



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

### **Box Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School**

High Street, Box, Corsham, Wiltshire, SN13 8NF

**Previous SIAS grade: Outstanding**

**Current SIAMS grade: Outstanding**

**Diocese: Bristol**

Local authority: Wiltshire

Date of inspection: 25 June 2015

Date of last inspection: 9 July 2010

School's unique reference number: 126302

Headteacher: Jo French

Inspector's name and number: Daphne Spitzer NS No 37

#### **School context**

Box Church of England Primary School serves the large village of Box and surrounding areas close to the city of Bath. There are 180 children on roll arranged in six mixed age classes. The numbers of children with special educational needs and/or physical disabilities are below the national average as are the numbers of children eligible to receive Pupil Premium. The majority of children are from white British heritage families whilst a small minority speak English as an additional language. The restricted external space has recently been supplemented by the addition of a large garden area and good use is made of the adjoining village recreational land.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Box VC Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding**

- The high quality of children's spiritual awareness promoted by the school's distinctive Christian character has a strong impact on the whole life of the school
- The promotion of the school's Christian values, in particular the value of friendship, has a significant impact on children's academic achievement, personal and spiritual development
- The visionary leadership of the headteacher, staff team, clergy and governors, drives the continuous improvement of the school's distinctive Christian character thereby raising its impact

#### **Areas to improve**

- Introduce reflective journals for individual children to record and share their depth of thought and beliefs in order to promote and track their developing spiritual awareness
- Involve parents in the church school self-evaluation process so that their views are included and feedback is widened

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

Box Church of England Primary School is an inclusive, warm and welcoming Christian community. A set of core values have been identified that are rooted in Christian teaching and are integral to the whole life of the school. These values are having a significant impact on children's high academic achievement, personal development and well-being. Children talk enthusiastically of the role of key values of compassion, perseverance and friendship in promoting their learning and link them to the parables of the Good Samaritan and the Lost Sheep Relationships are outstanding because children say they are built on the values of friendship, forgiveness and compassion. Children understand the need to show forgiveness in maintaining strong friendships and link the value to Jesus' friendship with Peter, saying 'God will forgive, always'. Children have a mature understanding of the value of peace describing it as 'friendship on a bigger scale'; an example of the highly developed understanding of spirituality possessed by the school community. This is the result of the way planning for the development of spirituality is integral to the whole curriculum and is having a strong impact on all aspects of learning. Children are able to think deeply about big questions such the opposing creation beliefs of religion and science. They are able to develop and justify their beliefs on matters of faith in a highly personal way and disagree politely with opposing views. They speak about their developing sense of knowing themselves which enhances self-belief and optimises learning. Very effective teaching in religious education (RE) enables children to recognise and identify how their Christian values are common to people of other faiths and none. This is a result of the outstanding way that spirituality is promoted; enabling children to develop a strong sense of mutual respect and tolerance towards other people as well as positive attitudes towards people of diverse communities.

**The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding**

Worship is distinctively Christian and of central importance in the daily life of the school. This is due to the outstanding way that worship promotes both distinctive Christian values and spirituality. An excellent class led act of worship responding to the big question 'How can we strengthen our friendships?' was a good example of the way these two aspects of worship are closely interlinked. Children used their good knowledge of Bible stories to demonstrate the relevance of the Christian value of friendship to life both in and outside school. Children are engaged, participate well and lead worship regularly in a variety of ways. The uses of simple liturgy, and the sharing of peace often led by children, are examples of how they are developing a good understanding of Anglican tradition. Opportunities for the school to celebrate the main Christian festivals in church are good and have been enhanced by the recent Trinity Week service. Worship on this occasion included a blessing and an introduction to communion. It was led by the local ordained minister who is also a member of staff and plays a key role in the school's worship programme. Children's understanding of the Trinity is outstanding. This is the result of the recent Trinity themed week. The high quality of learning is evident from children's individual prayers and artwork displayed. Worship is always inclusive and often inspirational; a variety of leaders including clergy, different groups and different settings ensure worship meets children's needs very well. In particular children say they enjoy class worship because it promotes lively prolonged discussions around spirituality when they can contribute their thoughts in a secure and supportive setting. This is a good example of the way worship encourages children to think deeply and develop their own personal beliefs. Worship is led exceptionally well; planning is innovative and original. Children's big questions are central to the planning process as are their evaluations of the worship programme.

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

The school's distinctive Christian character is of the highest quality, is deeply embedded and has a significant impact on the whole school community. The headteacher's strong Christian

vision and the staff team's commitment to this vision are the driving force at the heart of the school's success and ongoing improvement as a church school. Under her inspirational leadership, since the last inspection, the Christian vision has grown from strength to strength; for instance, by the way that spirituality now underpins the recently reviewed school's vision and the leadership's desire to take this to a higher level. Parents are very supportive of the school's distinctive Christian character and say they value the wide range of opportunities including spiritual and cultural provided by the school. Although informal feedback is regularly sought and given, parents do not formally contribute to the school's self-evaluation process as a church school. The governors are fully involved in all aspects of the life of the school and as a result the church school's self-evaluation is well considered, rigorous and very effective. For example, the worship programme is monitored thoroughly by two foundation governors, one of whom is the local ordained minister; other governors also contribute to this monitoring. One of the foundation governors regularly holds meetings with the RE subject leader and formally visit the school to monitor the impact of the school's distinctive Christian character. Issues raised have been addressed and the school has accurately identified areas for development. Professional development is regarded highly at Box and has had substantial benefits. For instance, whole school training days on spirituality and the Trinity have had a significant impact. Religious education is an inspirational aspect of the curriculum and led exceptionally well. The subject leader has very effectively led the adoption of a new scheme of work which is focussed on enquiry skills as well as embedding the teaching of RE in a cross curricular approach. The school's partnership with parents and the church are strong. Parents contribute very well to the life of the school and say they welcome the opportunity to join the school for worship, known as family assembly each week. They say it provides a good opportunity to understand the importance of worship in the life of the school as well as its profound impact on their children. The school welcomes initiatives which strengthen the school's partnership with the local community. For instance, a recent local charity funded enterprise has enabled elderly people to join the school to enjoy children's productions at Christmas.

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