



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Brookland Church of England Primary School

Brookland, Romney Marsh
Kent TN29 9QR

Previous SIAS grade: Good

Current inspection grade: Good

Diocese: Canterbury

Local authority: Kent

Dates of inspection: 8 October 2015

Date of last inspection: 24 May 2010

School's unique reference number: 118664

Headteacher: Martin Hacker

Inspector's name and number: Canon Linda Burton. NS462

School context

This is a smaller than average primary school with 95 pupils on roll. Most children are taught in mixed age classes. The majority of children are white British. The school serves a wide rural area and children come from a range of social and economic backgrounds. The proportion of children eligible for the pupil premium has increased over the last three years to 19%. A quarter of the children in the school have special educational needs or disabilities. Outcomes at the end of key stage 1 and 2 are at least in line, if not above national expectations. The majority of children make the expected levels of progress.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Brookland as a Church of England school are good

- The headteacher's clear vision for the school as a church school, shared by staff and governors, ensures that the school is effective in its promotion of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school's shared core Christian values lie at the heart of decision making and actions in order to make a significant impact on children's achievements and personal development.
- Excellent behaviour and relationships within the school are clearly based on Christian values.

Areas to improve

- Ensure that the school's Christian character has a high profile by making more explicit links between the school's values and the Biblical teachings on which they are based, in daily school life, in documentation, and on the school's website.
- Consolidate the leadership, management and assessment of religious education (RE) and embed consistency of good practice in all aspects of RE in order to increase its contribution to the Christian character of the school and to children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Enrich children's experience of collective worship by broadening the responsibility for leading worship and by establishing a lighting the Candle group.

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

Life at Brookland is characterised at all levels by Christian love, a non-judgemental attitude and a genuine commitment to working for a brighter future for everyone. Since the headteacher's appointment in January 2011 the school community has worked hard to develop and make explicit its Christian values of courage, honesty, optimism, inspiration, consideration and endurance. These are now at the centre of its relationships and actions. They underpin the school's behaviour policy and systems and its effective support of any child who is in any way disadvantaged or vulnerable. This is a happy school where behaviour and attitudes are excellent and where children are encouraged to take responsibility for themselves and for others. The care for younger and more vulnerable pupils was very evident in their play time together. Children, including children from vulnerable groups, achieve well and make good progress relative to their starting points. Key Stage 2 data is in line with or above national expectations. Parents confirm a high level of satisfaction with the impact Christian values have on children's behaviour and learning. Parents have supported the school well in making significant improvements in attendance. Whilst children are able to relate the values in a practical way to their lives, both in documentation and in daily school life, even more direct and explicit links could be made between these values and the Biblical teachings on which they are based. The school website is currently underdeveloped in this respect. The school strongly promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of children through its broad and varied curriculum. In this small rural community there are very few ready-made opportunities for encountering cultural and religious diversity. The school creates opportunities in a number of ways. These include RE lessons and special whole school days, for example the India Day. It raises funds for its partner school the Mount Zion Brookland Orphanage School in Uganda. It has worked with South African visitors in school for two weeks in preparation for the school's *Lion King* production. Following a time of staffing changes, a specialist RE subject leader is now in post. Teaching in this curriculum area is creative and imaginative and children enjoy the lessons, as evidenced in the Reception class lesson observed on Creation and the lesson with years 5 and 6 on Hanukkah. Children's levels of knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other world faiths are good. Learning in both attainment targets is planned for and through differentiation the learning needs of all children are met. Work has been done on assessment procedures since the last inspection. The new subject leadership enables consistency of practice to be demonstrated across the school. The development of a robust system of observation, work scrutiny, formative and summative assessment in order to improve children's progress in line with other core subjects is underway. Assessment practices in RE are increasingly in line with other core subjects in the school and with standards in literacy but as yet are not reported on in the manner of other core subjects. Curriculum development in RE is taking place and the new subject leader has already worked with colleagues in other schools. RE contributes much to the Christian character of the school but could increase its contribution through developing further whole school RE days.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

The daily act of collective worship is central to the life of the school and it has a good impact on children's spiritual development. Children know that it is a special time. It has a strong Christian focus through the extensive use of Biblical material and Christian teaching. Through it children develop an understanding of Jesus Christ and the Trinity. It contributes to children's understanding of the Anglican tradition. The use of Christian artefacts has been developed further since the last inspection and this supports the school's Christian ethos. The worship observed explored the meaning of Jesus's saying *I am the light of the world* and built on acts of worship on earlier days in the week about other titles of Jesus in St John's Gospel. It was relevant and age-appropriate; it fully engaged all the children and was very much enjoyed. Children reflected quietly about what they could actually do to be lights in the world. This allowed them to relate the teaching of Jesus to their personal situations. The school celebrates Christian festivals and important events in its life with services in church, led by the incumbent, to which parents and members of the community are welcomed.

Collective worship is a focus for development in the school in the coming year and its policy will be reviewed accordingly. Whilst its coordinator currently leads most acts of worship during the week, plans are in place to develop this responsibility further to include a wider range of staff. Staff, governors and the RE coordinator monitor and evaluate acts of worship. Their monitoring has identified that the school council has not been fully involved in all aspects of collective worship; this is now starting to be acted upon. The development of a lighting the Candle group in the school would give children opportunities for greater involvement in collective worship. Class prayers are said at two points during the school day. Further opportunities for reflection and informal prayer by children during the school day are being developed through the recent introduction of a reflection book for each child in years 1 to 6 and the creation of the outdoor reflection area which has materials to help encourage reflection. This enhances the existing provision of reflection areas in each classroom.

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

The headteacher, staff and governors are clear about the school's Christian character. They remain committed to ensuring that its core values lie at the heart of all decision-making and actions in order to make a significant impact on children's achievements and personal development. All members of the school community are involved in self-evaluation strategies and these link directly to the school's improvement plan. The headteacher plays a valuable role in school-to-school improvement in the local area. Arrangements for RE and collective worship meet statutory requirements. The school has recently taken steps to improve leadership and management of RE, and collective worship has been identified as an area for further development this year. There are concrete indications that these steps are already leading to improved practice. Governors are increasingly able to give solid support, offer challenge and hold the headteacher and his staff to account. They could be even more robust in their actions if reports to the full governing body were matched where appropriate to the descriptors in the SIAMS evaluation schedule. Parents bring a wide range of expertise and experience to the school governing body including to the planning of the school's new outside classroom. The incumbent plays an active role on the governing body and is very committed to continued school improvement. Links between the school and the church are good. The school's website could make reference to these links. Parents and the local community are involved with the life of the school and support its festivals in the church and school events well. A particular commitment has been shown in fundraising activities for local and national charities. Fundraising by the Friends of Brooklands School enables children to experience activities which they might not usually have the opportunity to be involved in. There is evidence of ongoing development of the school's Christian character since the last inspection in all three areas of focus.

SIAMS report October 2015 Brookland Church of England Primary School, Romney Marsh TN29 9QR