

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Brewood Church of England (C) Middle School

School Road Brewood Stafford Staffordshire ST19 9DS	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Satisfactory
Diocese	Lichfield
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local authority	Staffordshire
Federated with	St Mary's CE First School, Wheaton Aston
Date of inspection	16 February 2017
Date of last inspection	23 February 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Middle School 124452
Executive Headteacher	David Swift
Inspectors' names and numbers	Mark Cooper 425 Lead inspector Reverend Alison Morris 759

School context

Brewood Middle School has 419 pupils and is located at the heart of the village and set in a mainly rural area. The parish church is very close and pupils visit for seasonal festivals. The school is linked with St. Mary's First School at Wheaton Aston within a hard federation. Most pupils come from mainly White British backgrounds although there are a small number representing other cultures. Since the last inspection, both the incumbent and the chair of governors have changed. The most recent OFSTED inspection in December 2016 judged the school as inadequate and requires special measures.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Brewood Church of England (C) Middle School as a Church of England school are satisfactory

- Extra-curricular activities that contribute positively towards pupils' social, moral, social and personal development.
- Pupils' behaviour and the quality of relationships between pupils with staff and other adults that reflect the school's Christian values of respect and truthfulness.

Areas to improve

- Ensure that the school's personal, social, health and citizenship education programme (PSHCE) and safeguarding processes reflect 'Valuing all God's Children', the Church of England's guidance on inclusion and challenging discrimination of all kinds in schools.
- Broaden and deepen the experience and understanding by pupils of the diverse multi faith society in which pupils live.
- Deepen pupils' understanding of how Biblical teaching and the teachings of Jesus underpin and provide the foundation for the school's Christian values.
- Deliver a regular and consistent quality of collective worship in class which is monitored effectively.
- Ensure all staff and governors engage in the process of evaluating church school distinctiveness through appropriate training and by implementing rigorous and robust systems to regularly check and account for the school's continued progress as a Church of England school.

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

The Christian values of respect and endurance has an impact on attainment and progress of pupils in school. Pupils talk about a positive attitude to learning across the school and the impact their teachers have on their progress. Attendance, although better than the national average has not improved any more over a three-year period. Strategies have been recently introduced to manage this more effectively and these will help to truly reflect the schools Christian character, principles and motto, "Be the best you can be". Pupils commented that behaviour was good across the school. They said there were very few incidents of bullying and when there were, they were dealt with effectively. Pupils feel safe and cared for in school. When asked if they could link good behaviour to any teachings of Jesus some pupils could make connections while others referred to British values. Christian values have been identified, such as faith, hope, respect and endurance, and this has involved all members of the school community. Parents feel that the school provides a good moral foundation for the development of their children. Pupils talked about Christian values and how they felt they created a 'good atmosphere' around the school. However, pupils were very vague in their understanding of how Biblical teachings, particularly those of Jesus, underpin and provide the foundation for the school's Christian values. Pupils were more articulate about British values and clearer in their understanding of them and how they contributed towards the school's ethos, community and wider society. This contributes to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development. For some pupils, British values had a greater impact than the school's Christian values. Pupils talked about the many opportunities they had to be involved in charity work. For example, they support the 'Nepal Earthquake Appeal', 'Christian Aid' and the 'Big MacMillan Coffee Morning'. They clearly enjoy these activities and understand the importance of helping those less fortunate than themselves. However, pupils found it difficult to relate the reasons for doing so to Christian teaching on caring for others. There are many and varied extra-curricular activities and all contribute well to SMSC development. For example, the visit to Auschwitz deepened pupils' understanding of the wider world and historical injustices. The school needs to revise the PSHCE programme in light of the Church of England document 'Valuing All God's Children' as a matter of urgency. This would go some way to address pupil's limited understanding of diversity and issues surrounding discrimination of all kinds, including, radicalisation. Religious education (RE) contributes well to pupils' understanding of other faiths, beliefs and cultures. However the school needs to consider other ways in which pupils can develop a deeper understanding of them. The current link with St. Jude's Primary School in Wolverhampton could be optimised to help achieve this.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is satisfactory

Pupils experience worship in a variety of ways and settings such as whole school, class, sing-up and celebration praise. Pupils say that worship is mainly led by teachers. Worship is planned using a range of sources combined with themes from Biblical material, Christian and British values. The act of collective worship during the inspection involved pupils leading aspects of the service through Bible readings, prayers or reading poems. Pupils were respectful throughout. When asked about worship there was a real desire from pupils to have more opportunities to plan and lead worship. They particularly wanted this chance in class worship where groups were smaller and relationships closer. On occasions, class worship is replaced with accelerated learning tasks, which means that pupils miss out on that opportunity to join in a worship activity. Pupils commented that the quality of worship in school was varied. Pupils were sometimes 'bored' in class worship and it was not engaging enough. However, others said they really enjoyed class worship, but this was only when they were given the opportunity to plan and deliver it and given opportunities to write and say their own prayers. Planning and leading worship by pupils was a development point from the last inspection and the school has begun to address this, but there is still more to do. Pupils talked about prayer and recognised its importance and value. They could clearly link their school prayer to their understanding of the Trinity. Pupils also talked about how RE had helped them to understand the Trinitarian concept about God. Although pupils were involved in writing evaluations on worship themes, it was not clear how these were used by the leadership team to improve or adapt worship. This needs to be addressed so that a better picture of the quality of class worship and its impact on pupils' spiritual development can be ascertained. Pupils' understanding of liturgical colours and their link to Christian festivals was limited. However, pupils' understanding of Christian festivals was good and they could link Christmas to the birth of Jesus and the theological concept of the incarnation. Similarly, pupils showed understanding of the festival of Easter and Jesus's sacrifice, death on the cross and the resurrection. Pupils' understanding and experience of Anglican Eucharistic worship was mixed, many pupils referring to what they had learned about this in their first school. This was also a development point from the last inspection but a long interregnum at St Mary's and St Chad's has meant this could not be developed as quickly as leaders would have liked. Key Christian festivals are always celebrated in the church which reinforces the spiritual relationship between the church and the school community. Pupils talked about the discussions that had taken place to develop a spiritual garden and areas for quiet reflection around the school. They were really keen to see this come to fruition.

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

The school has all the elements in place to be a highly effective church school but the pace of development since the last inspection has been too slow. Leaders need to be more proactive and uncompromising in driving forward the school's Christian distinctiveness through its vision, values and worship. There is a need to re-evaluate systems that are already in place to monitor the effectiveness of the school's Christian distinctiveness. This is to ensure that there is appropriate action planning to address any perceived weaknesses so that it leads to effective and sustained improvement that will impact on pupils' understanding and spiritual development. The school's Christian vision and its promotion of Christian values is understood by the school community and pupils are eager to have more opportunities to plan and lead collective worship. Parents feel that the school is welcoming and supportive and they regard the headteacher's approach to the school as genuinely Christian. Governors have full confidence in the school's leadership and work closely together with them. Links between the school and local church are now becoming stronger with the recent appointment of a new incumbent. The incumbent is clearly committed to strengthening these links and is becoming a familiar face in and around school. This will help to address the development point from the last inspection, so that pupils can experience and understand an Anglican Eucharist. The appointment of a new chair of governors will help to refocus the school and hold its leadership to account. The RE co-ordinator is very keen and proactive. Her dedication and subject expertise can be used to help, develop and deepen pupils' understanding of the wider world, its faiths, diversity and difference. Close links between the school and the diocese of Lichfield are already in place. The leadership team needs to explore further opportunities for professional development for all staff on what it means to lead and work in a Church of England school. This would enhance and strengthen what is already in place.

SIAMS report February 2017 Brewood Church of England (C) Middle School Brewood ST19 9DS