

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

<b>Brookland Church of England Primary School</b>	
Address	High Street,, Brookland, Ashford, TN29 9QR
How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?	
Overall grade	Good
The impact of collective worship	Good

School's vision
Following in Jesus' footsteps, we learn to make positive and courageous CHOICES to brighten not only our future but that of others.
Key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School leaders have matched their Christian vision very well to its context. Pupils are supported to make choices which are aspirational. However, the vision is currently expressed primarily through associated values rather than explicitly in reference its biblical roots.</li> <li>• Love and kindness form the basis of relationships at all levels. Wellbeing is a priority for families, pupils and staff. The school's approach to spiritual development contributes well to these positive relationships. Deep reflection on injustice leads to social action locally. A sense of fairness and justice is not yet fully developed in relation to national and global issues.</li> <li>• Pupils understand and value the difference and diversity found within their school and in the wider world. There is a very strong culture of inclusion within the school. Those who have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), social or emotional needs are very well cared for. Their individual needs are met, enabling them to flourish.</li> <li>• Collective worship is strongly underpinned by the elements of choice and aspiration found in the school's vision and associated values. Pupils are able to act on its messages for their decisions and for their actions day by day.</li> <li>• Curriculum development in religious education (RE) has been well led and managed. However, the smaller steps of enquiry are not planned as consistently as are the 'big' questions within the RE curriculum.</li> </ul>
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embed an explicit and shared understanding of how Christian teaching roots the school's vision.</li> <li>• Build on the pupils' current understanding of how to challenge injustice so that they can apply this to national and global issues.</li> <li>• Develop small steps of enquiry for the RE curriculum in order to support the pupils' learning lesson by lesson.</li> </ul>

## Inspection findings

An aspirational Christian vision supports pupils in making their own courageous and positive choices. School leaders have ensured that this is very well suited for its small school community and its particular locality in Brookland. By making their own choices, the pupils grow in confidence which leads to flourishing, both academically and socially. They demonstrate a clear understanding that their behaviour and attitude choices have an impact on others. By choosing to put their associated values into action, they know that they will brighten the lives of all those around them. This is how they follow in the footsteps of Jesus. School governors and leaders clearly articulate their courage and risk in making bold strategic decisions for flourishing. They explain how their actions reflect the trust and bravery of Peter in 'stepping out of the boat'. However, this is not explicitly articulated by all staff and pupils. Their understanding is currently focussed on the outworking of the school's associated values. For parents, the living out of these values is one of the key reasons for their choice of this school. They are particularly impressed by the ways in which younger and older pupils interact naturally, knowing each other by name. This knowledge about each individual is modelled by staff in their dealings with families. They are readily available to reassure and encourage parents. Those who have transferred children from other schools have experienced a warm welcome, especially for those who have SEND or other needs. Pupils' personal development is exceptional because they are brought up in and by the school 'family'. One parent simply said, 'They (staff) love the children'.

Staff are very well supported. Their wellbeing is a priority for school leaders. This leads to staff members choosing to stay long-term or becoming confident leaders elsewhere. Strong staff relationships are the foundation and example for relationships at all levels. Pupils trust all adults to keep them safe. A culture of dignity and respect, based on making positive choices for others, means that negative incidents are extremely rare. Pupils know that they will be listened to if a problem arises. Parents also praise excellent communication about their children which means that their concerns are quickly heard and addressed. The behaviour policy is rooted in making positive choices in line with the vision. It encourages reflection on those choices which may not be the right ones, embracing the values of empathy and humility. A number of parents speak of highly individualised support which has transformed their child's attitude towards school. This demonstrates how pupils benefit from the wholly inclusive culture of the school and also make a positive contribution towards it. There is no such thing as giving up on an individual, either a child or an adult, in order to seek their brighter future. The best means of nurture and support is always found and offered, whether that be personal or professional.

A curriculum based on questions is used as an effective vehicle for widening the horizons of pupils towards a bright future. It promotes understanding of diversity and difference through the individuals whose lives are studied across different areas of learning. Pupils can talk about how being different is something to be celebrated. They say that this is because many varied gifts and talents are needed to make up their classes and wider school community. They also describe the world as more interesting because people are so diverse. The school's approach to spiritual development asks pupils to reflect on their own and others' experiences. Having done that, they are encouraged to take social action as a response. They express a desire to take better care of the local and of the world-wide environment. Practical action locally has seen the setting up of a 'Community Cupboard' in partnership with Brookland church. This stock of food items, donated through school, is used by all the village community. It has helped the pupils to have a passion for anyone in any kind of need in their locality. They can explain that there are many reasons why someone might draw on

the 'Community Cupboard'. Their attitudes demonstrate care, compassion and understanding for making sure that everyone is treated equally and justly.

Collective worship is shaped by the importance of positive and courageous choices as expressed in the school's vision. Pupils are able to apply the messages from worship to their everyday lives, both in school and beyond. They consistently refer to the benefit to 'others' when explaining how their school values are to be put into practice. Pupil leaders from Years 5 and 6 take responsibility for worship once a week. Based on a given theme, they plan and implement all the elements for Wednesday worship. This means that they are thinking deeply about how they convey their message and make it relevant for their peers. When adults lead worship, there is an invitation for everyone to take time for personal reflection through music and through prayers. This contributes to the spiritual development and wellbeing of the whole school community. Pupils and parents recognise the encouragement given through the Friday celebration's focus on positive attitudes and caring for others. Special celebrations in the local church for Harvest, Christmas, Easter and the Leavers' services are pupil-led. Parents say that they feel welcomed and 'at home' in the church building. With limited time, the local self-supporting vicar provides much-valued support as a governor and as a trusted 'listener' for staff, pupils and families.

The RE leader has developed the current curriculum in line with the questioning approach of the wider curriculum. She has benefitted from middle leadership training provided by Canterbury Diocese. In turn, she has ensured that training and ongoing support has been provided for teachers. This has increased their confidence for planning. It has also resulted in a curriculum which gives pupils a good understanding of a range of world religions. Teachers ask the 'big' questions for topics being studied. They do not consistently use other important questions to make sure that pupils are consolidating their learning step by step. Pupils enjoy lessons which help them to understand how different religions compare with each other. They explain how knowledge of various faiths will support them in living well alongside others, now and in the future. Creatively planned RE days provide valuable enrichment experiences of world religions. This means that pupils make relevant links with other curriculum areas and with their understanding of the wider world.

Information			
School	Brookland Church of England Primary School	Inspection date	3 July 2023
URN	118664	VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary controlled
Diocese/District	Canterbury	Pupils on roll	88
Headteacher	Martin Hacker		
Chair of Governors	Tara Pollard		
Inspector	Virginia Corbyn	No.	86