalbrookdale and Ironbridge CE VA Primary School TF8 7DS