



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

Little Bloxwich Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School  
Grenfell Road, Little Bloxwich, Walsall WS3 3DL

**Previous SIAMS grade: Good**

**Diocese: Lichfield**

Local authority: Walsall

Date of inspection: **5 March 2015**

Date of last inspection: **11 March 2010**

School's unique reference number: 104222

Headteacher: Ellen Taylor

Inspector's name and number: R Mary Gale 337

### School context

Little Bloxwich Church of England School has 202 pupils. Most of them live in the area surrounding the school which is a mixture of high rise flats, maisonettes and houses. Most pupils are White British with a few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. 41% of pupils are in receipt of Pupil Premium funding. The Headteacher has been in post for eight years. She is a member of Walsall SACRE (since July 2009). There have been changes to the leadership team since September 2014. A new vicar has recently been appointed. The church is located some distance away from the school. The school was inspected by Ofsted in Feb 2013 and judged to be good. A recent Local Authority review confirms this grading.

### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Little Bloxwich as a Church of England school are good

- The inclusive and cohesive school community which lives out Christian values and strongly influences all aspects of school life.
- The respectful, articulate and exceptionally well-behaved pupils, who demonstrate good attitudes to learning and succeed well.
- The strong leadership of the Headteacher, supported by her leadership team, and their passion for ensuring the spiritual experiences offered to pupils are of a high quality.

### Areas to improve

- Involve senior leaders and foundation governors in formally evaluating core Christian beliefs and the impact of worship on pupils.
- Ensure pupils in Early Years and Key Stage One experience a broader range of Bible stories.
- Develop pupils' experience of Christianity as a worldwide faith and their encounter with people of faiths to enhance their moral, social and cultural development.
- Enhance the school's Anglican foundation by:
  - a) broadening links with the parish team and its future leader
  - b) further embracing Anglican practices in worship.

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

This school is a welcoming Christian community. The school mission statement, “*caring, courtesy, conscientiousness and courage within a secure environment that is securely built upon Christian values*” is known and valued by all. This mission statement, built upon the key Christian values of trust, humility, thankfulness, service and compassion, underpins all school life and practice. As a result pupils mature and develop into compassionate and caring individuals who work hard and love learning. Governors hold leaders to account in relation to learning ensuring teachers go the extra mile and pupils are encouraged to believe in themselves modelling the core values. Consequently results in July 2014 were good overall; current data shows this trend is continuing. The vast majority of pupils make good progress and reach a good level of development regardless of their ability or background. This is due to the high aspirations of all staff and the personalised learning support which is built upon Christian values. This reflects the principles of a Christian community where pupils are encouraged to believe in themselves. Pupil relationships are nurtured so that everyone feels cared for as one big family. This inspires pupils to work hard, endure through periods of change and rise to challenges. Parents, including those of special needs pupils, praise the care and diligent support given by school staff to enable their children to reach their potential. Parents were enthusiastic in their praise of the school and many choose it because it makes a difference to the lives of their children. The views of many were stated by one parent, “*I chose this school for my child, it is very supportive and inclusive; it fosters the church school ethos.*” Parents value the safe and supportive environment provided which is evidenced through the way in which their children enjoy school and conduct themselves both at home and in the community. The spiritual development of pupils is supported by high quality experiences across the curriculum. This increases pupils’ awareness of the richness of God’s world and their responsibility in safeguarding it. Pupils readily express views about awe, wonder and creativity. The outdoor areas of the reflection garden and “*Jamie’s Place*” are utilised so that pupils are able to reflect on the school day in an oasis of calm. One pupil stated “*we go there if we feel sad, when we think about our friends who have died and then we feel better*”. The vast majority of pupils know that belonging to a church school is important, that it is built on Christian beliefs where the values of the school are rooted in the teachings of Jesus. When asked what this means to them, one pupil shared, “*Jesus is really special; like Daniel in the lion’s den, they both showed courage*” Another said “*The Good Shepherd lost his sheep; he didn’t give up- that’s Jesus; he cares!*”. Key Stage 2 pupils are able to make the connection about their need for courage and compare this with the courage Jesus showed when he was crucified. “*Jesus was brave he died for us so we could live a better life*”. This school values and rewards the achievements of all pupils both at home and school. As a result these confident pupils are keen to make a positive contribution. Pupils enjoy donating to charity. Through this they experience the Christian values of service and gratitude. Religious education impacts well on the schools’ Christian character. Key Stage 2 pupils say that stories from Christianity and other faiths show them how to live their lives. This promotes an understanding of, and a developing respect for diverse communities. Pupils’ understanding of world-wide Christian practice is limited. This undermines pupils’ understanding of international communities. Relationships in school are outstanding resulting in a calm, compassionate and purposeful Christian community.

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

Pupils value collective worship and see it as a cornerstone in the life of the school. Collective worship supports the pupils’ understanding of the 4C s “*caring, courtesy, conscientiousness and courage*” learning to connect these values to a variety of Bible stories and Bible verses e.g. “*courage*” Ezra 10:4 “*Rise up: this matter is in your hands. We will support you, so take courage and do it.*” Pupils are beginning to discuss these aspects with confidence which enables them to make comparisons between their lives and that of Jesus and his disciples. Pupils enjoy whole school, key stage and classroom collective worship. These settings provide varied opportunities for engagement and response at an age appropriate level. Opportunities are

offered in collective worship for pupils to pray, reflect, respond to Bible texts and answer questions. The importance placed on pupils' own prayers and the sharing of these prayers is apparent. Prayer is used to help pupils understand their feelings and the situations of others. Pupils state clearly the reason why they need to pray, "we need to speak to God; sometimes we pray for our friends who have passed away and ask that they be looked after in heaven". Pupils enjoy writing prayers for class prayer boxes, these are then shared weekly in whole school worship before "being sent to heaven." A Year 1 pupil has written a school grace which is prayed daily; this emphasises the importance of sharing personal prayer. The pupils have a developing understanding of The Lord's Prayer. The dedicated "reflection corner" within each classroom supports collective worship. They remind the pupils of symbols, precious objects, Bibles and prayer boxes which exemplify weekly collective worship themes. Bible stories are regularly included in worship but Early Years and Key Stage 1 pupils' recall of these is confused. The parish team lead worship on a regular basis; these sessions support pupils' knowledge of core Christian beliefs. Pupils are welcomed by the worshipping parish community. In the Summer term Year 6 attend a Eucharist Service led by Rev. Arnold (some pupils have been confirmed in the past and continue to receive Holy Communion) and Year 2 visit St John's for Christmas and Easter celebrations. These visits add to pupils' developing understanding of core Christian beliefs and Anglican practices. An established rolling programme of worship planning has been devised based on Christian values and festivals. Core Christian beliefs and aspects of Anglican practice are not yet fully embedded in this programme, therefore pupils' understanding of these aspects are underdeveloped. Pupils have a limited understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Records of worship are completed by staff and pupils; this supports recall and reflection. Evaluation of worship by senior leaders and governors needs formalising. Parents comment that worship is having a positive impact on their children and that they enjoy being included in celebration events enabling them to worship as a family.

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

The Headteacher (who is also the collective worship and Religious Education co-ordinator), her leadership team, and the governors, have a clear vision of how distinctive Christian values need to be central to school life. They model compassionate caring throughout the school day. These school leaders speak confidently and accurately about the schools' Christian vision based on the 4Cs. The school logo incorporates the cross and the 4Cs, this serves as a daily reminder of the importance the school places on these aspects and how pupils can live their lives. Detailed analysis of performance and progress ensures that all pupils' learning needs are supported, enabling them to overcome educational, social and economic disadvantage. Standards of attainment and rates of progress are in line and often above the national average because this school celebrates the unique contribution each pupil brings to school. It ensures pupils are given the encouragement to be the best they can be. This has a positive impact on the well-being of all pupils. The Governing Body's evaluation of the schools' core Christian beliefs to inform strategic direction is yet to be formalised. Whilst they value the strengths of the school, they are aware of areas for development and have discussed the actions that need to be taken to move the school forward. Leaders hold a realistic view of areas to be addressed, such as more systematic teaching of Bible stories to the younger pupils and embedding and developing the evaluation of the impact of worship within the annual school cycle of review. Parents are appreciative of the ways in which their views are informally and formally sought. They praise the openness of the school resulting in an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect. Pastoral links with the church communities are well developed, as exemplified by the variety of events where members of the church community are prominent in their support. These include "Messy Church", shared newsletters and the "Youth Church". These links help pupils understand that they belong to a caring Christian community where all individuals are valued. Developments from the previous inspection have been addressed.

