

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### **The Curzon Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School**

Church Road  
Quarndon  
Derby  
DE22 5JA

#### **Diocese: Derby**

Local authority: Derbyshire  
Dates of inspection: 19<sup>th</sup> October 2010  
Date of last inspection: 1<sup>st</sup> February 2008  
School's unique reference number: 112981  
Headteacher: Mrs Geraldine Lowden  
Inspector's name and number: Mr John Horwood NS177

#### **School context**

The Curzon Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School is situated in spacious grounds adjacent to the church in the village of Quarndon. It is a smaller than average school housed in a modern building with good facilities. Children are predominantly of white British heritage. The number eligible for free school meals and the number who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well below average. The headteacher currently teaches two days a week.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of The Curzon Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding**

The school is distinctive because the Christian ethos is promoted through outstanding relationships and a very strong partnership with the local community. It is effective because under the outstanding leadership of the headteacher and governors the school is a happy and purposeful place where children's needs are supported in a caring and loving environment

#### **Established strengths**

- A mutually beneficial relationship with the local church community and outstanding support from the vicar, the foundation governors and from parents.
- An extremely well led committed team of staff who provide outstanding care for the pupils whilst ensuring they gain a very good understanding of Christianity and other world faiths.
- Pupils behave extremely well and value the Christian ethos of the school.
- A happy and harmonious school community where pupils work hard and attain above average standards.

#### **Focus for development**

- Develop further links beyond the local community to give pupils an even greater understanding of other communities.
- Involve pupils in the regular evaluation of the impact of collective worship.

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

Throughout the school the Christian values of care, trust and respect are evident and are reflected in the outstanding relationships between children and with adults. Adults lead by example in promoting these values and pupils are confident and have excellent attitudes to learning and to each other. Behaviour is very good throughout the school enabling all children to feel safe and learn. The children say they enjoy coming to school because their teachers reassure and encourage them. Many said the school is good because it is a small friendly place to be and it treats every pupil as an individual. Staff ensure that all children are included

in all activities and children provide support for each other both in lessons and at lunch time. The promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and the school's prospectus celebrates this clearly. The school environment is very well used to promote spiritual and cultural development. Clear signs and artefacts around the school identify this as a church school and there are quiet areas around the school for reflection. There are displays of children's work in religious education around the school. One pupil who had joined the school from a non-church school said that the difference was immediately apparent and he found the ethos very beneficial to his learning. All children have the chance to contribute to the school operation by taking on responsibility such as being on the school council or the eco-committee. A reward, greatly enjoyed by pupils, is 'being head for a day'. There are very good links to the community especially through links with the church and charity work. Effective links are in place with a school in Uganda and visitors provide pupils with good insight into the global community. The school has done much to develop some exciting links but knows that ongoing development is needed to ensure sustained learning opportunities for pupils.

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

Pupils enjoy the times of worship and during the inspection the whole school visited the adjacent church for a stimulating collective worship by a local faith group. Worship in the church is attended by all staff, the vicar and other foundation governors. Pupils joined in enthusiastically in the songs and the prayers. The nature of the worship restricted opportunities for active involvement of pupils but many could recall previous worships where they had been involved in the organisation. The eco-committee, for example, had recently led worship in the church for the school and the local community. All staff attend worship and participate fully which clearly helps the spiritual growth of the whole school community. Several of the pupils were able to explain the importance of prayer and to hold a good discussion about their beliefs. All teachers organise class worship and the vicar leads worship once a week. There are other visitors who lead worship and both pupils and parents talk very positively about the 'HOW' and 'Open The Book' collective worships. Worship is extremely well planned and monitored by the coordinator. Governors are kept fully informed through the headteacher's report and informal discussion. The evaluation of worship always correctly focuses on the impact it has had on those present. At present the evaluation is carried out by the coordinator and an area for development is involving pupils in this process. As a direct result of the impact of collective worship some pupils now attend church events and services, many attend the after school club held each week and the holiday club provided by the church.

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

The school is fortunate in having both a headteacher and a religious education (RE) coordinator committed to high quality RE provision. The co-ordinator has worked closely with the diocesan RE advisor and has collaborative arrangements with other schools to share innovative ideas. There have been significant improvements to the provision since the last inspection when it was judged to be good. This is mainly because assessment systems are well established to ensure pupils make at least as good progress as they do in other subjects. There is also a good focus on the understanding of faiths in the wider community with visits taking place to support this. Pupils are very well informed about the church and the various roles and responsibilities because of the excellent involvement of the vicar who they know well and like. All three lessons seen during the inspection were good or better. Pupils made at least good progress and their standards attained are judged to be above expected levels. The pupils were comfortable when talking about spiritual and faith matters and have an extremely good understanding. Regular assessment is carried out appropriate to the age of the pupils and helps teachers ensure that work is well matched to pupils' ability. There are good displays around the school to celebrate pupils' work. Pupils are actively involved in lessons and are consistently given opportunity and encouraged to reflect, question and reason. Even the younger pupils could reflect on and discuss their observations about the creation of spiders' webs and were fascinated by the short film about the beauty of spiders. Year 2 pupils made good progress in their understanding about 'creation' and in the Year 4/5 class the topic of Judaism was made exciting by the use of information and communication technology and by appropriate artefacts.

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

The headteacher provides outstanding leadership with the dedication and skills to move the school forward as a church school. She is supported by a caring and dedicated team of staff who set outstanding role models for children throughout the day by promoting Christian values. The foundation governors provide excellent support and have worked with the headteacher to ensure all the areas identified for development from the last inspection have been improved. Governors are now kept well informed about the school's Christian distinctiveness and opportunities for prayer are now better planned throughout the school day including all governors' meetings opening with a prayer. The school prospectus and aims reflect the strong Christian ethos within the school. Governors are very clear about the importance of the school being a church school and of having the Christian ethos central to the pupils' education. The partnership with the church is outstanding and ensures that the church and the school are an integrated part of the community. The strong partnership with the church is also exemplified by the vicar being invited into school to talk to the staff about Christianity. The church and the school are supportive of each other and parents say the partnership is of benefit to their children who develop a good understanding of religion through it being part of their normal day. Both the headteacher and foundation governors have attended training provided by the Diocese who also organised a meeting for parents about the place of RE in a church school. The self evaluation of the school as a church school is very accurate and this, together with the successful improvements since the last inspection, confirm that the capacity for sustained improvement is excellent.

SIAS report October 2010, The Curzon Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, Quarndon DE22 5JA