



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

### By Brook Valley Church of England Primary School

The Street  
Yatton Keynall  
Chippenham  
Wiltshire SN14 7BA

**Previous SIAS grade: not previously inspected as an academy**

**Current SIAMS grade: Outstanding**

**Diocese: Bristol**

Local authority: Wiltshire

Date of inspection: 17 March 2015

Date of last inspection: 2 October 2009

School's unique reference number: 138112

Headteacher: Beverley Ball

Inspector's name and number: Daphne Spitzer NS No 37

#### School context

By Brook Valley Church of England Primary School serves the village of Yatton Keynall and three other local villages, as well as surrounding areas including the town of Chippenham. It is a one form entry school with 192 children on roll. The vast majority of children are from white British heritage families. The numbers of children with special educational needs and/or physical disabilities are lower than the national average as are the numbers eligible to receive the Pupil Premium. In 2012 the school converted to academy status and a new extension including 2 classrooms, was finished a year ago.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of By Brook Valley Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The high quality of children's spiritual awareness promoted by the school's distinctive Christian character has a strong impact on their academic achievement and personal development
- The excellent partnership between the church and school communities is mutually beneficial enabling all to feel part of the extended church school family
- The visionary leadership of the headteacher drives the continuous improvement of the school's distinctive Christian character in order to raise its impact

#### Areas to improve

- Provide opportunities for parents to develop a greater understanding of the school's distinctive Christian values and involve them in monitoring and evaluating the school's distinctive Christian character

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

By Brook Valley Church of England Primary School is an inclusive, friendly and welcoming Christian community. It has identified a set of four values underpinned by Christian teaching which are integral to the whole life of the school. These values, which place forgiveness at their heart, have a significant impact on children's personal and spiritual development as well as their academic achievement. Children talk enthusiastically of the importance of the values in their lives and their belief that Jesus will always forgive 'no matter how bad someone is'. Relationships are outstanding because children say they feel that the values of friendship, forgiveness and honesty are strong in school. The school community possesses a highly developed understanding of spirituality. This is because planning for the development of spirituality, known as the spirituality flower, is integral to the whole curriculum and it makes a strong impact on all aspects of learning. One child described the spirituality flower as 'all things you need to develop and be better people'. Times for prayer and reflection promote learning because children are encouraged to reflect at the end of the day and quietly recognise and celebrate their own successes. Children feel inspired to help others, often in response to topical events; such as two children raising funds for the Ebola victims or creating their own poppy Great War memorial following individual visits to the recent exhibition at the Tower of London. Children are developing a good understanding of diverse communities. This is promoted very well as part of the religious education (RE) curriculum. For example, children visit places of worship of other faiths. A strong link with a school in Uganda is helping children understand the lives of other children abroad. As a result they express thankfulness for the opportunity provided to help them but also admiration for the harder life these children have at their school. Children are excited by RE because teaching is engaging and challenging; evident when older children were debating and using analytical skills to argue in a highly respectful manner in order to convince others of their views. This is an excellent example of the high level of spiritual awareness evident throughout the school.

**The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding**

Collective worship holds a place of central importance in the daily life of By Brook Valley. Children value the calm and reflective setting provided for worship which enables them to 'feel closer to God'. Worship is very effective in promoting distinctive Christian values. The current theme of humility is well understood by children. This is because it is clearly linked to the selfless role model of Christ, highlighted during the current Easter season. Clergy and lay members of the church, such as the 'Open the Book' team who lead worship, plan themes with the headteacher in a complementary way. This was seen in the worship led by clergy using the life of St Patrick well to illustrate the value of humility. Anglican practice is being developed very effectively; such as the use of greetings, liturgical responses and coloured table cloths. The clergy, planning closely with the headteacher, have developed and supported the children's good understanding of the Trinity. Spiritual reflection and prayer is an integral part of worship as it is of the school day. The high quality of inclusion is evident in the way children use the central prayer space and say that 'no one judges' you. A peace and prayer garden is well established and is regarded highly by children. Children plan and lead worship in a variety of ways such as their class termly values worship and for the celebration of Christian festivals which take place in one of the three local churches. The leadership of worship by the headteacher is exemplary. Governors, clergy and children are all involved in the monitoring and evaluating of worship; the feedback is then continually used to improve planning and further raise the impact of worship on the lives of the school community.

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

The improvement in the school's distinctive Christian character since the last inspection has been profound. The headteacher's Christian vision and the leadership's commitment to this

are the driving force at the heart of the school's success and significant improvement as a church school. Under her inspirational leadership the Christian vision has grown from strength to strength with an increasing impact on the lives of the whole school community. The governors are exceptionally well involved in all aspects of the life of the school and as a result the church school's self-evaluation process is rigorous and very effective. For instance, all governors monitor spiritual development during lesson observations whilst members of the Foundation and Ethos Committee focus to a greater extent on monitoring the school's Christian distinctiveness. This committee is innovative and thorough in its work; noted by its recent evaluation of the use of the Bibles provided by a local church group, the Ark. Parents are very supportive of the school's distinctive Christian character and contribute much to the life of the school. They understand the impact of the school's Christian values. For instance, they nominate their children for awards showing the term's current value. However, parents do not necessarily understand the Christian roots of the values. Parents are not included formally in the self-evaluation process because their views on this aspect of school life are not surveyed. The school's links with the diocese are strong and training is very beneficial. For example, following recent professional development, the headteacher has led the school on a highly original and innovative initiative to develop spirituality. Religious education is led very effectively; the subject leader observes lessons, tracks children's progress in learning and shares her enthusiasm with the staff team. As a result, an adapted scheme of work has now been successfully implemented which includes greater challenge and the subject's profile has been raised. Over the last few years, the school's existing good partnership with the church has been strengthened further by the work of the clergy. This is evident, for example, by the Ark, an increasing popular church family activity and the annual Experience events involving people from the local churches.

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