

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Chapel-en-le-Frith Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School

Warmbrook Road, Chapel-en-le-Frith, High Peak, Derbyshire, SK23 0NL

Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese	Derby
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Local authority	Derbyshire
Name of multi-academy trust	N/A
Date of inspection	5 July 2017
Date of last inspection	April 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Controlled 133538
Headteacher	Jacqueline Barber
Inspector's name and number	Kerry Palmer 60

School context

This larger than average school is the only primary school in the local community. It includes specialist resources to support children with special needs many of whom come from beyond the school neighbourhood. Consequently, the proportion is higher than average. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. 22% of children are recognised as disadvantaged and in receipt of pupil premium support. The headteacher has been in post since September 2014 and has led a revival in the school's fortunes. There are close links with the local Anglican and Methodist churches. A breakfast, after-school and holiday club operates on site. The school will shortly be joining the Derby Diocese Academy Trust. School leaders have requested that religious education (RE) be included in the inspection process.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Chapel-en-le-Frith Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School as a Church of England school are good

- Strong and effective Christian leadership actively promotes the school's Christian ethos.
- A dedicated staff team driven by Christian values of service and compassion recognise each pupil as unique and special with gifts and talents which they develop to the full.
- Actively involved governors give high priority to promoting the school's Christian character.

Areas to improve

- Review key documentation and welfare policies to ensure that the school's Christian values are explicitly identified and expressed as based on the teaching and example of Jesus Christ.
- Devise strategies for pupils to regularly plan, lead and evaluate collective worship to increase ownership.
- Explore opportunities for developing children's prayer life to enhance spiritual development.

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

Children at this strong church school benefit from a rich and exciting school life driven by strong Christian values which underpin school policy and practice. Trust, justice, friendship, service, peace, compassion and forgiveness are

lived out in school relationships and evident in policies but their explicit Biblical foundation not always acknowledged. Challenge and determination are fostered by a mutually supportive, collegiate staff team who appreciate each child as unique and special. They are sustained by the school's Christian ethos and dedication to the needs of the children. This is no more evident than in the professional and sympathetic commitment that successfully ensures that children with severe limitations are integrated and play a full part in school life. Careful monitoring and sensitive intervention ensures that children of all abilities are challenged to reach their potential. Data indicates positive trends with increasing numbers of children, including vulnerable groups, reaching age related expectations or higher. Justice and reconciliation are at the heart of the school's approach to behaviour. Children recognise that, 'every day is a new day'. The invaluable contribution of an established pastoral learning mentor embeds this approach through a variety of nurture groups raising self-esteem and building confidence. Children love the 'Going for Gold' incentive scheme. Consequently, behaviour is exemplary, children display mutual respect and concern for others. RE is enjoyed by the children and recognised as increasingly important in fostering the school's Christian character and promoting social, moral, cultural and spiritual (SMCS) growth. The need to raise awareness of our increasingly diverse society and the world-wide Christian church is recognised. Strategies include participation in a diocesan partnership in India which includes links with schools in Kolkatta. Empathy for those less fortunate is clear in the support for the local food bank at harvest time and support for charities, such as Samaritan's Purse and Children in Need, often promoted by the School Council.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

The whole school community recognises collective worship as an important and central feature of school life. Many elements of good practice are evident in themes based on Christian values. 'Seeing Anew' strategies have been enthusiastically introduced and responses recorded, encouraging a reflective and creative approach to Christian life. Exploration of 'What is the Kingdom of God like?' elicited response of 'heaven', 'peace and happiness' and 'everywhere'. This led to consideration of the ways the Fruit of the Spirit could be carried into the school day. Key messages affect children's lives. 'Patience,' said one boy, 'I'm going to try anyway!' Deep thinking and reflection, in worship and the school day, contribute significantly to spiritual development. This is also supported by regular Philosophy for Children sessions. All staff attend worship and leadership includes the vicar and ministers from Chinley Congregational and the local Methodist Chapels. The team of pupil worship leaders enjoy their role, embedded on a retreat day. All children are encouraged to become actively involved in teacher led worship. However, there are insufficient opportunities for children to regularly plan, deliver and evaluate worship for themselves. Prayer is a regular feature of worship and the school day. Increasing use is made of features such as a prayer tree and pebbles. The school recognises the need to develop reflective opportunities further. Children's prayers are collected in class books and used. Children are growing in their appreciation of The Lord's Prayer. Year 6 pupils have written their own interpretations for discussion and display. They would welcome more opportunities to offer their own prayers. Children have a growing appreciation of the special nature of Jesus and of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. On encountering an insect, a children recently said to a parent, 'don't hurt it, it's part of God's creation!' School worship patterns celebrate church seasons and children talk knowledgeably about the significance of related liturgical colours supported by Rev. Freddie Fisher! A variety of worship songs, sung with gusto, compliment worship. The school choir regularly supports worship at church celebrations such as Mothering Sunday and Christingle. Festival services in St Thomas Becket Parish Church and the Methodist Chapel involve much pupil participation and are enjoyed by many parents and friends. From these visits children gain an insight into contrasting worship traditions. Class assemblies share school projects and children's achievements with families but do not explicitly present these as an expression of God given gifts and talents. The vicar is increasingly involved as pastor, governor, worship leader and a recognised friend of the school.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

Teaching in RE is of a high standard and levels of pupil achievement are comparable with other core subjects. School development plans make clear school leaders' determination to recognise the subject's importance and status in this church school. However, this is not yet evident in the school prospectus or on its website. The subject leader, who benefits from a RE degree, exudes enthusiasm and energetically promotes the development of the subject throughout the school. For example, recent diocesan 'Understanding Christianity' training has already been cascaded to colleagues, building knowledge and confidence, and introduced in classrooms. RE is taught creatively using a range of imaginative strategies that engage and challenge children with varied learning styles. Children are actively involved, working independently and cooperatively in groups. They showing focussed enthusiasm and are eager to learn more. Foundation children loved role play of the Good Samaritan story and had animated conversations about people who help. Teaching strategies and content do much to promote children's social, moral, cultural and spiritual development. Rigorous monitoring through work scrutiny, observation and learning walks informs focussed improvement plans. The quality of teaching is recognised as good, sometimes outstanding and improving. Children say they enjoy RE and quality outcomes are supported by a structured marking policy. Recently updated pupil tracking systems have yet to be embedded. Detailed planning supports individual teachers and ensures progression throughout the school. Children respond positively to lessons which are well paced. Deep thinking is stimulated by focussed questioning. Whilst predominantly Christian, as expected in a church school, the RE curriculum includes appropriate teaching about other faiths. For example, a Year 2 class learning about Hindu beliefs discussed how their concept of Dharma was similar to the Christian view of morality. Similarly, a Year 6 class talked thoughtfully about Hanukah candles, Jesus, the King and 'hope at the end of the tunnel'.

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

The dedication, professionalism and Christian commitment of the headteacher has fostered significant development of the school's Christian distinctiveness since her relatively recent appointment. She makes clear to all new parents, 'we embed the Christian ethos right through the core of our day to day lives', when they first visit the school. This determination is tempered by a sensitive respect for the fact that the school serves the whole community with its variety of faiths and none. Consultations over academy conversion are an example. School leaders have nurtured a strong and effective staff team who are committed to promoting the school's values and inclusive ethos. Staff and governors share the vision of 'learning for life' and are united in the pursuit of excellence in a school which considers children's safety and wellbeing to be paramount. Staff professional development and empowerment, at all levels, is actively and successfully encouraged. This is supported by active engagement with the diocese, local authority and with local school networks. Leadership potential is recognised and strengthening the skills and confidence of middle managers is a key school priority. Well informed governors offer appropriate challenge and are fully involved in strategic planning. Their commitment to the school's Christian ethos has been enhanced by a strengthening of foundation governor input since the last inspection. The RE and worship link governor is a regular visitor to school and works in close partnership with school leaders. She makes valuable contributions to curriculum development and evaluation in addition to her monitoring role. Parents are full of praise for the values of the school, 'They are taught values for life,' one said, '...but it's not rammed down their throats,' responded another. They value the accessibility of staff and regular communication. One commented, 'You can always talk to the teachers and the headteacher welcomes us on the gate every morning'. The well supported PTA promotes social cohesion amongst the school community, whilst raising funds thorough activities such as bag packing and summer fair. Partnership with local churches is well developed. Statutory expectations for RE and worship are fully met. School leaders have moved the school significantly forward in the past three years and the potential for further positive development is excellent.

SIAMS report July 2017 Chapel-en-le-Frith CofE (VC) Primary School, Derbys. SK23 0NL