

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

### Codnor Community Church of England Primary School & Nursery

Whitegates, Codnor, Derbyshire DE5 9QD

**Current SIAMS inspection grade**

**Outstanding**

**Diocese**

**Derby**

Previous SIAMS inspection grade

Good

Local authority

Derbyshire

Name of multi-academy trust / federation

N/A

Date/s of inspection

15<sup>th</sup> June 2017

Date of last inspection

15<sup>th</sup> June 2012

Type of school and unique reference number

Voluntary Controlled Primary 131156

Headteacher

Steve Bower

Inspector's name and number

Jane Lewis (27)

#### School context

Codnor Church of England Primary and Nursery School is larger than average serving the village of Codnor and the surrounding area. There are currently 280 children on roll. Indices of social deprivation at the school are comparatively low with the number of pupils eligible for free school meals below the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is also below the national average. In 2016 a member of staff was appointed with responsibility for religious education (RE) and collective worship. The parish church is located some distance from the school.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Codnor Community C of E school as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The school's Christian character, underpinned by distinctively Christian values, strongly influences the daily life of the school and all aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- The commitment of senior leaders to provide an outstanding education, equipping pupils for the future and underpinned by a Christian vision, ensures that all stakeholders understand the purpose of the school
- Pupils enjoy and are challenged by Religious Education so that it has a major role in strengthening the Christian character of the school
- A very high value is placed on collective worship and opportunities for personal reflection and prayer, all of which supports members of the school community on their spiritual journey

#### Areas to improve

- Strengthen the work already begun to develop 'Understanding Christianity' within Religious Education so that it impacts on the wider life of the school
- Extend opportunities for pupils to work with staff to move forward the distinctiveness of the school as a church school, including collective worship, in order that future developments are owned by everyone

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

Excellent relationships are fundamental to how this school operates. They are shaped by Christian values and lead to exceptional pastoral care for all. Pupils respond with exceptionally courteous and positive behaviour. The biblical basis of the explicit values such as trust, hope and respect is so well taught that by the time pupils are in Year 6 they have a mature understanding for their age of how the values are relevant to their lives. They speak of respect as, 'not judging people once you know about them because we are all precious to God' and trust as, 'you can trust God all the time. We know that because the Bible tells us'. A newsletter with a close focus on the termly value ensures that pupils and parents together can explore the value at home. Parents say that this helps pupils to, 'want God to be part of their lives wherever they are'. Clear links are made between Religious Education (RE), collective worship and the values. A display in one classroom linked the story of Noah to trust. In collective worship the story of David and Goliath had helped pupils reflect on the need for peace. Implicit Christian values such as hospitality and kindness are also evident in this school. Everyone is aware of one another's needs and respond appropriately. Parents speak of the way in which there is always a welcome in the school, 'even when you come with a moan about something'. It is clear that staff live out these values being excellent role models for pupils. 'Teachers welcome us each day and make it feel like they are really pleased to see us,' typifies the comments made by pupils. Foundation governors are clear that Christian principles are the 'core of what we do at Codnor' and there is a clear vision to support pupils in their understanding of faith as being something that runs throughout life. Pupils attendance is above the national average, proving the school's commitment to safeguarding and nurturing each one as unique and precious to God. The potential in every pupil is acknowledged and all are supported to fulfil the school's vision for everyone to 'Learn, Strive and Achieve in a Christian Environment'. Pupils actively engage in fundraising 'because at this school we care about others'. Over time the school has raised money for a primary school in Mozambique and pupils take an ongoing interest in developments at the school. A year 6 pupil said 'I feel better knowing how much we have done to help others across the world.' All this is the result of the transformational impact of the school on the lives of pupils. Academic progress is underpinned by the values which means pupils are safe, secure and ready to learn. All pupils, without exception, make good or better progress. By the end of key stage 2 pupils achieve standards above the national average. Learning experiences successfully foster understanding of diverse communities. During the inspection pupils and staff were engaged in a 'Multi Faith week'. Whilst exploring Buddhism pupils could talk about how the eight fold path in Buddhism might help everyone to live well together. This is one of many examples of outstanding learning experiences in RE. The recent introduction of 'Understanding Christianity' has already made an impact. Pupils enthusiastically share their learning of the significance of stories from the Bible within a 'big story'. RE leaders have plans in place to see the learning from this project impact further across the school. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development is therefore a strength of the school. The clear expression of Christian values, strong adult role models and a genuine understanding of the needs of pupils means that this school is a shining example of Christian discipleship in action.

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

A rich and varied life of prayer and reflection contributes significantly to the spiritual journey of the whole school community. In every classroom, main corridor and outside there is a place where pupils and staff can be quiet, reflect and pray. Establishing these areas was a focus for development at the previous inspection and the impact of them is now significant. Year 6 pupils spoke of how important these areas were for them during their recent SATS tests. Following the death of the mother of a pupil another pupil had written 'I pray for his family and that he is ok. I pray that he realises we are there for him'. Through prayer and reflection pupils and staff are able to link the Christian values of the school to real life experiences. Pupils linked their reflections on the value of peace with the bombing in Manchester. One prayer said 'I pray for the people of Manchester and hope that God brings peace to them'. Prayer is central to collective worship with members of the school community regularly writing prayers and placing them in a box. These prayers included in collective worship help pupils to feel supported with the challenges they have to face. The school's core Christian values are each linked to Christian festivals and to biblical stories. Pupils relate these values directly to the life and teaching of Jesus as well as Old Testament stories. This means they are confident to talk about the concept of the Trinity and how they are growing in their understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit as they move through the school. Pupils are regularly involved in leading aspects of worship. The school's 'Faith Minister' acts as a link between the pupils and what goes on in worship. The impact of this role, which involves leadership of worship, has been significant. 'It's a real privilege for me to do that job,' he said and other pupils know that this is a key role on the school council. The school has now identified the need for more pupils to be involved in developing the worship life of the school along with other areas of the school's distinctiveness. Rigorous monitoring of worship has taken place since the last inspection by staff, pupils and governors. It is now monitored effectively so that everyone is clear about the way forward. The school enjoys an excellent partnership with St James' church along with other local churches. The parish is currently served by an associate priest who is a regular visitor leading worship and providing a strong link with the church. Pupils and staff

value his presence in the school and say that it helps them to see that they are part of the church even though church and school buildings are located some distance apart. Valley CIDS (Christians In Derbyshire Schools) lead worship regularly and work with the school in providing a Christian based club which is held weekly. Together they bring different approaches to their leadership of worship. The school community therefore experiences a breadth of worship styles which supports their spiritual development and deepens the relationship between local church communities and the school.

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

Codnor's set of values is seen as a tool in implementing the vision of 'Learn, Strive, Achieve in a Christian Environment'. All stakeholders see the values as being the foundation of all the school stands for. The expression of the values underpins decisions made at every level. The life chances of pupils matter enormously to all members of staff, whatever their role, and pupils and their parents are acutely aware of this. Careful recruitment of staff means that they are appointed for their potential to implement the Christian ethos not just their professional skills. School leadership is driven by a Christian interpretation of values. This shapes the strategic direction of the school. Foundation governors ensure that all decisions made are underpinned by Christian faith so that faith is seen as something that runs through every aspect of school life. They are active in their role to monitor the Christian distinctiveness of the school. This has ensured that the level of challenge to the leadership is strong and allows for continuous growth; staff are held accountable in a supportive manner to achieve the best outcomes. The role of the associate priest in the life of the school has changed over recent years and he is now regarded as a chaplain. His presence in this capacity ensures that staff and pupils feel supported and valued. His links with families provides a welcome bridge between church and school. One pupil had come to know Jesus as her friend at school and so wanted to be baptised at the church. The partnership is mutually beneficial. Over a period of time pupils have raised a considerable sum of money towards repairs to the church roof because St James' is seen as 'our church'. Parents are confident that the links with the church and all the marks of Christian ethos help to provide the very best for pupils. 'The Christian side of the school is a bit like the glue that keeps us together,' said one parent. The headteacher actively engages with other church school leaders in the area and he along with foundation governors are currently working with the diocese on matters of governance. School leadership ensures that it meets the statutory requirements for RE and collective worship. Both are robustly monitored so that developments can be made appropriately in order that they continue to contribute significantly to SMSC. Since the last inspection the inspirational RE and worship coordinators, one of whom began work this academic year, have been involved in training and supporting staff in their teaching of RE and leading collective worship. This has raised the profile of these key areas of the school. They have ensured that rapid and sustained progress has been made in moving the school forward since the last inspection. Along with a renewed sense of vision everyone is now clear about the significance of all these factors in continuing to develop the distinctiveness of this outstanding church school.

SIAMS report June 2017 Codnor Community C of E Primary School, Derbyshire DE5 9QD