



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Christ Church Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Tapton View Road
Stonegravels
Chesterfield
Derbyshire S41 7JU

Previous SIAMS grade: satisfactory

Current inspection grade: good

Diocese: Derby

Local authority: Derbyshire

Dates of inspection: 25 June, 2015

Date of last inspection: 24 May, 2011

School's unique reference number: 112810

Headteacher: Sue Beckett

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

School context

Christ Church is a smaller than average primary school serving an urban community in Chesterfield. Children are mainly of White British heritage with a small but significant number with English as a second language or from other cultural backgrounds. The proportion receiving pupil premium support is above average, as is the number with special needs or disabilities. This well maintained school, including generous outdoor areas, provides a stimulating learning environment. It works in close partnership with the nursery on the school site. The parish churches are within walking distance.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Christ Church Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School as a Church of England school are good

- Professional, enthusiastic and committed school leaders give the school's Christian vision high profile. Consequently, Christian values impact positively on all aspects of school life.
- A school community driven by key Christian values which recognise the unique worth of each individual, so that children feel loved, supported and achieve well.
- A positive and mutually supportive relationship with the parish which gives children a feeling of belonging and insight into church traditions.
- A strong commitment to staff development which grows professional competence and potential church school leaders for the future.

Areas to improve

- Develop strategies for promoting the school's Christian values that ensure that their foundation in the life and teaching of Jesus Christ is appreciated by all in the school community.
- With the support of the diocese, explore ways of growing children's familiarity with the Trinity and appreciation of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- Make reference to the school's Christian values when reviewing all policies and key

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

This is truly a school that is successfully driven by its vision 'Learning and growing in faith, hope and love'. It has made significant progress since the last inspection in making its Christian distinctiveness explicit and emphasising its importance throughout the school and in the community. Great emphasis is placed on the development of self-worth. A nurture and wellbeing manager leads many supportive interventions. Wellbeing is given high priority, and Christian love is extended to children from challenging situations. There are several examples of children, excluded from other schools, becoming happy, settled and making good academic progress. Data illustrates that children, including the disadvantaged, with determination and perseverance, make good progress or better. Challenge and enrichment ensures the more able also achieve well. Excellent learning behaviour is evident throughout the school day. Children enjoy coming to school, consequently attendance is good and there are no exclusions. The school is succeeding in its aim 'to develop compassionate and respectful citizens'. Positive and mutually supportive relationships, displaying Christian service, are modelled by all staff and evident amongst the whole school community. Religious education (RE) is recognised as a core subject and significantly promotes the school's Christian foundation. Staff also actively seek ways of highlighting Christian values in other subjects. For example, in a literacy lesson with younger children they discussed whether the witch in Rapunzel displayed Christian values of truthfulness and generosity! The RE curriculum also includes appropriate teaching about other faiths. In another lesson older children noted similarities between Christian and Muslim values and how they influence their lives. This promotes understanding and respect. A visit to a mosque and art related to other faiths were rated highly in a recent children's survey, but, there is insufficient appreciation of Christianity as a world-wide, multi-cultural church. Through a range of creative strategies, RE successfully promotes spiritual, moral, cultural and social development. Children who are 'values ambassadors' lead support for the less fortunate, harvest food parcels, CLIC Sergeant Wig Wednesday and class Christian Aid projects being examples of activities which promote empathy for the less fortunate and illustrate faith in action.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship is a central feature of school life, recognised as a key strategy in promoting Christian values and the school's vision. An established format which includes a liturgical setting, a Bible story, the Lord's Prayer and a time for reflection is standard practice. This, and regular visits to church, introduces children to Anglican tradition. Children remember important lessons and talk enthusiastically about how Christian values are important in their lives. All staff are involved in worship which enhances its status. The whole school worship together on two days each week, with key stage worship on three days. All follow an agreed Christian values themed format, with medium term planning in place, but there is little monitoring of the impact of worship with younger children. There is insufficient structured monitoring of worship across the school, involving a range of stakeholders, to inform positive development. Children have a range of opportunities to actively participate in worship, but in the worship observed chances for them to lead were missed. Memorable festival services, well supported by parents and friends from the churches, involving enthusiastic child led dance, song, presentations and prayer are held in church. The vicar is a recognised friend of the school leading worship and supporting RE. Children particularly enjoy and remember his visits and worship led by the parish Open the Book group. Weekly celebration worship, joined by many families, recognises God given gifts and talents and includes prayers, written by the children, from the school 'values ambassadors'. Prayer and reflection are regular school activities which actively promote spiritual development. Children speak of a calm and thoughtful end of each day. Christian values, including children's thoughts and perceptions are displayed throughout the school, including some excellent creative art work, but insufficient focus on interaction is included. There is an appropriate understanding of Jesus being special, 'the Son of God' several responded, but limited

appreciation of the nature of the Trinity.

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

School leaders enthusiastically embrace and promote Christian values and the school's distinctive character. They involved governors and children in establishing a vision based in faith, hope and love. Christian values are embedded in school life and positively influence relationships, wellbeing and academic progress. Unfortunately, the theological foundation for these values is not explicitly recognised. Time is given by school leaders to focussed reviews of Christian distinctiveness which is a key priority in school development plans and a major improvement since the last inspection. The value of professional development is recognised with effective use made of many training opportunities, including those provided by the diocese and these significantly influence school developments. The 'What if...?' project being the latest example. Mutually beneficial partnerships share expertise and the skills of staff and school leaders with others. The effective and hardworking RE subject leader is currently supporting staff in implementing strategies learnt from an excellence in RE course and promoting a whole school approach. Staff are encouraged to take additional responsibilities and include a number of aspiring headteachers. Effective governors are actively engaged in school life and foundation governors regularly visit to join worship and observe RE. They also discuss the school's self-evaluation of Christian distinctiveness, but there is no regular pattern of ongoing review. Parents appreciate the dedication and professionalism of staff. One commented on 'the welcoming family atmosphere', a Muslim mum said her children were happy at school and a Christian dad said 'they live out their Christian values'. Parents' views are not currently sought on the impact of worship or Christian distinctiveness. The active partnership with the parish has grown since the last inspection and is recognised on the parish website. Church members organise and support reflective 'Experience' days for classes at church and cross phase RE Days in school. They are eager to welcome school at church. Statutory requirements for RE and collective worship are exceeded and the school's aspiration to become an outstanding church school is realistic.

SIAMS report June 2015 Christ Church CofE (VC) Primary School Chesterfield S41 7JU