



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

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

Main Road, Brailsford,  
Ashbourne, Derbyshire,  
DE6 3DA

**Previous SIAMS grade: Outstanding**

**Diocese: Derby**

Local authority: Derbyshire

Dates of inspection: 22 January, 2015

Date of last inspection: February, 2010

School's unique reference number: 112804

Headteacher: David Wood

Inspector's name and number: Kerry Palmer (60)

#### **School context**

Brailsford is a smaller than average village primary school with four classes. Almost all the children are of white, British heritage. The proportion eligible for free school meals is significantly lower than the national average. The number with special needs or disabilities is currently small. The school's popularity attracts some families from a wide area. The original, Victorian building, with 'temporary' accommodation added, is shortly to be replaced. There is no hall, the village institute being used for PE and larger gatherings. The village Methodist Church is well used as is All Saints Church which is some distance away. The headteacher has been in post for one year.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Brailsford C of E (VC) Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding**

- Servant leadership, modelled by the headteacher, so that children, staff and governors are driven by a desire to serve others.
- Shared school values, clearly based on the life and teaching of Jesus, promoting an outstanding sense of community and identity.
- The inclusive and individualised approach to learning recognising each child as a unique creation and worthy of the best education.

#### **Areas to improve**

- Develop school worship to embed the centrality of the Trinity in Christian teaching.
- Enhance celebration worship so that children recognise that their talents are gifts from God.

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

Everyone at Brailsford Primary is proud of its core Christian ethos which drives every aspect

of school life and has a very strong impact on relationships, pupil achievement and concern for the wellbeing of all in this Christian community. Christian service from an experienced, collaborative and professional staff team, prepared to 'go the extra mile', promotes enthusiasm and determination in children. An atmosphere of mutual respect and support is evident throughout the school. Data shows that pupil progress and levels of achievement are high, often exceeding national expectations. Each child is recognised as having unique, God given, gifts and talents so all abilities do well with excellent support for the less able and many enrichment and extra-curricular opportunities to successfully stretch the many gifted and talented children. The school's effective behaviour policy, based on Christian forgiveness and reconciliation ensures that behaviour is excellent at work and play; children have a clear sense of fairness and understanding of right and wrong. This is supported by positive incentives and well-trained pupil mediators, one of many opportunities older children welcome to take responsibility, enhancing social development. Children are happy, enjoy school and feel safe, illustrated by much better than average attendance levels. Positive cultural development is successfully promoted and diversity respected through study of other faiths in religious education (RE), including visits to places of worship, special events such as Diwali Day and links with a charity in Sierra Leone. International Schools is one of several national awards displayed in the school. Empathy for the needs of the less fortunate is evident in the support for many local and national charities. Examples include support for the Ashbourne Food Bank at harvest time, the shoe box appeal at Christmas and support for Fairtrade. Children enjoy the predominantly Christian, enquiry based, RE which stimulates reflection, links to the school's Christian values, contributes significantly to the school's Christian character and fosters spiritual development. In one lesson, children were taught to tie sailors' knots in which they could trust, like sailors on Galilee trusted Jesus in a storm.

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

The school's distinctively Christian worship is valued by all the school community, however, it is known as assembly, detracting from its key focus. Parents say that children talk enthusiastically about Bible stories promoting school Christian values, and the impact on their lives. One spoke of 'the voice in your head'. Coordinated worship themes are led by the headteacher, staff, local clergy, older pupils and occasional visitors. However, opportunities have been missed to develop a reflective focus at the start and end of worship. Regular pupil planned and led worship, developed since the last inspection, was the highlight in a recent pupil survey. Children appreciate opportunities to reflect and offer their personal prayers in collective worship and the school day, one said of God, 'You are always there for me'. Most children know the Lord's Prayer and its importance as Jesus' prayer. They have a developing understanding of Jesus as God on earth and some appreciation of the Trinity as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Prayer trees in each class are well used and children's prayers often contribute to worship. Celebration assemblies praise children's gifts, talents and achievements but do not articulate these gifts as gifts of God. Parents and friends from the village community join school worship in All Saints Church, the Methodist Church and Village Institute for festival and celebration services. However, feedback has not been sought and so the link between community and school has not been fully evaluated. There is an active and growing partnership with local church communities. School families are increasingly involved in new family orientated worship at All Saints, the school choir sings at the Methodist coffee shop and children participate in activities such as Advent Adventure. All of this helps them develop a growing appreciation of church tradition and practice.

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

The highly motivated and energetic headteacher is successfully building on the strong Christian ethos of the school established by his predecessor. Prominence to the significance of the school's church foundation on the recently re-vamped website being one example. His emphasis on collaborative working with staff and governors, delegation of responsibilities and

clear structures promote the Christian values recognised as central to the school ethos and vocational growth. Rigorous school self-evaluation is insightful and appropriate development plans in place. Together they are committed to high academic achievement in children of whom they are rightly proud. The relatively new worship coordinator is dedicated and enthusiastic. She conducts reviews with staff, children and link governors, has a clear picture of the way forward and has focussed development plans in place. However, there has been insufficient time, to date, for the impact to be evaluated. Generous opportunities for professional development are well used as is support and training offered by the diocese and local authority. Governors know the school well. Foundation governors play an increasingly structured role in monitoring and development planning of the school's Christian distinctiveness. Parents hold the school in high esteem and believe they are fully involved in school developments. There is active support for the 'Friends of Brailsford School'. Partnerships with the parish and community are strong. Statutory requirements for collective worship are fully met and the potential for further positive development is excellent.

SIAMS report January 2015 Brailsford CofE (VC) Primary School, Derbys. DE6 3DA