



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

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

### **Brockington College**

Blaby Road, Enderby  
Leicester LE19 4AQ

**Previous SIAMS grade: Outstanding**

**Current inspection grade: Outstanding**

**Diocese: Leicester**

Local authority: N/A

Dates of inspection: 9&10 December 2015

Date of last inspection: November 2010

School's unique reference number: 138521

Principal: Christopher Southall

Inspector's name and number: Lyn Field 151

### **Context**

The school converted to an academy in 2012 and, in September 2015, extended its admissions to become an 11-16 college. The expansion necessitated the appointment of twenty new members of staff this term. Brockington is a community college housing a full programme of adult learning. The vast majority of students are White British and the proportions of students eligible for extra pupil premium funding or who have special educational needs are both lower than schools nationally. The principal, vice principal and vicar have all been in post for around six years.

### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Brockington College as a Church of England academy are outstanding**

- Governors and senior leaders have a clear Christian vision for the college and this is the driver for their strategic planning.
- The partnership that has evolved with Christian churches locally has become a significant resource for the college in meeting the needs of students. It is an example of excellent practice in the Church serving the community through its schools.
- The prominence given to religious studies (RS) and spiritual reflection equips students with the skills to *'live life to the full'* in modern society

### **Areas to improve**

- Forge partnerships with the wider network of church schools in order to play a role in the development of church school education
- Enhance the curriculum provision for students at key transition points so that it inspires and fully meets their spiritual and personal needs into the future

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

The Christian ethos has a high profile in the life and leadership of the college. The mission statement *'Learning to live life to the full'*, inspired by John 10:10 in the Bible, drives the work of all departments but especially pastoral care. Exemplary and meticulous attention to detail leads to good and rising levels of

attendance, with each year group improving on figures for the previous year. This is also true for the small proportion of students who do not attend regularly and exclusions for poor behaviour remain low, even as the school expands. This is because the first words of the mission statement, *Learning to*, focus students on taking responsibility for themselves and others. They recognise when they themselves need help and raise any concerns about the wellbeing of others. The seven core Christian values of the college are constant reference points in how the care of students works out in practice. They are known to have a distinctively Christian basis and this is regularly articulated by staff and students alike. Relationships are 'truthful and trustworthy'. Justice is evident on a daily basis in the way that students are treated fairly and forgiveness is regarded as a life skill in maintaining the harmonious relationships that exist. A recent, significant development is that the college is now accessing Christian organisations, such as REALITY, as a source of professional support for students. On a more informal basis, the innovative creation of the *Koinonia Kafe* and a *Christian Lunchtime Club* are proving valuable to students and not solely those from Christian backgrounds. They are run by clergy and lay staff of Christian churches locally. The growing presence of the Church as a resource for the college is an initiative worthy of sharing across the wider network of church schools. It is opening up opportunities for Christian students to relate to other Christians without compromising the inclusive nature of the college. It is a safe place for students (and adults) to explore what faith might mean for them. *'Learning to live life to the full'* is equally evident in academic work because the curriculum is planned with this purpose in mind. It can be life-changing, as in trips to Kenya, but regularly prompts the rethinking of issues. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is, therefore, outstanding. Students enter the college with above average attainment. They continue to make good progress, often more than expected, so achievement is consistently high. Students with special needs do particularly well. Short term intervention groups are very effective because they specifically address the needs of able pupils as well as those who find learning difficult. Lessons in personal development do not shy away from difficult and sensitive issues and equip students to make life choices and explore how these might be informed by faith. Students frequently draw on their knowledge from RS. This is one of many examples in which RS has a major impact on how the Christian character of the college prepares students for life in modern society. Students show a genuine interest in all faiths and develop the skills and confidence to challenge any form of prejudice and discrimination.

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

All forms of daily collective worship come under the umbrella of Spiritual Reflection. This makes it clear that the spiritual dimension of each individual is equally as important as their academic achievement. This is why a decision was made that year group assemblies should be planned and led by senior staff, governors and clergy from local Christian churches. Themes, agreed by consultation, are expressed as whole sentences rather than as single words. This very specific focus places significant demands on both the leader and the listener. Each member of this team gives very serious thought to the interpretation of themes so students receive material of the highest quality, week after week, through their time in the school. The long-term impact is that ex-students look back on this time as instrumental in shaping them as people and their outlook on relationships and global issues. This is yet another example of the college equipping students with skills to *'live life to the full'*. Students and staff fully engage in the worship because each element is carefully designed to challenge their spiritual thinking in a different way. Termly services in church, when students take a leading role, reflect the Christian traditions in the local community so students are confident to explain how key Christian beliefs, including the Trinity, are expressed in formal worship. All acts of worship offer opportunities for prayer and options to pray individually with clergy or in groups with other students are increasing. These groups are not exclusive and are often attended by students exploring or curious about faith. In form groups, spiritual reflection diaries are well established and valued by students who see them as something precious and unique to them. Leaders are never complacent and regularly make amendments in response to feedback. This term, literacy and spiritual reflection booklets have been merged and students are divided about the benefit of this. Some find the focus on language helpful while others find it a distraction from deeper thinking. With the future in mind, leaders recognise that as Year 10 students move into year 11, material for form groups may need to be revised to match their growing level of maturity. The staff handbook and the collective worship policy provide clear guidance that worship is a 'special and

separate time'. Delivering these expectations, however, can be challenging for teachers new to the school. Experienced tutors are paired up with new colleagues to minimise the inevitable inconsistency that creeps in. Worship is monitored at regular intervals. Some learning walks lack a sharp enough focus to lead directly to improvement but members of the clergy are now in the second cycle of evaluating each other's leadership of assemblies. The clear structure they have created for this is an example of excellent practice worth sharing with schools more widely.

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

Religious studies is an ambitious and highly effective department. The subject leader for RS is very well informed about changes in the world of RS as well as being familiar with effective teaching methods. She is passionate about the difference the subject makes to students' understanding of living in a diverse society and, consequently, how they '*learn to live life to the full*' in that context. The leader has made maximum use of opportunities to make RS a lead subject in the college, especially in making the transition to Key Stage 4. Both the leader and another colleague have trained as GCSE examiners in order to be certain that assessment across the department is accurate. Christianity is particularly well taught because teachers' strong subject knowledge enables them to ask probing questions that persistently focus on religious concepts. Similarly, activities are matched to the needs of different abilities, not just in terms of students' skills in literacy but in how they are mastering skills specific to RS. Students work well collaboratively and pay attention to what others say in order to form their own opinions. The staff work effectively as a team and everyone contributes to the constant development of teaching materials. Students respond to the high expectations of their teachers, including non-specialists, who are of a very high calibre. Achievement is well above average in Key Stage 3 and is already putting down clear markers for Year 11 results in 2016. Students are being well prepared for GCSE by starting the course in Year 9. They each believe in their own ability because assessment raises aspirations and teaching is frequently outstanding and never less than consistently good. The enthusiasm of new and experienced teachers alike is infectious. Students are unanimous in their support for RS as a compulsory core subject.

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

Although graded outstanding by the previous SIAS inspection, the college's Christian character has advanced considerably in the last five years. The confidence to make innovative and far-reaching changes is the result of the same team of senior leaders and governors working relentlessly to deliver the mission of the church in the local community. They are united in their actions by a clear Christian vision. This has motivated the expansion of the college to 11-16. Governors talk of Gospel values being constant touchstones at every stage of the process. The vast majority of Year 9 students have stayed into Year 10 and this represents a huge vote of confidence from parents. They praise the excellent communication that exists and the level of support for families that totally reflects the college's Christian values. What stands out here is the way in which the college now embraces the wider Christian community. This has a two-way benefit. It offers current students a range of Christian networks. It is also a lasting point of contact for those at the fringe of the church community who miss the spiritual dimension to life when they move on or who, years afterwards, seek support in time of crisis. The development of this partnership with the wider Christian community is the result of hard work and measured judgements in when to move forward. This is particularly true of the chaplaincy. Wise decisions and detailed strategic planning have enabled the college's expansion to happen smoothly. Leaders anticipate where challenges might arise and are already looking ahead to ensure the curriculum evolves whilst still reflecting the college's Christian character. This demonstrates their readiness to make use of their experience more widely in church schools. The prominence given to RS and spiritual development are non-negotiable and this is the reason for the effectiveness of both areas. Leaders are never complacent and no time is lost in making even the smallest improvements. Effective mechanisms are in place to monitor progress including a senior and junior version of EMBRACE, which acts as the sounding board for leaders in developing the Christian ethos of the college.

SIAMS report December 2015 Brockington College Enderby LE19 4AQ