

## Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

### Norbury Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Lid Lane Norbury, Ashbourne, Derbyshire DE6 2EG

**Current SIAMS inspection grade**

**Outstanding**

**Diocese**

**Derby**

Previous SIAMS inspection grade

Good

Local authority

Derbyshire

Date of inspection

5 May 2017

Date of last inspection

2 May 2012

Type of school and unique reference number

112845

Headteacher

Rebecca Chapman

Inspector's name and number

Elizabeth Stanley-Wainwright 880

#### School context

Norbury is a smaller than average-sized primary school. Pupils attend from the local villages and from Ashbourne town. There are 62 children on roll divided into 3 mixed age classes. All pupils are white British and the proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is currently below the national average. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. The headteacher has been in role for two and a half years. The school has very close relations with clergy from St Mary and Barlock church, which is a short bus ride away. The school uses the church for main festivals throughout the year. Collective worship is held in the village hall which is situated next to the school building.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Norbury as a Church of England school are outstanding

- A welcoming, inclusive church school, which has strong relationships based on explicit Christian values.
- A distinctive church school, which puts pupils and the community at the heart of everything it achieves.
- The significant work in the development of collective worship makes an excellent contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, cultural and social development.

#### Areas to improve

- Develop a spirituality policy, which reflects the school's current practice.
- Increase opportunities for pupils to independently plan, deliver and evaluate collective worship.
- Ensure policies, documentation and signage explicitly celebrate the school's Christian values to all.

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

Norbury is a welcoming, inclusive church school that has strong relationships based on Christian values. Christian values are core and explicitly acted out by the staff, children, governors and parents. This has a significant impact upon the quality of relationships and a profound sense of belonging. The wellbeing of pupils and adults is a high priority and is evident in the way support, care and encouragement are visible in school. The school community takes the time to provide significant opportunities for children to engage with spiritual development through Forest School, Religious Education (RE) and collective worship. The pupils have a natural care for each other, which is seen throughout the day where all pupils interact and look after each other. The school ethos of 'loving, supportive family which promotes laughter and learning' is the golden thread throughout the school. There is a strong sense of family where everyone plays a vital role in ensuring the pupils are kind, caring, loving people who think of others as they

would themselves. Parents talk with great enthusiasm about the staff being 'special people who are not just teachers, they are amazing. We feel like we are sending our children to another home.' Parents attend weekly worship where there is an atmosphere of belonging to one big family and staff actively encourage visiting toddlers to be part of the worship. Parents value the Christian ethos and report that 'staff know each child as individuals and support children in their journey through school and their understanding of their faith'. Parents appreciate the strong links between school, church and home and feel they are able to come and talk to any staff member about their child and to get support from the school community. Parents talked with ease about the range of discussions that they have at home based around religion and Christian values commenting that 'the Christian ethos is everything. Respect is embedded with a reason why'. Through the introduction of Understanding Christianity, the RE makes a significant contribution to pupils' lives where they feel that they are able to ask big questions and have time to reflect effectively supporting spiritual, moral, cultural and social issues. Pupils have excellent self-esteem and are confident to give their opinions, ask questions and think through answers about a range of world faiths. The school clearly recognises pupils as all God's children and through regular awards and praise the pupils feel valued. Forest School provides many opportunities to explore and reflect on the beauty and wonder of the natural world, contributing to pupils' spiritual development and understanding. The school has made it a priority to visit a mosque in Derby to give the pupils a better understanding of difference and similarities between faiths. The school is linked with an inner city school in Derby where the pupils have been able to complete a school exchange. The children talk about their exchange school with passion and are able to articulate their learning experiences from the link. The staff have skilfully used these visits to ensure that the pupils at Norbury have respect for world faiths and have a safe platform to ask questions relevant to the world in which we live.

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

Collective worship plays a big part in the daily lives of the pupils and staff as a time when the whole school can come together as one. The environment set aside for worship is calm and purposeful and the pupils take responsibility for setting up and welcoming all to their worship. All staff within school attend and see it as an important time to take part and an opportunity for their own reflection. The clear links from RE teaching and Forest Schools are cleverly crafted into the worship to ensure all pupils can enjoy freedom, space and a sense of peace. Being part of Forest Schools has given the pupils a real sense of being closer to God through nature and this is evident in the way the children interact in their space. Pupils and staff talk about the impact that music has upon their worship. The school has had a hymn written specifically for them called 'God is all around us' which the children and staff enjoy singing. The joining together of voices gives this small school a mighty feeling where all children from the youngest through to the oldest are able to celebrate this beautiful world through song. Prayer is an important part of worship and the school has collated prayers, which pupils can choose to read as part of collective worship. The children are also keen to write their own prayers in particular one child has written a prayer that has been placed in the reflective space outdoors for all children to use. Pupils understand that prayer is talking to God and that there are different prayers, some which might say thank you, sorry or ask for something. The beautiful outdoor area has been developed as a quiet place for contemplation and wonder, which is regularly used by the whole school. The school uses a range of resources to support worship ensuring that it is engaging and gives pupils the time to reflect. Worship is relevant and interactive where all pupils recognise this as a special time in the school day. Rev Carolyn is fundamental in supporting the worship in school where she is a constant presence giving advice, support and leadership. Through Rev Carolyn, sharing her expertise, the school has been able to put on workshops such as 'My perfect village' and 'Holy Trinity exploration' where pupils and parents can gain a better understanding. The pupils have a very good understanding of Trinity and can discuss this in detail through well thought out examples. The programme for collective worship is carefully planned on a termly basis drawing on staff expertise and knowledge which has led to a comprehensive plan, which is rich and varied. The school has a pupil worship group who take responsibility for setting up, exploring themes and monitoring collective worship. Governors also have a role in evaluating worship and review pupil voice and parent questionnaires to ensure that worship is effective.

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

The headteacher's leadership embraces the Christian vision and values. She actively encourages the whole school to model these values, through her leadership skills and relationships. The leadership and management is highly effective in continuing to develop a distinctive and inclusive church school, with clear benefits for the whole school community. The headteacher's openness encourages honesty, enthusiasm, drive and involvement for all staff to maintain a strong focus on meeting the needs of all learners. The well-being of all pupils and staff are of high importance in school and this is demonstrated by a familiar camaraderie within the school. All staff are mutually supportive, recognising that each child is unique and special with God given talents that should be celebrated. The visions and values are set out on the school website and within the school, however, the excellent practice and

importance placed on the Christian foundation is not yet evident in all documentation. The whole school community has a very clear understanding of the vision and this is lived out daily in relationships, behaviour, lessons and at lunchtime. The self-evaluation shows what the school has already achieved and has clear steps to continue ongoing improvements. The leadership and management of RE are well established and the school has a good evidence base from which to evaluate standards, through a robust assessment system. Governors and staff have excellent relationships based on mutual respect. They hold the headteacher to account to ensure that they have accurate information about pupil progress and achievements. The governors are fully involved in the strategic management of the school as a Church of England school and are regularly in school to work with pupils, monitor progress and development. Governors have a very good understanding of the school's aims and visions and are able to support the school in its Christian vision for all pupils and staff. The school has very strong links with the church community and Rev Carollyn has very strong relationships with staff, children and parents. Rev Carollyn is a vital part of school life and works hard to support staff and pupils. She clearly values having a church school within the parish and says 'it is precious to hold and nurture'. The pupils talk about Rev Carollyn as a staff member and hold her very dear to their hearts as an adult they can go to and talk to about anything. The church makes a significant contribution to school life and many members of the congregation come into school to have lunch with the children thereby strengthening the partnership. The relationships that pupils have built with the parish are genuine and give them a clear understanding of serving, respect and contribution to a community. Statutory requirements for RE and collective worship are met and developmental issues from the previous inspection have been fully addressed.

SIAMS report May 2017 Norbury VC Primary School Lid Lane Norbury, Ashbourne, Derbyshire DE6 2EG