



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church**

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

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

Bramley Lane

Bramley, Tadley

Hampshire RG26 5AH

**Previous SIAS grade: Inadequate**

**Current SIAMS grade: Good**

**Diocese: Winchester**

Local authority: Hampshire

Dates of inspection: 21 June 2016

Date of last inspection: 28 November 2012

School's unique reference number: 116278

Interim headteacher: Lisa Hodgkinson

Inspector's name and number: Andrew Rickett 201

#### **School context**

Bramley is a larger than average size primary school with 388 children on roll. The school is situated on the outskirts of a large town. Children come from a range of socio-economic backgrounds. The majority of children come from a white British heritage. The number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is in line with the national average as is number entitled to receive the pupil premium. Attendance is broadly in line with the national average. At the time of the inspection, the school was led by an interim headteacher. Recently, there have been significant changes to the leadership structure.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Bramley as a Church of England school are good**

- Explicit Christian values have become more firmly established throughout the school community and impact on the quality of relationships and children's attitudes towards learning.
- The introduction of big questions in collective worship is creating opportunities for children to explore Bible stories in greater depth.
- The headteacher, together with senior leaders and governors, have ensured that the Christian ethos has made significant progress since the previous inspection.

#### **Areas to improve**

- Equip children with strategies to enable them to reflect in greater depth so that their understanding of core Christian values makes a positive impact on their lives.
- Create opportunities for children to have greater ownership of how themes in collective worship are explored so that they develop spirituality at a more personal level.

- Ensure that leaders and managers, including governors, develop the skills needed to effectively monitor and evaluate the impact of new initiatives.

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

The identification of three core Christian values has more explicitly raised the profile of the school's Christian ethos. Love, courage and respect are well known among the school community and children are clearly aware that their interpretation has roots in Bible teaching. Children and adults in school are rapidly developing a language through which they are exploring their understanding of these values as they become more integral to the children's learning. For example, values are increasingly contributing to teachers' planning and particularly in subjects which cover personal and social development. At the moment, not all children have the strategies to be able to reflect in depth on how the values impact on their lives. The core values have made a difference to the quality of relationships in the school where children's behaviour has improved and there is a more positive attitude towards their learning. This has made an impact on the standards children achieve which have been steadily rising. The school has been improving its understanding of spirituality and has a framework in place through which it is creating opportunities for children to explore themselves, others and the world around them. This has not yet been consistently implemented across all classes. Reflection areas in all classes have been introduced and provide effective opportunities for children to respond to collective worship. They are not used to support the wider curriculum. Religious education (RE) makes a good contribution to the children's growing sense of justice and fairness. An emphasis on enquiry in RE promotes the acquisition of skills, although children do not always have the strategies to be able to apply their learning in depth. Children speak with conviction about the need to treat everyone with kindness and consideration, regardless of their background. The school works hard to give children opportunities to experience the diversity of cultures and faiths in modern Britain and RE makes a valuable contribution towards this.

### **The impact of collective worship on the school community is good**

The school has made good progress in developing acts of worship which are more meaningful and challenging to children. Core Christian values are more clearly at the centre of worship planning and have explicit links to Bible stories. Children are able to identify specific Bible stories that illustrate love, courage and respect. Moreover, an increasing number of children are able to place their own interpretation of the value that they think the message conveys. The recent introduction of a weekly big question is allowing themes to be explored in greater depth. This is still in the process of being developed and has not yet been fully explored. However, early evidence is positive as children seem to enjoy the challenge of responding to the questions. This is evident in the written reflections that children complete which show that they are able to articulate how Bible stories have relevance in their own lives. Children have a growing understanding of the purpose of prayer. Older children for example, appreciate that anyone can talk to God whether they have a faith or not and that He will listen to them. They understand that prayer is not a 'wish-list' but find it harder to explain how prayer actually helps people in trouble. All children show an appropriate respect and reverence for prayer in worship and have learnt the Lord's Prayer by heart. They are developing their understanding of the nature of the Trinity, recognising God as Father and Jesus His Son. They are aware of the Holy Spirit but find it more difficult to articulate how He can protect and support them. Acts of worship are distinctively Anglican in nature with the use of simple words of welcome, prayer, singing and time for reflection. The introduction of 'Open The Book' in Key Stage I has improved the variety of worship offered. Children have some involvement in leading and planning acts of worship although the opportunities for them to have greater ownership of how themes are explored in class-based worship has not been fully developed. There are effective procedures to monitor and evaluate the impact of worship.

### **The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a Church school is good**

The headteacher, working together with other senior leaders, has ensured that the school has made good progress in developing a distinctive ethos based on explicitly Christian values which support a growing understanding of spirituality. She has worked hard to bring greater meaning and purpose to what it means to be a Church school by involving adults and children in the school community. The commitment to developing the Church school ethos is reflected in the extent to which school leaders have engaged in professional development including support from the diocese. This has made a considerable impact on their understanding of values and spirituality and contributed to developing future leadership of Church schools. School leaders have an accurate grasp of the school's strengths and areas to develop as a Church school and have effective procedures in place that gathers good quality evidence of impact. In particular, evidence from children's feedback informs evaluation of the impact of collective worship and understanding of values. The contribution of the foundation governor has been a central aspect of this. She has carried out a number of interviews with children that have identified strengths. Leaders and managers have yet to identify how these monitoring systems will be developed so that they can effectively evaluate the impact on new initiatives. The RE leader and deputy headteacher have made good contributions to the development of the Christian ethos and share the headteacher's commitment. The RE leader is rapidly developing her understanding of her role and has put in place an action plan that has identified challenging priorities to improve the subject. Links with the local church are close and have been strengthened by the introduction of the 'Open the Book' team to deliver worship to Key Stage 1 children. Children regard the celebration of major Christian festivals in the church as an integral part of being a Church school and the donation of Bibles to Year 6 leavers is a reflection of the bond between school and church. Parents say that the school's Christian values are 'all encompassing' and support their children to appreciate other people regardless of their background. The school meets the statutory requirements for RE and collective worship.

SIAMS report June 2016 Bramley CE VC Primary School Bramley RG26 5AH