

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Brabourne Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

School Lane, Brabourne, Ashford, Kent TN25 5LQ	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese	Canterbury
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Local authority	Kent
Date of inspection	20 March 2018
Date of last inspection	6 March 2013
Type of school and unique reference number	118663
Headteacher	Andrew Stapley
Inspector's name and number	Elizabeth Pettersen 557

School context

Brabourne Church of England Primary School is a small school with 99 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are White British and come from the local villages on the outskirts of Ashford. The number of pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding is below the national average. The number of pupils with special education needs is just above the national average. Since the previous denominational inspection, a new headteacher has been appointed. In July 2017, the school began working collaboratively with the CARE (Collaborative Approach to Rural Education) foundation trust, a charitable company limited by guarantee. This formalised an already established collaboration of local schools to support strategic development. There is currently an interregnum within the local parish church.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Brabourne primary school as a Church of England school are good

- The Christian values of respect, responsibility, courage and hope are firmly embedded in all aspects of school life. These values impact on very good pupil behaviour and positive attitudes to learning by all.
- The headteacher, ably supported by the governing body, has a clear vision for the strategic development of Brabourne as a church school. This is effectively shared with pupils, staff, parents and the local community who are very supportive of the school's ethos.
- Pupils' spirituality is developed through a range of experiences including a broad curriculum, outdoor learning, trips and charitable fundraising. As a result, pupils' well-being and overall attainment is good.

Areas to improve

- Allow times of quiet and stillness within worship to enable pupils to reflect on the stories and questions posed.
- To widen opportunities for pupils to be involved in the planning and leadership of whole school worship so that their role in worship leadership is increased.
- To work collaboratively with other local schools to moderate the quality of teaching and learning in religious education (RE) so that developments and improvements in the teaching of RE can be sustained.
- Include in the RE and collective worship policies how monitoring is to take place to ensure ongoing and sustained development of these areas.
- Articulate clearly the impact of the school's Christian values on pupils and on the whole life of the school in self-evaluation documentation in order to keep this as a focus for future school developments.

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

Christian values of respect, responsibility, courage and hope are firmly embedded in all aspects of school life. Pupils have a secure understanding of how the values link to key Bible stories and the impact that this has on their learning. For example, the story of Noah's ark is linked to the importance of never giving up if you are to achieve, and the Easter story demonstrates courage to do something that is difficult. As a result, all pupils, whatever their ability, are achieving well. The school meets the floor standards set by the government for attainment at Key Stage 2 with attainment being above this. Pupils acknowledge the impact that an understanding of the values has on their wellbeing. Displays in each classroom illustrate the pupils' aspirations, for example, to have the courage to be confident near dogs or not to be afraid of the dark. Pupils express a great sense of achievement when they have to overcome a fear or meet a challenging personal target. The behaviour policy is clearly focused on the importance of respect. This is visible in relationships with all stakeholders. Parents value the care and nurture of their children in a safe environment that values the individual. They are confident that they can approach the school about any issue and know that it will be managed sensitively and effectively. Pupils consider that they are one big family, with all ages happy to play together. They are adamant that no bullying takes place within their school. Charitable fundraising is given a high priority within the school. The school supports international, national and local charitable work. This is often due to the inspiration of an individual pupil within the school. Pupils recognise the need to support others who are not as lucky as they are. A focus on developing the wellbeing of the whole child has ensured that the school follows a broad curriculum. This includes outdoor learning where pupils take part in a variety of curriculum linked practical activities. This gives pupils a deepening sense of awe and wonder in God's world as well as impacting on independence and team work. Special themed weeks, such as the RE and art week together with a variety of school visitors, add to pupils' enjoyment of learning. The study of different faiths within RE supports pupils' understanding of difference and tolerance of all. Links with schools in Bangladesh and France have nurtured pupils' understanding of our multi-cultural world. The staff team works well together and demonstrates the school's Christian values within their teaching and in the award of values certificates to pupils. Pupils express confidence in their teachers, testifying that, "They say we are welcome here, which is a very Christian thing to do." As a result, the school's Christian values are lived out by all members of the school community. Pupils demonstrate a deepening personal prayer life and an understanding of the importance of prayer. They say that prayer is a time to rely on God to help them in life. They also consider that prayer represents their respect to God; it is giving something back to him as he has helped them. Pupils like to visit the spiritual garden as it provides them with a quiet space to reflect.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship is seen as a central part of the school day by all pupils. They appreciate the opportunities to take part and lead, thus meeting a key development point from the previous denominational inspection. Pupils enjoy being involved in the role play to illustrate stories and are eager to answer questions. On occasions, they have led a whole act of worship, for example, the Christmas service in church. However, pupils are eager to take an increased lead, expressing a wish to plan and organise daily whole school worship on a regular basis. They are excited and enthused by class worship which provides them with a greater opportunity to be more involved. They consider this worship to be fun and creative. It deepens their spirituality enabling them to reflect on Bible stories and on the impact that these have on their personal life. The school follows the diocesan planning for worship, adapting these plans to develop an understanding of the school's values. The Anglican tradition is apparent in worship with the lighting of a candle, the saying of liturgy and the use of Bible stories. Reflective questions are posed during worship, but the absence of a time of stillness does not allow pupils time for personal reflection and application of the themes. The prayer life of the school is developed well through worship. One pupil writes a prayer to link to the theme for the worship which is read out to the whole school each day. Pupils are familiar with the Lord's prayer and the school prayer. Enthusiastic singing, accompanied by pupils playing guitars, enriches the worship. Pupils have an age appropriate understanding about God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The school council has discussed worship which has led to improvements, such as the inclusion of more acting and prayers which are written and said by pupils.

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

The school is led with commitment and clear vision by the headteacher. He demonstrates the values that the school upholds in his personal conduct, which provides confidence by all in his leadership. The headteacher is ably assisted by a dedicated and enthusiastic governing body that challenges and ensures that the school is focused on its Christian foundation. The Ethics and Culture committee, set up to meet a recommendation from the previous denominational inspection, monitors the Christian character of the school effectively. The school has an accurate understanding of its strengths and development areas. At present, it does not articulate the impact of the Christian

values and its developments fully in documentation. The development of the school as a church school is fostered by good links with the local community. For example, the local Women's Institute has worked with pupils to knit blankets for premature babies. This enabled pupils to understand the importance of doing something practical for those in need. The parish is currently without a priest. Contact with the church is sustained through the regular visit of a local lay reader to worship and the promotion of activities such as Messy Church. Parents are very supportive of the school, being active in fund raising as well as supporting school events and worship. The school has sought support from the Diocese in the development of the teaching of RE. The introduction of the new Understanding Christianity resources is developing pupils' ability to deepen their knowledge and application of Bible stories. All staff foster open dialogue and questioning about the Bible stories. As one pupil described it, "We don't judge people, we value what others think." As a result, pupils are confident to express their opinions and ideas. The school has established collaborative working with other local schools through the CARE foundation. This enables subject leaders to work together. Although the school carries out RE book scrutiny and lesson observations, this is currently not moderated by other schools to agree standards and quality of work. The importance of sustaining the Christian character of the school is reflected in recent staff appointments. Policies are in place for RE and collective worship, but at present do not state how each area is to be monitored. The school meets statutory requirements for collective worship and the teaching of RE.

SIAMS report March 2018 Brabourne Church of England Primary School, Brabourne, Ashford, Kent TN21 5LQ