



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

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

### Monyash Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Church Street  
Monyash  
Bakewell  
Derbyshire  
DE45 1JH

**Previous SIAMS grade: Good**

**Current inspection grade: Good**

**Diocese: Derby**

Local authority: Derbyshire

Date of inspection: 19<sup>th</sup> May 2016

Date of last inspection: May 2011

School's unique reference number: 112843

Headteacher: Sharon Slack

Inspector's name and number: Elizabeth Stanley-Wainwright (Trainee)

QA Assessor: Lizzie McWhirter 244

#### School context

Monyash is a small church school in the heart of the Derbyshire countryside. There are 29 children on roll. Monyash has two classes, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Almost all children are White British and a small number of pupils have special needs. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. The school is situated close to St Leonard's Church and the headteacher has been in post since September 2015, after a significant number of changes in leadership.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Monyash as a Church of England school are good

- Strong leadership and governance results in a clear Christian vision underpinned by core Christian values.
- Excellent relationships within the school, and the children's positive attitude to learning, make significant contributions to their understanding of the Christian character of their school.
- Close relationships between church and school enhances the Christian foundation of this school community and applauds its place at the heart of village life.

#### Areas to improve

- Strengthen the distinctive Christian character of this school by providing quality continuing professional development for the religious education (RE) subject leader and formalise the monitoring process.
- Embed the evaluation of collective worship involving children and governors to ensure that the spiritual journeys of the whole community are enriched.
- Enable pupils to grow in their responsibilities for leading worship as an important aspect of their spiritual life.

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

Christian love is evident in all aspects of school life at Monyash. Children are treasured as unique and special. Consequently, they are confident and enthusiastic for life and learning. Children say they enjoy school, feel safe and always try their best. Children are clearly listened to regarding a range of topics within school. One child said, 'it's small, everybody knows each other so you can be yourself'. The behaviour of pupils is outstanding, resulting in positive attitudes to learning, which has made a huge impact on outcomes at the end of each year. The school places high importance on Christian values, which are linked to biblical teaching and are demonstrated in daily life. The ash tree and cross on the school logo are recognised and understood by the children. They can confidently talk about why their school is special and what impact being a church school has on their lives. Relationships are excellent amongst all in this closely knit school family and village community. This is because the Christian values are held at the heart of everything which the school does as demonstrated by the care and compassion given to SEND children in school by all. Parents know that they will be listened to and value the transparent partnership with the school. One parent said, the 'school is devoted to your child because they know each child very well'. Justice and forgiveness are evident in positive behaviour management, resulting in children who cooperate and support each other at work and play. There is a strong atmosphere of mutual support and cooperation. For example, children naturally offering help to their peers and younger children throughout the day. The school enhances the pupils' welfare and is developing experiences for cultural understanding across the curriculum, including religious education. Pupils clearly enjoy their RE lessons and say that they are able to ask questions. They learn many different Bible stories and stories from other religions through a range of art work, drama and formal recording. The children have studied a range of world religions, such as Sikhism, Buddhism and Islam. Skilful questioning enables pupils' understanding and starting to develop their knowledge and make links with Christianity. The children are beginning to articulate diversity and Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith in a positive and respectful way. The RE leader is new to this role and has started to make plans to deepen the pupils' understanding of different religions and cultures.

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

The school recognises the importance of collective worship as a values team is working with the ministry assistant to plan collective worship. However, this is in the early stages, enabling pupils to develop their leadership roles. The children are enthusiastic about having the time to plan worship with the ministry assistant and feel that they can share their ideas. One child said, 'it doesn't matter if we miss playtime because it is fun planning especially when we get to act Bible stories out ready for the whole school to see'. Collective worship promotes an atmosphere of calm and readiness. Importantly, pupils are given the opportunity to answer questions and discuss the content, using partner work and all children are focused on the big question. Children say they enjoy singing and it gives them a chance to learn new songs as a whole school. They write their own prayers which are on display in the north porch of St Leonard's Church and shared in collective worship. All staff are present for collective worship. Each member of staff leads worship on a rota basis providing variety and stimulus for the pupils and professional development for the staff. The headteacher has worked hard to establish a clear collective worship system which encourages a variety of visitors leading worship, benefitting the whole school community. Inclusively, parents are actively encouraged to attend weekly worship. They say, 'weekly worship helps us to understand what the children have been learning and how we can celebrate the Christian calendar and festivals from around the world. It makes us feel close as a school community'. Children are developing a good understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Worship is enhanced by input from clergy, the ministry assistant and the foundation governor. The church parish team regularly come into school to lead collective worship and support the planning of worship. However, there is no formal monitoring or evaluation of collective worship by the school. The staff have not yet received any recent training to support this. The school recognises this is important for the efficacy of worship to make a significant contribution to the spiritual development of children.

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

The headteacher's strong leadership has focused the school through a shared vision where all staff work together for the benefit of the pupils. There is a strong Christian ethos which is built upon recently reviewed vision and values statement shared with, and developed by, the whole school community. Staff and governors are united with the head in working for continuous improvement in academic standards within a Christian context. Safety and wellbeing are established priorities and the headteacher has rapidly ensured this is in place. A detailed and relevant monitoring programme for school improvement informs focussed development plans. Partnerships with local schools and local authority input, drive the school forward. The headteacher regularly attends diocesan training and has a good understanding of how to use this training to impact upon outcomes in school. Links with St Leonard's Church are very strong and relationships have been established very quickly. The school is valued by the church through its commitment to the school, such as the new role of ministry assistant and the regular input from church members. The school celebrates the festivals of Harvest, Christmas and Easter in the church and use it as a teaching resource. As a result, pupils have good knowledge of the church building and the importance of church/school links. The governors offer robust support and challenge to the headteacher as an integral part of the good working relationship with St Leonard's Church. The foundation governor observes and discusses aspects of Christian distinctiveness and is starting to feedback to the full governing body. The school recognises the importance of formalising the monitoring of RE as an important aspect of Christian distinctiveness. In addition, governors rightly identify the need to provide quality training and support for the RE subject leader. Currently, this is not in place. Parents praise the staff who know each child as individuals. They are supportive of the school and feel well informed. Parent helpers are often in school and the 'Parents and Friends' regularly organise fundraising events and social events. Parents welcome the school's openness and say their views are always considered which are sought through the school questionnaire. Parents feel that the links with the church give a strong community feel and appreciate that their children also benefit from the school's involvement in activities arranged through local churches working together. The school keeps the community informed through the school's website and the parish magazine. Both RE and collective worship meet statutory requirements. The potential for further development of the school's Christian distinctiveness is good.

SIAMS report May 2016 Monyash VC Primary School, Church Street, Monyash, Bakewell, Derbyshire DE45 1JH