

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

<b>Kniveton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School</b>	
Kniveton Ashbourne Derbyshire DE6 1JJ	
<b>Current SIAMS inspection grade</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Derby</b>
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local authority	Derbyshire
Date of inspection	13 June 2017
Date of last inspection	19 June 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Controlled 112834
Headteacher	Lynn Board
Inspector's name and number	John Clapham (775)

### School context

Kniveton is a smaller than average rural primary school, overlooking St Michael and All Angels' church in the Derbyshire village of Kniveton. The school serves 59 children from several local villages, as well as the nearby town of Ashbourne. Children are taught in three mixed age classes, with the village hall used as the third classroom. 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 overall, but above average in some year groups. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are significantly above average, although no children are currently supported with statements or Education Health Care Plans. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds and speak English as their first language. The headteacher teaches three days per week.

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

- Kniveton is a caring and highly inclusive school where each child is valued and nurtured as a child of God.
- Strong emotional support, and a culture of high expectations, love and encouragement ensure that children are, confident, articulate and have high levels of self-esteem.
- Purposeful and mutually beneficial partnerships with schools in Sri Lanka and Gambia, and more locally in Derby, have contributed significantly to children's exceptional understanding and respect for diversity.
- The whole school community share a passion and vision for the school. The outward looking head teacher and her team consistently demonstrate and live out the distinctively Christian values of the school with conviction and compassion.
- At Kniveton, there is a strong sense of community and belonging, with mutually beneficial links between school, church and the wider village community.

### Areas to improve

- Further enhance children's Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) development by embedding the new Understanding Christianity resource in Religious Education (RE).
- Involve all members of the school community in formally evaluating the impact of 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 Kniveton school, where each child is valued, encouraged and nurtured with care and love. Kniveton is a highly inclusive school, and strives to meet the needs of every individual child, regardless of their ability or circumstances. As put by a foundation governor, 'the love of Jesus is for everyone; we don't turn anyone away.' Children are highly appreciative of the staff and each other and enthusiastically comment on how, 'it is just lovely how kind everyone is at this school.' An incredible array of acts of kindness has been recorded over time on the school kindness tree, with kindness celebrated regularly as a whole school. The school has had a sustained focus on nurturing children's mental health and self-esteem, including specific classroom activities on 'growth mind-set', 'positive pathways' and resilience. This has greatly supported the school's drive to nurture happy, settled children who are well prepared for learning and life. Opportunities are well embedded across the curriculum and the wider life of the school to nurture children spiritually, socially and emotionally as well as the outstanding academic attainment that is characteristic of the school. As the head teacher put it 'SATs are not 'it'; even though our children achieve very well, it is the whole child that is important so that they are valued and special and thrive.' Parents appreciate the fact that 'the school is very nurturing because [staff] recognise when someone is struggling and there is always someone to talk to.' Children have been highly involved in the writing of the new anti-bullying policy. Consequently, they know that any issues are dealt with quickly and fairly and so are confident and feel valued. As a result, attendance is very high and children value school as a safe, happy place. Children have regular opportunities to interact reflectively with big issues and questions. They are given the space and encouragement to think, reflect and express themselves with sensitivity and respect towards the beliefs and opinions of others. Creating areas for quiet reflection was an area of development from the previous inspection and is now a strength. Parents appreciate the fact that, 'the school plants the seeds for children to form themselves and their values.' Children are able to eloquently communicate these values. One child noted, 'our values help us to understand the world and each other.' Visits to differing places of worship in Derbyshire through the Derby Open Centre have contributed significantly to children's exceptional understanding and respect for diversity. Strong and active links with schools in Sri Lanka and Gambia have not only strengthened children's appreciation for difference and diversity, but have also introduced them to a wealth of Christian tradition and practice from around the world. The children value their links with friends from across the world and are keen to both learn from and support them. The fact that 17 families at school currently sponsor a child in Gambia is a clear example of the children's drive to make a positive difference. Children take their responsibilities seriously and enjoy caring for each other as a whole school community. They are keen to live out their Christian values and demonstrate their care and compassion through a wide range of charity support and fundraising. This has included funding 7 donkeys and carts for villages in Gambia as well as regular support for Red Nose Day, Children in Need and Unicef. The teaching of RE is relevant and engaging. High quality questioning and a strong enquiry based approach has ensured that children are highly reflective, think deeply and are developing a considerable depth of understanding. The recently introduced Understanding Christianity resource is already beginning to impact on children's SMSC development and is deepening children's understanding of Christianity. As one parent noted, 'our school's Christian distinctiveness goes far wider than all the activities and teaching because what the school does is make the children spiritually aware and that positively affects everything.'

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

At Kniveton, collective worship is valued as an integral part of the life of the school, and fully involves every member of the whole school community. Daily collective worship is welcoming, genuine and inclusive. It invokes a strong sense of community and clearly inspires the thinking and day to day actions of the whole school. Children are involved in planning and leading many aspects of worship, adding value and importance to this key part of the school day. Significant progress has been made since the last inspection in the part children play in leading worship. Regular links made with key messages from previous acts of worship help ensure that daily worship has a clear practical application and impacts strongly on children's attitudes and behaviours throughout school. As one of the worship monitors put it, '[collective worship] helps us to be kind and respectful because all of the stories have a moral and a meaning for us.' Whilst children have opportunity to talk about what how they would like to be involved in collective worship, they do not yet have opportunity to formally evaluate the impact of worship on the life of the school and use this to plan for the future. A range of simple liturgy, beautiful altar cloths, the regular use of Christian symbols, and regular worship in church are equipping the children with a growing understanding of Anglican tradition and practice. The lighting and

extinguishing of candles gives children daily opportunity to both reflect on Jesus and bring to remembrance those who need prayer. Prayer is an integral part of the rhythm of the school day, with well-established routines and creative prayer activities that are valued by all involved. Children have a strong and meaningful understanding of the Lord's Prayer, and use this to structure their own thoughts and prayers. The school collective worship calendar raises the profile of key events, such as anti-bullying week and black history month and helps ensure that worship continues to contribute strongly to children's SMSC development. Well planned worship themes draw strongly on Biblical material, supporting children's good understanding of God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Regular visits from the church 'Open the Book' team are also supporting the children's sound understanding of the Bible. Key concepts from the Understanding Christianity resources are regularly brought into collective worship, both in church and school. Children benefit from ecumenical input into collective worship, including inspiring weekly visits from Sister Merle and services in the Methodist chapel as well as the much anticipated monthly worship at the local parish church, with strong support from foundation governors. Children have written their own call and response greetings. These are used regularly in church, where children feel a sense of belonging. Singing is a key element of worship at Kniveton, with songs sung wholeheartedly and with real meaning and reverence. Children, staff and parents enjoy many positive experiences of worship. These include recent Experience Christmas and Easter events in Brailsford church and a 'mini pilgrimage' around the churches of Ashbourne. Regular opportunities to reflect and think deeply are an integral part of daily worship and ensure that collective worship continues to contribute strongly to the ethos and Christian distinctiveness of the school.

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

The headteacher and her team are highly dedicated to the school and passionately and articulately live out the school's distinctively Christian values with love and compassion. The headteacher, staff and governors have established and maintained a distinctively Christian ethos where each child is nurtured as a child of God. The strength of leadership from the head teacher is apparent not just in the quality of provision in school, but also in the strong and mutually supportive partnerships that have been formed between school, church and the wider community. As one parent noted, 'the church is at the heart of our village and the school is integral to that.' Strong links between the school and local churches contribute significantly to the school's Christian distinctiveness. Children are given regular opportunities to write for the parish newsletter and enjoy contributing to village events. School services at both the parish church and the local Methodist chapel are well supported, with both buildings regularly full to capacity. During harvest, older children took boxes of produce to some of the villagers, as described by the vicar as, 'a very practical expression of Christian love and service.' Members of the village community and school staff have trained together in the use of the new village defibrillator, further cementing the strong partnerships between school and community. Governors engage well with training, including foundation governor attendance at diocesan events. They have a strong understanding of progress and standards in Maths and English through insightful self-evaluation, although similar processes for monitoring the impact of RE and collective worship are not yet fully developed. All areas for development from the previous inspection have been fully met. RE and collective worship are well led by the head teacher, maintain a profile in the life of the school and meet all statutory requirements. RE and collective worship are integral to the school improvement planning process, in which governors play a key role alongside the head teacher. All staff are strongly supported by the head teacher and the whole team both personally and professionally. Staff development and succession planning is given a high priority, with many available opportunities for staff to gain qualifications and experiences that strongly support their professional growth and development, with tangible benefits to the school.