



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Meole Brace CE (VC) Primary School

Church Rd
Meole Brace
Shropshire
SY3 9HG

Previous SIAMS grade: Good

Current inspection grade: Outstanding

Diocese: Lichfield

Local authority: Shropshire

Date of inspection: 1 October 2015

Date of last inspection: 10 November 2010

School's unique reference number: 135789

Headteacher: J Davies

Inspector's name and number: R M Gale 337

School context

Meole Brace CE VC Primary School is a large Primary school with 342 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils live within the local community and are of white British heritage. The school serves a diverse catchment area in terms of socio-economic grouping and level of need. When last inspected by Ofsted in 2010, it was judged to be a good school. The school has very close links with Holy Trinity church and the local community.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Meole Brace CE VC Primary as a Church of England school are outstanding.

- The respectful, articulate and exceptionally well-behaved pupils, who demonstrate excellent attitudes to learning.
- The supportive Christian environment in which all pupils thrive.
- The integrity and willingness of all leaders in making explicit the Christian distinctiveness of this happy school.
- Positive, harmonious and inclusive relationships that foster a strong sense of community cohesion and a sense of belonging within this Christian church school.

Areas to improve

- Embed more regular and formal rigorous monitoring and evaluation of collective worship with a wider range of stakeholders.
- Support pupils in taking more regular ownership in planning and leading worship on a weekly basis.
- Foster more partnerships and links which will allow pupils to encounter lifestyles with different faith traditions of people living in an area of the Lichfield diocese that is more religiously and culturally diverse.

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

This school lives out its Christian aims in every aspect of daily life and interaction. The mission statement, 'Belonging, Believing and Becoming' is displayed throughout the school and is the benchmark to ensure all pupils are nurtured to succeed. The Christian values of love, forgiveness, thankfulness and care underpin practice. The older pupils are able to relate these values to the teachings of Jesus. The vast majority of pupils know that belonging to a church school is significant. The school system of merit awards and the weekly celebration of these awards serves as a reminder of the school's core beliefs, reflecting the principles of this Christian community. Behaviour is of the highest standard because pupils can talk about forgiveness and love and put these into practice. As one pupil said, "*Jesus told us to love each other*". Pupils work hard, endure through periods of adversity and rise to challenges. Some pupils join the school with attainment below age related expectations. Systems are in place to monitor outcomes and target interventions to ensure the needs of all pupils are addressed. Through this targeted support these pupils overcome educational, social and economic disadvantage. Overall, the majority of pupils make better than expected progress during their time at school. Relationships in school are outstanding resulting in a calm, compassionate and purposeful Christian community. The spiritual development of pupils is supported by high quality experiences across the rich curriculum. The pupils' sense of awe and wonder in God's world is extended through the 'Reggio Emilia' approach, Religious Education (RE), Forest School and Messy church activities. The outdoor calm zoned areas, willow arch garden and indoor reflection areas further support spiritual development. RE impacts well on the schools' Christian character, as it enhances spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. As a result of workshops such as 'Colour of My Skin' and the exploration of other faiths within the RE curriculum pupils' knowledge of the diversity and difference both within the church and in other faith communities is developing. Well planned RE visits and "Open Door" are examples of the enrichment opportunities that the school is providing in its efforts to expand the multi-cultural knowledge and further the spiritual understanding of its pupils. Fund raising, links with various charities, especially the "flush away poverty" charity, links with Kenya and the work of the choir within the community celebrate the school's Christian outreach. In all these ways the school is committed daily to making a significant difference to the lives of its pupils and their families, through effective Christian teaching and guidance. The school council is one example of many where pupils are encouraged to be pro-active and responsible. They are currently developing a school prayer which will be shared across the school with guidance from the school Chaplain. Pupils feel their role as school council members is very important because they work as a team for the school.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

During daily worship pupils and staff are encouraged to reflect and pray and learn about the Christian belief and values underpinning the school. They are supported in praying so that they are "*protected by the love of Jesus*". Pupils enjoy the calm and peaceful atmosphere of worship. One pupil commented that "*worship changes life*". There is a strong emphasis upon Christian teaching through Bible stories using the resource "Open the Book" linked with the effective teaching of RE. This enables pupils to connect with the moral ethic within texts, so to positively enhance pupils' attitudes to each other and their learning. Pupils enjoy worship – singing, praising, praying, taking part in role play - especially when led by visitors, including the church team. Pupils understand the candle as a symbol of God's presence. The Lord's Prayer is prayed regularly and its meaning can be explained by the pupils. They are also given the opportunity to explore prayer further through focused classroom activities. This enhances their understanding of the value of prayer and its centrality to worship. A weekly prayer meeting affirms this. The spiritual atmosphere of worship is supported by the effective use of music which is played on entry and exit, and the beautiful singing where pupils show a high degree of reverence, creating a special atmosphere. Discussions with pupils and parents and

documented evidence confirm that worship is central to the life of the school. Through worship pupils are being offered a wealth of opportunities to grow spiritually on a daily basis and to develop their knowledge about Anglican traditions. Older pupils are able to discuss aspects of Christian belief with a high degree of confidence. This enables them to make connections between their lives and those of Jesus and his disciples. Worship provides opportunities to nurture faith and belief in all pupils. An established programme of worship planning has been devised based on Christian values and festivals and this together with their RE lessons, ensures pupils are developing a sound awareness of the person of Jesus and of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Governors informally monitor the quality of worship and plans are in place to further extend this. Pupils are at an early stage of planning, delivering and evaluating daily worship. Pupils are very able at leading worship at Holy Trinity church during all major Christian festivals. The church is also used as a valuable resource to extend pupils' knowledge of worship and Anglican traditions. The pupils really enjoy this and explain how they are welcomed by the church family. Parents also enjoy attending church services and worship in school; they say it supports the feeling of belonging to "one big family". Opportunities to enhance Eucharist opportunities are planned.

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

The headteacher together with the governors and Church Team are leaders who are held in high esteem by the whole school community. They support and drive the Christian vision of the school. The school web site and documentation is in the process of being updated to celebrate the Christian vision. The church members and staff work as an effective team who have supported each other and their pupils through a challenging year, illustrating the cohesive nature of this Christian school. There is a weekly prayer meeting where parents and staff are encouraged to pray for the needs of the community. The school is described as a welcoming place by stakeholders, who are sure their views are respected and acted upon. They comment on the openness of the staff and the church team resulting in an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect. This inclusive practice celebrates the uniqueness of each member of the school family. These strong relationships underpin and create a harmonious ethos. The rich curriculum, especially in RE, and extra-curricular opportunities offered ensures that pupils are "Belonging, Believing and Becoming" as individuals. Governors hold the school to account in relation to teaching and progress and in the evaluation of the school's core Christian beliefs to inform strategic direction. This has led to the appointment of the school chaplain, who leads worship, prayer meetings and enrichment and nurture activities. These roles are further supported by the vicar and his curate. Foundation Governors also promote the Christian dimension diligently both practically and prayerfully. Pastoral links between the school, church and local communities are outstanding. Regular learning sessions in church are a feature of this school in addition to attendance at the celebration of Christian festivals. This enhances pupils' understanding of core Christian beliefs. All pupils questioned say they want to come to school. One pupil stated "*We are happy to come to this school, we are happy to learn and play together.... There is so much to do!*" As a result attendance is very good. Leaders use pupil premium and sports funding effectively to support needs. The school has strong links with the Diocese and governors have had the opportunity to train and network. Partnerships and links with different faith traditions of people that are more religiously and culturally diverse are developing. This is an area that school leaders, especially the RE leader have already identified for further development. Previous inspection developments points have been addressed.

SIAMS report October 2015 Meole Brace (VC) Primary, Meole Brace, Shrewsbury SY3 9HG