



## Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

<b>St Briavels Parochial Church of England Primary School</b>	High Street, St Briavels, Lydney, Gloucestershire GL15 6TD
<b>Current SIAMS inspection grade</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Gloucester</b>
Previous SIAMS inspection grade:	Outstanding
Local authority	Gloucestershire County Council
Name of federation	Wye Forest Federation
Date/s of inspection	22 September 2016
Date of last inspection	11 November 2011
School's unique reference number	115697
Executive Headteacher	Ian Barkley
Inspector's name and number	Maria Wells 793

### School context

St Briavel's Parochial Primary School is a smaller than average primary school in the Forest of Dean. Since its last inspection the school has grown by 40 pupils; the school is now approaching full capacity. A new executive headteacher was appointed in September 2013. He is also the headteacher of another local church school. The two schools together form the Wye Forest Federation. The additional funding the school receives for pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The number of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) is below the national average.

### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Briavel's Parochial Primary as a Church of England school are outstanding.**

- The vision and leadership of the headteacher drives continuous improvement of the school's distinctive Christian ethos.
- Christian values are an intrinsic part of school life and underpin strong, positive relationships throughout the school.
- The governors' strong commitment to ensuring that Church school distinctiveness is sustained and developed.

### Areas to improve

- Strengthen links with national and global communities in order to further enrich the lives of pupils and develop their understanding of Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith.
- Continue to develop the planning of Christian values and for opportunities for spiritual development across the curriculum in order that pupils regularly engage in experiences that further develop a personal spirituality.

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

St Briavel's Primary School is an inclusive, warm and welcoming Christian community. The school's adopted Christian values are made explicit and have a significant impact on well-being and spiritual development. As a result of the Christian ethos pupils achieve well and make good progress from their starting points. Pupils talk of the importance of the Christian values on their lives and can identify how they help with their learning. They describe the need for courage when working through problems, which they relate back to the Bible story of David and Goliath. Parents comment that the Christian ethos of the school has helped their children grow in confidence and self esteem which has in turn impacted on their learning. Pupils give examples of how teachers demonstrate the values, such as justice when pupils may have fallen out. The school ensures that the six core Christian values of trust, friendship, forgiveness, truthfulness, justice and courage remain high profile by regularly reviewing them with parents through questionnaires. All new parents are introduced to the Christian values and the Christian ethos of the school before joining. Teachers are beginning to plan for opportunities to include the values and opportunities for spiritual development across the curriculum, however, this is not yet fully embedded. Behaviour and relationships at all levels are outstanding and are attributed to the Christian ethos and values of the school. Pupils comment that 'behaviour is good, we are all treated equally, we all respect each other and use our values to help'. There have been no exclusions and attendance is good. Pupils have a good understanding of the role of the Christian church locally. However, this is less well developed at a national and global level. The school leaders and staff have spent time exploring the question 'What do we mean by spirituality?' and have developed a policy which they have summed up in the phrase 'developing the inside as well as the outside'. The 'Think, Explore and Create' group helps pupils to develop a personal spirituality. All classes have 'reflection time' which is valued by pupils as a time to think deeply about feelings. RE has a significant impact on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development. This enables pupils to reflect on moral and social issues such as 'Can I change the world.'

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

Collective worship is an important part of daily life at St Briavel's school. Staff and pupils articulate the impact it has on their lives. Worship is distinctively Christian. Christian values are fully embedded during worship, through Bible stories, the parables of Jesus and stories of other significant Christian leaders. As a result, pupils understand the values as being distinctively Christian and can make links with Bible stories. Members of staff always attend and fully participate in worship and comment that it impacts on their lives. The use of symbols to represent God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit is helping pupils to develop an understanding of the Trinity. The use of incense as a symbol of the Holy Spirit is helping pupils to understand that 'the Holy Spirit is all around us even though we can't see him'. The school uses a diocesan resource 'Roots and Fruits' as a starting point for planning. The worship leader works closely with staff and pupils to ensure they include a range of Christian themes. There is an emphasis on the Christian values and worship rooted in scripture. The school has an enthusiastic pupil worship team. With the support of the collective worship leader they frequently help to plan and lead worship. Pupils receive a rich experience of worship which is led by the headteacher, all staff and an 'Open the Book' team made up of members of the local church and congregational chapel. Worship impacts on the lives of all

members of the school community and staff talk of the Ash Wednesday worship where the school community received the cross of ashes as an 'amazing spiritual moment'. Aspects of traditional liturgy, such as the 'the Lord be with you' are regular features of worship. As a result pupils are developing an awareness of Anglican traditions. The major festivals are celebrated in the parish church giving pupils an excellent understanding of the seasons of the Church's year and Christian festivals. When leaving the school pupils are encouraged to take the values with them. The whole school community places great importance on the annual leaving service where all pupils are given a Bible and cross. There is a strong focus on prayer. Pupils write prayers and the Lord's prayer is always a feature of worship. Thus pupils understand that prayer can be both personal and corporate. The simplicity of the school prayer 'God made us, God loves us, God keeps us' means that even the very youngest know and understand it. Pupils talk about prayer as being 'in touch with God'. A foundation governor regularly attends worship. Governors evaluate its impact on the lives of pupils through observation and interviews with pupils which are shared with the Ethos committee and used to inform future planning. As a result of the consistent focus on Christian values, pupils independently take action in the service of others through fundraising activities. For example, pupil interest in the plight of the refugees led to this being the focus of the Harvest Festival worship and fundraising appeal entitled 'Feed the World'. Pupils are challenged to consider 'Big Questions' such as, 'Is it ever right to be wrong and is it ever wrong to be right?' 'What can I do to change the world?' thus developing thinking and supporting SMSC development.

### **The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding.**

Religious Education (RE) is exceptionally well led by a skilled and knowledgeable subject leader who supports and mentors other staff in developing their skills and knowledge. RE is seen as a core subject and is monitored and evaluated in the same way as other core subjects. The school's tracking shows that pupils' achievement in RE is in line with that of other core subjects and that pupils make good progress from their starting points. Progress is clearly evident in RE books. Religious education has a high profile and pupils are encouraged to think deeply and reflect on faith and moral issues through skilful questioning by the teachers. Monitoring and evaluation by school leaders shows evidence that teaching in RE is consistently good and often outstanding. Links with the Christian values are made clear in the religious education curriculum and they have a significant impact on pupils. When learning about sacred texts one pupil said 'You have to show respect to the texts even if you don't believe in that religion.' Pupils are given opportunities to understand the beliefs, practices and values of other faiths. When studying sacred texts pupils were analysing, interpreting and reflecting on quotes from the Bible, Torah and Qur'an. Teachers planning of RE supports pupils knowledge at all levels. RE lessons are exciting and challenging. Pupils talk about the subject with enthusiasm. The story of the lost sheep was brought alive to younger pupils by the use of small world models. The dramatisation by the teacher fully engaged pupils who were then able to apply their learning to their own reflections on the meaning of being lost.

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

The headteacher's strong leadership and personal vision and passion ensure that the whole child is valued. The school aims to 'find the gift in each child' by making sure that the 'Christian values are embedded through everything we do'. This ensures that the focus is always on the needs of the child both in terms of their learning, well-being and spiritual development. As a result of strong leadership, all staff feel valued and demonstrate respect and care for each other. Self-evaluation is strong and the headteacher is well supported by the governors. The ethos committee monitor and evaluate the impact of the school's Christian character through their visits to lessons and worship and through discussions with pupils, the headteacher and RE lead teacher. Governors frequently ask the question 'How does this fit in with our Christian ethos?' The headteacher and governors are determined to ensure that the school's Christian distinctiveness is sustained. They work closely with the diocese. This was demonstrated through their appropriate and efficient management of a recent issue, where they found it necessary to seek diocesan advice. Governors understand the importance of their own development and have recently attended diocesan training on church school distinctiveness. The school recognises the importance of preparation for the future leadership of church schools. The skilled RE subject leader supports staff development and provides outreach to other local church schools. The school has effective partnerships with parents who feel welcome and listened to. They comment on how approachable the headteacher and staff are. Parents comment that the school is a safe, nurturing place, that their children trust their teachers and have good relationships in school. Parents appreciate being kept informed about the Christian values via the school newsletter but also comment on the impact of the values at home. The local church contributes to school life and welcomes the school for Christian festival services. A 'food for thought' discussion group, open to the whole community takes place in the school regularly. Partnerships with the local community are strong and as a result, pupils have a good understanding of their community. The Pastor of the local congregation chapel has helped the school develop a link with a community in Uganda. However, this and other links with global communities are not well developed. As a result, pupils do not have a good understanding of difference and diversity. The school meets the statutory requirements for collective worship and religious education.

SIAMS report September 2016 St Briavel's Parochial C of E Primary, Lydney, Gloucestershire GL15 6TD