



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Dinting Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Dinting Vale, Glossop, Derbyshire, SK13 6NX

Previous SIAS grade: Good

Diocese: Derby

Local authority: Derbyshire

Dates of inspection: 15 January, 2015

Date of last inspection: July, 2010

School's unique reference number: 112884

Headteacher: Lynn Elliott

Inspector's name and number: Kerry Palmer (60)

School context

Dinting is a smaller than average primary school with four mixed age classes. Almost all the children are of white, British heritage. The proportion eligible for free school meals is higher than the national average. The number with special needs or disabilities is currently small. The school's increased popularity attracts some families from a wide area. The original, Victorian building was extended in 2000 to provide a spacious and well equipped learning environment. Excellent outdoor provision, for play, sports, environmental studies, gardening and a range of curricular activities has been developed in recent years. A private pre-school operates within the premises. Holy Trinity Church is next door.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Dinting Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding.

- The headteacher's passionate commitment to articulating Christian values as central to all school activity and making the Fruits of the Spirit evident each day.
- The expertise and insight of the religious education and worship coordinator ensuring that they are 'at the heart of everything offered to learners'.
- The strong partnership between school and church enriching the Christian experience of all stakeholders.

Areas to improve

- Develop a programme of multi-faith experiences to enrich RE.
- Explore ways for children to regularly plan and lead worship so as to give them more active ownership.

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

The school's Christian vision is cherished and promoted by the whole school community. Adults talk with passion about the positive impact of Christian values on the children's lives. Children talk freely about the Christian love and care that is evident each school day. 'We try to be like Jesus,' one said. Christian values of endurance and trust promote determination and enthusiasm amongst children and staff, ensuring that all abilities make good or better progress and achievement is well above national levels. The new Learning to Achieve Better room, named by the children, is a vital support base for the learners and many enrichment activities ensure that gifted and talented children are stretched. Consequently, the gap between those identified as disadvantaged and other children is much smaller than national averages. Relationships amongst all in the school community are open, positive and mutually supportive. A parent spoke of the compassion and support offered to the family of a very poorly child; great emphasis is placed on all children's wellbeing. Christian forgiveness and reconciliation drive the school's very effective behaviour policy; children's behaviour is exemplary. Older children buddy the little ones, including pairing with them in worship. They respond maturely to the many responsibilities shared with them. Careful consideration has been given to embedding very effective spiritual development opportunities throughout the new curriculum. However, there are too few opportunities to help children appreciate their place in a diverse and multi-cultural country and world. Wide ranging activities successfully promote the social, cultural, moral and spiritual development of hardworking children who love school, illustrated by attendance levels well above national averages. Children are taken outside the locality into the countryside and are excited by the awe and wonder of God's creation. Parents, staff and children are currently working on a spiritual garden as a place of Christian reflection.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Inspirational Christian collective worship is at the centre of school life and promotes Christian action in pupils' lives. Children say that the focus on Bible stories, the example of Jesus and prayers help them at school and home. Through regular reference to God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit in prayers, songs and story themes, children are comfortable with the concept of Trinity. Thoughtful and informed thematic planning is led by a highly committed coordinator and delivered by a strong team of staff, governors and church representatives. Children are challenged and learn from all aspects of worship, particularly when actively involved in prayer, reading or role play. However, there is insufficient opportunity for them to plan and lead 'their own' school worship. Structured evaluation involving staff, pupils and link governors, introduced since the last inspection, contributes to relevant and focussed improvement planning. Families and friends welcome regular opportunities to join school worship at termly school Holy Communion, Festival and celebration services and class presentations but no formal feedback is given to inform development. Prayer and reflection are important to the children in worship and the school day. They often choose, write and read or say prayers for worship. Every week children's prayers are offered on subjects important to them, ranging from a sick friend to Ebola in Africa. Christian justice and service are lived out in the children's support for numerous local and national charities. Holy Trinity Church works in close partnership with the school. In addition to supporting school worship, church members stage reflective workshops for classes at each of the major church festivals and pupils regularly visit for curricular activities. All

these activities give the children a good insight into Anglican tradition and practice.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

RE is highly valued as a core subject and is 'at the heart of the school'. Led by an experienced, skilled and passionate coordinator, teaching is excellent and pupil achievement is at or above national expectations. Relevant but manageable pupil tracking and assessment systems, introduced since the last inspection are closely monitored and inform planning. There is clear progression and appropriate tasks for all abilities in lessons throughout the school. Importance is given to active and independent learning, whilst group and cooperative work features strongly in imaginative and creative activities. There is strong emphasis on learning from RE which clearly impacts on children's values and outlook on life. Christianity is at the core of RE teaching and children's understanding and knowledge of the Bible and the special nature of Jesus is beyond expectations. In an inspirational infant lesson about the creation story, a little girl picked up a plastic donkey and remarked 'Jesus rode on a donkey, twice! Once when they waved the branches and once in his mummy's tummy!' The school is currently introducing a new enquiry based programme of study which, excites, enthuses and successfully promotes higher order level learning skills, as observed when older children debated the uniqueness of Jesus. Regular professional development opportunities, led by the subject leader and diocesan staff are well received by all staff.

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

The school is led by a headteacher who passionately promotes distinctively Christian values, arising from the life and teaching of Jesus, in the very successful pursuit of the very best education for every child in the school. The array and variety of national awards, including the RE Quality Mark, proudly displayed, illustrate the continual striving for quality. This vision is articulated and shared by staff and governors who work as a mutually supportive team in the quest for excellence in all aspects of school life. Self-evaluation is accurate and improvement plans, contributed to by key stakeholders, identify relevant priorities. The highly professional staff team feel valued and supported, enthusiastically engaging with professional development opportunities which enrich their vocational opportunities. Excellent use is made of support and training offered by the Diocese. Governors know the school well, are now actively involved in monitoring, offering increasing challenge; their wisdom and experience enhances school life. They are clear that the school's church foundation compliments the drive for academic achievement. Several governors regularly lead worship and reflective workshops in church, indicative of the very strong partnership with the church community. Parents have great confidence in, and affection for, the staff team. 100% strongly agreed that 'Dinting School positively promotes Christian values and a positive Christian ethos in the education of my child', in response to the latest school questionnaire. They welcome many opportunities to be involved in school life. The school's quality has been recognised by local authority and diocese in support of others. Statutory requirements for RE and worship are well met.