



Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Sundridge and Brasted Church of England Primary School	Church Road Sundridge Kent TN14 6EA
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Rochester
Previous SIAS inspection grade:	Outstanding
Local authority	Kent
Date of inspection	14 October 2016
Date of last inspection	September 2011
School's unique reference number	118608
Acting Headteacher	Anil Gaind (from September 2016)
Inspector's name and number	Pamela Draycott (161)

School context

This small primary school is proud of its history of service to its rural community. The majority of pupils are White British. Most come from families that do not attend church regularly outside of their involvement with school. There is an acting headteacher and an acting senior teacher, both of whom are new to the post but not to the school. The school is linked with the parishes of St Mary's (Sundridge) and St Martin's (Brasted). Both vicars are relatively new to their respective parishes.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Sundridge and Brasted primary school as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The school treats all its pupils as individuals recognising the God-given gifts and talents that all have. This means that appropriate support for all, both academically and personally, is a priority,
- The caring and inclusive Christian ethos of the school means that it is supportive of all its pupils and their families. This, in turn, leads to a parent body which recognises that Christian values underpin the school's life and work.
- The worship programme clearly and explicitly supports pupils' religious, spiritual and moral development and contributes effectively to enhancing and celebrating the school's Christian foundation.

Areas to improve

- Explore new ways of strengthening the links between school and church in the light of the fresh impetus provided by new leadership.
- Embed the use of the prayer garden as part of the development of the spiritual life of all members of the school community.

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

The school's clear priority is to support the learning and the personal development of all pupils. This is linked to a vision of service to the local community based on its school code, 'treat others as you would have them treat you'. This is explicitly taken from Jesus teaching and is well linked with the school motto, 'to shine as lights in the world'. This code can be very well seen in the strong and supportive relationships evident in school life. It is also marked in the very good behaviour of pupils who can relate why they should behave well. For example, 'It's because Jesus told us to' as a key stage 1 pupil reflected, or as a key stage 2 pupil stated, 'It's important to forgive others – it's like a fresh start. Like in the Lord's Prayer. That's what Jesus teaches us'. Consequently, the school is a happy and safe place which means that attendance is slightly above the national average and improving. There is a good climate for learning across the school with colourful, relevant and appropriate displays to support and celebrate achievements as well as the school's values. A recent review of these established values has led to a fresh understanding of them which has moved the school forward as a church school. Pupils can talk about them being based on their school code and can express ideas about why they are important and how they link generally to their own and to school life. They are less able to clearly and consistently identify specific links with wider biblical teaching. Pupil attainment is broadly at or above national and local authority averages despite a significant minority of pupils starting at the school with lower than expected levels. This shows that the school is helping pupils to make at least good and sometimes very good progress from their various starting points. Progress in Reception is very strong.

Religious education (RE) is enjoyed by pupils who see its relevance in helping them to develop their knowledge and understanding of Christianity and of other world faiths. 'It's important to know about Christianity and about other faiths, like we did on our special 'world faiths' day. It means that you are not ignorant and it helps you respect everyone.' RE makes an effective contribution to the school's Christian foundation as well as supporting very well the good spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of pupils.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

The daily worship programme is very well planned and delivered which gives a clear indication of its importance and value within school life. Effective evaluation by adults, including governors, and by pupils, enhances provision and leads to strong engagement across the school community. It is delivered in different groupings and led by different people within the school, including by pupils. Adults and pupils engage well in worship in the different groups it takes place in. They are clearly able to explain the significance of the worship programme to the life of the school. Through worship, there are regular opportunities to explore Bible stories. The significance of these stories for individuals and groups today is well linked. This enables both pupils and adults to consider the importance of faith and worship in today's world. Through worship, pupils develop a good understanding of the importance of Jesus for Christians and an age appropriate appreciation of the Christian belief in God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This is very well extended through productive links with units of work within the RE curriculum. Pupils have a basic grasp of the Christian year through the celebration of festivals such as Harvest, Christmas, Easter and Pentecost. Pupils are developing an understanding of Anglican practices through, for example, lighting a candle to represent Jesus as the light of the world. This also reflects well the school motto of shining as lights in the world. Worship is enhanced by regular visits from the two vicars whose parishes are linked to the school and also by visits to the churches to celebrate particular festivals.

Pupils have regular opportunities for prayer during worship times and at other points in the school day. They know that the Lord's Prayer is an important Christian prayer and many are able to explain something of its significance. 'Prayer is important because it is like a conversation with God. It helps you to feel calm and peaceful and helps other people when you pray for them.' A useful prayer and reflection area is now well used in each classroom. This successfully encourages pupils to be mindful of the possibility of prayer at any time of the school

day and so enhances their spiritual development. Whilst the worship programme is explicitly Christian, it is also inclusive of those from other faiths or of no-faith background. In this way, it reflects the school's inclusive Christian foundation. A very recent development, which has limited impact so far, has been the inclusion of a prayer garden at the front of the school which classes have used for 'circle time' discussions.

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

The previous headteacher moved on to another post very recently. Following the previous denominational inspection, she worked effectively with colleagues, including governors, to ensure that the key issues for improvement were addressed. She also ensured that the Christian distinctiveness of the school maintained its high priority. Currently, the acting headteacher and acting senior teacher are ensuring that this focus continues. In this, they are ably supported especially by committed governors and the effective subject leader for RE. Consequently, staff, pupils and parents relate the school's code of how to treat people to relationships and behaviours evident day to day, linking this appropriately with Jesus' teaching. Leaders, including governors, have a good understanding of the school as a church school which leads to well considered priorities for continued improvement. As part of its ongoing development as a church school, the correct decision was taken by the acting senior team to refresh and re-inforce the school values for the beginning of this academic year. Awarding stickers to pupils who have demonstrated the values in action is a new practice. However, already it is impacting positively on school life. Pupils are very pleased to receive a sticker and are able to say how this helps them think about their behaviour and to 'shine as a light just like Jesus did'.

Staff are well supported for working in this church school context. The school meets the statutory requirements for worship and RE in a voluntary controlled school. Both areas are very well led and managed. Support from the Diocese has impacted positively, for example, on the school's RE curriculum. Following a diocesan course attended by the subject leader, the curriculum was redesigned. It now has a key question for each lesson which promotes enquiry by pupils. This has improved teaching, learning and engagement by making lessons more interesting. A high priority is given to encouraging pupils to think and reflect on their learning and on their behaviour. This impacts positively on pupils' SMSC development. Parents are regularly and well informed about their children's progress. They are clear that the school's Christian message of care and concern for others impacts positively on their children's behaviour and attainment. They praise the school's caring nature and the approachability and commitment of staff in supporting their children. Links with the church are good and improving following periods without clergy in both local churches. During this time, the foundation governor has kept the church-school link alive. In the light of new appointments for the school and the churches locally, fresh initiatives are emerging but are not established.

SIAMS report [October 2016] Sundridge and Brasted CE (VC) primary school, Sundridge, Kent, TN14 6EA