



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

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

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

Church Road  
Quarndon  
Derby  
DE22 5JA

**Previous SIAMS grade:** Outstanding

**Current inspection grade:** Outstanding

**Diocese:** Derby

Local authority: Derbyshire

Dates of inspection: 26<sup>th</sup> November 2015

Date of last inspection: 19<sup>th</sup> October 2010

School's unique reference number: 112981

Headteacher: Geraldine Lowden

Inspector's name and number: John Clapham 775

#### School context

The Curzon Church of England Primary School is a smaller than average primary school situated in the village of Quarndon, just north of Derby. The school is in close proximity to the parish church, and enjoys a mutually supportive relationship with them. It has a stable roll of 128 pupils in seven single age classes, and is regularly oversubscribed. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds and speak English as their first language. The proportions of pupils eligible for the Pupil Premium (those eligible for free school meals or who are in local authority care) are below the national average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are below average.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of The Curzon Church of England school are outstanding

- Distinctively Christian values are deeply embedded in every aspect of the life of the school, and are central to everything that they say and do.
- The high profile of the school's Christian character has a discernable impact on the children's exceptional behaviour and attitudes, as well as the academic and the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) of each child.
- The Curzon is an inclusive, loving and caring environment where every child is nurtured as a child of God.
- The school is well led, with all members of the school community committed and contributing tirelessly to the sustained progress that The Curzon continues to make.

#### Areas to improve

- Build on the high quality opportunities for reflection across the curriculum to develop outdoor reflective spaces.
- Give regular opportunities for children to plan and lead values based collective worship.

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

Distinctively Christian values are deeply embedded in every aspect of the life of The Curzon and are central to the whole life and witness of the school. This is apparent from first entering the building, and is consistent across school. Reflective areas, creative prayer prompts and the prominent display of biblical material contribute strongly to the spiritual development of the whole school community. All adults in school show genuine care for the children, as articulated by a parent who said “everyone in school goes above and beyond to meet the needs of my child- there is kindness everywhere”. As a result, attendance is very high and children value school as a safe, happy place. Children know that any issues are dealt with quickly and fairly and so they are confident and feel valued. This can clearly be seen on the playground, around school and at lunchtime, where children work together, play together and care for each other exceptionally well. The playground was observed to be a busy, happy place where the Christian ethos and values are lived out consistently. During inspection, one child commented that this was because “Jesus died for our sins so that we could be His friends and love each other, that’s why our school is a good place”. Children take their responsibilities seriously, particularly through the school council, peer buddies and play leaders and in caring for each other as a whole school community. They have also made a real difference beyond their immediate locality with a huge range of charity fundraising initiatives organised by the school council and others. Children show high levels of tolerance and understanding of the views and beliefs of others, both in school and church, and in other faith communities. The strong links established with the Good Shepherd School in Uganda, including reciprocal staff visits; fundraising for a school building; exchanges of letters and displays and prayer, have given children a palpable respect of diversity and a keen awareness of Christianity as a multicultural world faith. The school’s Christian character results in a secure and caring environment where children are making strong progress both academically and in terms of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development across the whole curriculum.

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

Collective worship across school is inspirational and an integral part of school life, influencing the thinking and day to day actions of the whole school together as a community. Relevant and engaging opportunities for worship in classrooms, as Key Stages and as a whole school, give children many opportunities to participate, reflect and apply clear, practical meaning to their own lives. Time for stillness, prayer and reflection in collective worship feeds into classroom provision, making an impact on SMSC across the curriculum. A well-structured rolling programme of worship themes, as well as weekly worship in church led by an Open The Book team, has given children across school an excellent knowledge and understanding of the Bible. This includes an appreciation of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit and a clear overview of how the Bible fits together. Children are less clear on how the school’s Christian values link with their biblical knowledge. Prayer is highly valued as an integral part of the life of the school, and involves all members of the school community, including parents and governors. Senior leaders and governors regularly use well focussed monitoring and evaluation of collective worship, including observations, questionnaires and meetings with groups of children to make constant improvements to provision. This has ensured that collective worship continues to make a significant impact on the whole school community. Children are involved in leading many aspects of worship, including choosing and leading the greeting, lighting candles, selecting songs, participating in the worship, and leading prayers. The School council plan the content of collective worship annually, although more frequent opportunities for children to give input into the content and themes of worship are not currently established. Collective worship is well planned and meets statutory requirements.

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

The school's Christian values are integral to the RE curriculum and staff are highly effective in embedding high level skills in children's enquiry, analysis, interpretation, evaluation and reflection. The school's creative enquiry led approach to RE gives children many opportunities to apply their impressive knowledge and skills, with clear progression across the school. The quality of teacher questioning is a particular strength across the school and supports children to express their feelings and beliefs, showing a great deal of tolerance and respect for the feelings and beliefs of others. The depth of children's understanding is shown by the ease with which they make links with their own lives, and with the beliefs and practices of the faiths that they study. During inspection, one child observed "We learn about other religions so that we can connect with people of different beliefs with respect and understanding. Terrorists should do this too and then they would not want to do bad things". In the lessons observed, children were encouraged to think deeply, had their perceptions challenged, and were able to justify choices and viewpoints and tackle enquiries with real perception. Children have ownership of their next steps in learning and take on board advice through marking and feedback to demonstrate progress in subsequent work. Rigorous assessment demonstrates strong attainment and progress in RE that is at least in line other core curriculum areas. Tasks are well matched to children's needs and provide appropriate challenge, including for the more able. Opportunities for prayer and reflection are highly developed, and older children show a striking understanding of difficult world issues through this. Whilst reflection is a strength of the school, the school's outdoor environment is not currently set up to give space and opportunities for reflection at break and lunchtimes. The RE curriculum meets statutory requirements, with the teaching of Christianity given prominence. The RE subject leader is proactive in supporting and challenging staff to constantly improve their practice.

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

As a result of the outstanding leadership of the Headteacher, the whole school community shares a clear Christian vision for The Curzon and communicates it warmly and effectively. School leaders, including governors, are particularly effective in linking their vision to day-to-day actions and in helping staff to build effective partnerships with the parish, diocese and their local community. A particular strength of the school leadership is the way that staff at all levels are developed to fulfil their potential both in school and a range of external roles supporting others. Mutually beneficial partnerships with other church schools, and high engagement with diocesan support and training opportunities contribute to the school's relentless commitment to continually improve and develop. Strong insightful leadership has ensured that any issues are quickly identified through effective, well focussed self-evaluation and highly effective interventions put in place. The significant progress made by the school since a dip in Maths attainment last Summer is a striking example of this and demonstrates the on-going commitment of the school to be the best it can be. The governors tackle their roles as critical friends with considerable expertise, and are highly committed to school improvement. Governors and subject leaders work closely with the Headteacher to ensure that monitoring of RE and collective worship lead directly to effective strategies for improvement, and maintain a strong focus on meeting the needs of all learners. An area of improvement from the last inspection was to develop links beyond the school community. The strong links established with the Good Shepherd School in Uganda have been highly effective in developing children's wider global understanding and this is now a strength of the school. High levels of support from the vicar, foundation governors, the church children's and youth worker and other members of the church greatly support the Christian character of the school. A foundation governor noted that links between school and church are now "not just about partnerships but about relationships". The school leaders and governors ensure statutory requirements for RE and collective worship are fully met, ensuring that The Curzon makes a significant impact on improving well-being for its children, families and the local community.