



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Kirk Langley Church of England (VC) Primary School

Moor Lane
Kirk Langley
Ashbourne
DE6 4LQ

Diocese: Derby

Local authority: Derbyshire

Dates of inspection: 15th October, 2014

Date of last inspection: 20th November, 2009

School's unique reference number: 112833

Headteacher: Mr David Brown

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

School context

Kirk Langley is a much smaller than average village primary school. The number on roll has grown in recent years, its reputation attracting some children from further afield. Best use is made of the restricted, three class, building to provide a bright and stimulating learning environment. It is at the heart of the village and close to the parish church of St Michael's. The majority of children are of white British heritage; few pupils attract pupil premium support. The current headteacher has been in post since January, 2013 and there have been several staff changes in recent years.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Kirk Langley Church of England (VC) Primary School as a Church of England school are good

- The impact of core Christian values on all aspects of school life resulting in the pursuit of excellence for every child.
- The active and mutually supportive partnership of school and parish which enriches the Christian life of all concerned.
- Religious education (RE) which, whilst having Christianity at its core, includes appropriate teaching about other faiths engendering respect and understanding.

Areas to improve

- Establish a cycle of review and development, involving all stakeholders, so as to improve the school's distinctively Christian character.
- Introduce appropriate strategies for pupil evaluation of worship in order to improve planning and increase pupil participation.
- Involve governors and staff in a review of the school's website and key documentation so as to make it explicit that Kirk Langley is a Church school.

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

Recognition by the school community that all God's children are unique and special ensures appropriate motivation for pupils of all abilities and aptitudes. Christian values of service and endurance are evident amongst a professional staff team who provide effective, focussed support for the less able and a range of enrichment and challenge for all. Consequently, performance data indicates progress, including that of vulnerable groups, consistently above national averages in a school where children are confident happy and feel safe. Christian values are modelled by all staff who work together with governors and parents to successfully promote respect and cooperation amongst children who are enthusiastic, very well behaved and hardworking. Trust and forgiveness are evident between children of differing age groups, older children happily helping those who are younger enjoy themselves in the playground. Excellent attendance, well above national averages, is an indicator of this fact. However, the source of Christian values, in the teaching and example of Jesus, is not always clearly articulated or fully evident in key documentation. Significant positive developments since the last inspection ensure that children have a growing appreciation of the diverse country and world that they are growing up in. Much good work ensures insights into other cultures and faiths; respect and understanding is evident in their conversations. Children were engrossed by the recent visit of a teacher from an Islamic school who answered their many questions. The pupils recognise that Jesus is special and different, 'He's the Son of God', said one. Time and thought has been given to the recent introduction of a new RE agreed syllabus. Well planned lessons successfully encourage children to explore spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues, a strength of the school. They learn from as well as about religious teaching; it has a very positive impact on the wider life of the school. This is illustrated by empathy for the needs of the less fortunate and the support given to many charities and good causes such as the local Hope food bank and 'Shelterbox' appeal following the Phillipines disaster.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Christian worship is recognised as important in the life of the school, positively affecting children's spiritual development and lives beyond school. One said 'Remembrance is about dying for others' when discussing sacrifice in war and the school's special, pupil led, service planned for November 11th. Termly themes, developed by the headteacher with the vicar are led by all staff in turn; children appreciate the variety of approaches. They present Christian values, often through Bible stories and discussion which leads to prayer and reflection centring on 'what it means to me'. Children know the Lord's Prayer and why it is special. There is a strong choral tradition which enhances worship. At the moment not all staff are present for worship every day. Worship, like RE, is monitored by foundation governors who submit reports to the full governing body. However, there are currently no structured strategies for reviewing the impact of worship by children. Worship planned and led by children has increased since the last inspection, but the potential is not made the most of. Key celebrations in St Michael's Church, such as harvest, Christmas and Easter are valued by children and parents alike. They would like more, particularly as there is insufficient space for parents to join children for worship in school. Creative activities have a lasting impression 'My candle, last Christingle was the light of Jesus' one child remarked. Children feel 'at home' at church, visiting for many curricular activities. Worship in church and regular involvement of the vicar in school worship and RE gives the children a growing awareness of Anglican tradition and Christian understanding of the Trinity. The vicar and key parishioners are seen as friends, leading sessions such as 'Ways to Pray' which children speak of enthusiastically. This is part of an ongoing strategy which is widening children's understanding and engagement with prayer and meditation, along with growing opportunities and spaces for reflection. Prayer also features at lunchtime, in classroom reflection in some classes, and at the end of the school day. Statutory requirements for collective worship are met.

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

The headteacher, in partnership with staff and governors promotes a Christian ethos which

impacts very positively on the academic achievement and personal development of all the children in the school. All stakeholders have contributed to a vision which includes 'to inspire each child with Christian values...' which informs attitudes to all aspects of school life. This is truly a school where 'Every child can shine'. Whilst being fully supportive of the school's Christian ethos, stakeholders, do not always explicitly link this to 'Jesus, light of the world'. Foundation governors hold regular discussions with the headteacher, monitor effectively and play a full part in governance, but, they are not part of a review cycle informing development of Christian distinctiveness. Staff appointments now ensure that candidates are supportive of the school's church foundation. Good use is made of ongoing support, training and professional development opportunities offered by the local authority and diocese so that shared responsibilities and succession planning is well supported. Parents speak very highly of the commitment and professionalism of all the staff, the warmth of welcome, openness and concern for every child. One parent who had moved from another area said 'As soon as I visited, I knew this was the place for my child – and I've never had misgivings.' Another, 'the children get a foundation of good values'. Questionnaires, meetings and discussions ensure that parents, and children know their voice is heard and taken seriously. Relationships throughout the school are excellent and there is a genuine sense of community. There is popular support for the Friends of Kirk Langley School social and fundraising activities. The current headteacher is fully supported by staff and governors in his determination to continue moving the school forward as a distinctively Christian school and the potential for further improvement is excellent.

SIAMS report October 2014 Kirk Langley CE (VC) Primary School DE64LQ