



Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Braunston Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary Academy	
Barby Lane, Braunston, Daventry, Northamptonshire NN11 7HF	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Peterborough
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Date of academy conversion	July 2014.
Name of multi-academy trust	Peterborough Diocese Education Trust
Date of inspection	8 February 2017
Date of last inspection	24 November 2011
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary controlled primary 121963
Headteachers	Sue Rigby, Gwenda Barker
Inspector's name and number	Janet McMurdo 529

School context

Braunston CE VC Primary Academy is a slightly smaller than average primary school with the large majority of pupils from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) or in receipt of the pupil premium grant are below the national average for primary schools. The proportion of pupils with additional money to support the provision for their special educational needs is average. Since September 2016 the school has operated with a co-headteacher structure as the long serving headteacher moves to retirement and her successor develops into her new role.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Braunston CE Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding

- Deeply embedded Christian values inspire the school community with a love of the Lord and their learning and give rise to excellent behaviour and relationships throughout the school.
- The strategic leadership of the staff and governors is highly effective in promoting the Christian vision of the school.
- The school's involvement in the national 'What if Learning Character Education Project 2016' project has ensured a whole school commitment to strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development.
- Well-embedded links with the church support the clear Christian ethos of the school.

Areas to improve

- Develop the opportunities for prayer and reflection across the school so that their importance at times other than collective worship is widely recognised.
- Increase the regular involvement of learners in planning, leading and evaluating acts of worship to strengthen their leadership in this key aspect of the school.

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

Braunston is a very strong cohesive church school community where Christian values are key influencers in all of the decisions. A strong Christian ethos is evident in all aspects of the school. As a result the behaviour of the children across the school is exemplary, as evidenced both in lessons and in collective worship. The children demonstrate a very supportive caring attitude and give each other the space and time to think and therefore to succeed. The link between children's behaviour and the school values is explicit in how they interact with each other around school.

The school's involvement in the national 'What if Learning Character Education Project' has impacted positively on the SMSC development of all learners. They develop a good understanding of the religions they study and reflect on and express their thoughts about what this learning means to them. In the Christian value 'floor books', a whole class recording system, the depth of children's understanding and response to challenging situations is very impressive. Children interviewed could articulate how these experiences were often linked to Bible stories and taught them how to deal with situations in their lives. In a year 6 RE lesson children were challenged to think about making difficult decisions. The quality of their considered responses, showing empathy with the plight of others in the scenarios, was practical evidence of the work seen in books and on display as their routine practice. The high quality of the children's work, in a variety of contexts, is evidence to the richness of their learning in RE.

The children are very aware that Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith. They cite the events of Pentecost as an explanation for Christianity being a world religion 'The disciples spoke in different languages so Christianity spread across the world'. They have also developed strong links with national and international organisations, eg Barnabas Education, to further develop their understanding and raise funds for Christians across the world.

The obvious love of their school by the children is evidenced in the levels of attendance which are above the national average. The school, through its Christian character, ensures that standards are above national average in English and maths. Attainment is also very strong in RE, showing results above those achieved in English.

In promoting the school values, the school effectively prepares the pupils for the future and enables their understanding of diverse cultures and communities. Pupils regularly benefit from visits to and visitors from a variety of other faith communities. They also recently explored the role of Sikhs in world war 2 as part of a whole school history topic.

The school's Christian commitment to inclusion is clearly evidenced in their current context. A pupil relatively new to the school, is not currently settling to a point where he can learn. The response of the leadership team, both in terms of resource deployment and working proactively to resolve the situation, is evidence to the Christian love they show to all members of the school community.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship is an integral part of the life of this school. This start to the school day was described as being 'a key time to think' by one of the children. It routinely reinforces the importance and impact of Christian values on the life of the community. Members of the school community also refer to the key role played by the incumbent and her team in developing the whole child rather than just their academic ability. The collective worship seen on the inspection day was evidence of the high level of engagement and participation by the whole school community. It was reported by the children to be typical of their usual worship experiences.

Pupils develop an understanding of different styles of worship through the leadership of all staff and leaders of the local Anglican church. The worship coordinator offers support to any who need it. There are not, as yet, enough opportunities provided for children to plan and deliver collective worship, though this has been identified as a development area by the school; a focus agreed by the inspector. As well as contributing to the pupils' spiritual, cultural and moral development worship also contributes to their social awareness. Consequently, they engage enthusiastically in charitable projects such as the shoebox Christmas appeal.

Pupils appreciate the opportunities to pray offered in collective worship but do not currently have similar experiences of prayer in other elements of school life. They explain prayer as talking to God and can clearly articulate the importance of this in their lives.

Worship themes include the Anglican liturgical calendar. This has ensured that children have a thorough understanding of the church year. Pupils are introduced to the important doctrines of the Christian faith. They can also engage with the idea of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit in an age appropriate way, partly through the use of a Trinitarian blessing in collective worship. The use of Anglican prayers, including the Lord's Prayer, as a routine part of collective worship has supported their understanding of the Trinity. The children are aware of the importance of Jesus Christ in the Christian faith and link the school values to those shown in his life. A particular highlight of the school year for the children are the times they celebrate together as a whole school community in the local church. Key times in the liturgical year are marked by processions, picnics and praise at the church and enjoyed by the village community.

Links with RE enable teaching in worship about Christian values, the Bible and the life and works of Jesus Christ to be reinforced. Worship is regularly monitored and evaluated by pupils and adults, including governors and leads to ongoing developments.

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

The co-headteachers promote and live out their vision for the school to nurture and support every individual as a child of God. This is securely rooted in Christian values and biblical teaching and is shared by others in the school community. They clearly model a distributed leadership structure, operating as co-headteachers. This is positively supported by all stakeholders. Since the team members are clearly committed to the same vision, all are able to confidently promote the Christian values. The governing body successfully supports and challenges the leadership team to consolidate and continue to develop the school's Christian values. The role of the incumbent as the school's strongest advocate and challenger is well evidenced by senior leaders and governors. She is a weekly visitor to the school, planning, supporting and monitoring many aspects of the church school, as well as providing emotional and spiritual support as necessary.

The school's self-evaluation is accurate, insightful and shows commitment to the development of all areas of the school. The whole school community is involved in evaluating its work which leads to consistent improvement. The school development plan includes RE and worship and confirms the high profile and perceived importance of these areas of the school. All areas for development identified in the last inspection have been strengthened through clear incisive action.

One of the co-headteachers leads RE and collective worship, thus giving status to these important elements of school life. Planning in collective worship is thorough, collaborative and leads to highly effective practice. The school environment and displays demonstrate the high priority and status of RE across the school. This is reinforced by the creative recording of RE in individual and class 'floor books'.

The Christian vision makes a very positive impact on the attitudes and behaviour in this significantly oversubscribed church school.

Staff development is coordinated to ensure both individuals and the whole school are supported to reach their potential. Significant commitment to working with the diocese and diocesan school's consultants on specific projects has ensured the development of the church school has been sustained. The whole school involvement in the 'What if Learning Character Education Project' has given the school a diocesan and national profile as a centre of excellence.

Parents are delighted that the values, which are the focus for worship, are routinely communicated home. This means they are able to support and reinforce them. Church services are also publicised through the school newsletter so that families are kept well informed of local Christian activities. The strong partnership which exists between the school and the church is partly evidenced by the changed timing of the recent Christingle service, to the end of the school day, so that children and their families could go straight to the church together.

SIAMS report February 2017 Braunston, Daventry, Northamptonshire NN11 7HF