



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

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

### **Billesdon Parochial (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School**

Gaulby Road  
Billesdon  
Leicestershire  
LE7 9AG

**Diocese: Leicester**

Local authority: Leicestershire

Dates of inspection: 3 October 2014

Date of last inspection: 11 November 2009

School's unique reference number: 120115

Headteacher: Mrs Anita Timson

Inspector's name: Mrs Hilary Painter

#### **School context**

This is small primary school serving a rural area. The pupils are of mainly white British heritage, living in Billesdon and surrounding villages. There are currently 96 pupils on roll, of whom about 30% live outside the catchment area. The school enjoys strong links the local Anglican Church and also the Baptist Chapel. Since the last inspection, major refurbishment has been completed, including the provision of a hall. The governing body has recently considered academy status but this route has not been followed.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Billesdon Parochial Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding**

- The leadership team has a strong vision of the school as a church school, living by Christian values, which are firmly embedded and inform practice at all levels.
- Christian values are clearly apparent in relationships throughout the school and have a significant impact on pupils' development.
- The school has strong, working relationships with the local church, enabling pupils to feel they are part of the wider Christian community.

#### **Areas to improve**

- Develop the links with Christian values across the whole curriculum, to further increase the impact they have.
- Increase the awareness of development as a church school in the School Development Plan, to ensure it has a high profile.

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

Billesdon's vision statement states, 'We are the Children of God. We learn to believe, and believe to achieve.' The impact of this, and the school's Christian values, is immediately apparent, providing

a positive atmosphere in which all children can develop, feeling safe and respected. Christian symbols and displays are prominent and pupils talk eagerly about their meaning and content. Each class has its own reflective area, with prayers, books and palm crosses to help pupils to focus. Pupils enthusiastically explain the significance of the crosses and their use on Ash Wednesday. They confidently write prayers that are used in a variety of situations in school, although the use of private prayer is less developed. There are 'quiet areas' outside and benches for those who feel in need of friendship. These encourage cross-age support and help build a sense of community. Attendance levels, achievement and attainment are high at both key stages and there is effective support for those with special needs at each end of the ability spectrum. Behaviour is a strength of the school. Staff attribute this to the school's Christian ethos, which encourages empathy and awareness of others. Poor behaviour is dealt with quickly in a sensitive and caring way. There is a well-developed House system, encouraging co-operative effort. Religious education (RE) is taught using the diocesan framework and pupils are able to clearly express thoughts and ideas concerning faith and relate moral issues in their own lives to stories in the Bible. Through RE and collective worship, pupils develop a high level of understanding about those less well off than themselves and respect for other cultures. They speak with enthusiasm about efforts to help others, mentioning collecting items for wash-bags to be taken to India and a 'Welly Walk' to raise money for Farm Africa. Annual surveys show that parents are appreciative and supportive of the school's Christian values. They say their children love coming to school and speak of their children's growing awareness of moral issues. They also mention children's sensitivity towards the feelings of others and attribute this to the school's strong Christian character. Through links and visits to their partner school in Leicester and links with a school in the diocese of Trichy in India, the pupils show increasing awareness of other faiths and cultures.

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

Great value is placed on collective worship, which is the focal point, beginning each day. It is distinctly Christian in character and is structured around themes, linked to Christian values and the church year. All but the youngest pupils know the Lord's Prayer and the school prayer. They respond powerfully to the greeting, 'God is good!' with the response, 'All the time!' Worship songs are sung well and with enthusiasm. Pupils speak positively about worship and can clearly relate the content to Jesus' teachings, Christian values and to their own lives. They also show development in understanding of the Trinity. Parents comment positively that their children talk about faith and worship at home and some have introduced prayers of thanksgiving before meals. Year 5/6 pupils prepare the focus table with the Cross, a candle and cloth of the appropriate liturgical colour and operate the IT presentations. Eleven out of twenty eight year 5/6s belong to the Worship Workshop. This group meets weekly with the vicar, serving the school through discussion and preparation of prayer and worship, including the communion services in the church. The strong impact of pupils' participation is demonstrated by the confidence with which they take part in worship. There are also a number of pupils each year who continue to deepen their faith by preparing for confirmation. Other acts of collective worship are planned and led by teachers, the vicar and curate, the Baptist minister and other members of both congregations. This enables pupils to identify a variety of ways of Christian worship, particularly Anglican ones. Members of the church congregation present 'Open the Book' sessions to each class on a fortnightly basis, furthering the sense of belonging to a wider community. Parents and members of the church welcome the opportunity to join in celebratory services and the special services in church, including the mid-termly communions and end-of-term services. Staff and governors regularly undertake effective monitoring and evaluation, leading to improvements that benefit the pupils' experience of the Christian life.

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

A strength of the school is that the headteacher, management and foundation governors are keenly aware of the importance of the Christian values of a church school and articulate them with clarity. These values are clearly embedded in the ethos of the school. Within this ethos, pupils' progress is

carefully monitored and they make above average progress. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is enhanced by the wider curriculum including extra-curricular clubs and activities, involvement in charities and a range of day and residential visits. These enrich the pupils' awareness and understanding of the world beyond Billesdon. The school's Christian vision prefaces each policy and work is in progress to link Christian values across the whole curriculum. The governing body takes effective steps to monitor the school as a church school, to develop its effectiveness. The headteacher is a member of several development groups within the local family of schools, which provide mutual support. The school values training and support from the diocese and staff and governors have attended courses organised by the diocese, the authority and the National Society with the aim of increasing their knowledge and skills, thus improving the learning experience for the pupils. Links with the church are impressive and have a powerful impact on the school. One grandparent, who has lived in the village all her life, comments that 'Church links have never been stronger, and I go back a long way!' A governor states that the church-school partnership, built on mutual trust and support, goes both ways, benefitting everyone.

SIAMS report

October 2014

Billesdon Parochial Primary School, LE7 9AG