



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Christ Church Voluntary Aided Church of England Primary

Diocese: Newcastle

Local authority: Newcastle

Dates of inspection: 21st April 2016

Date of last inspection: 20th January 2011

School's unique reference number: 108493

Headteacher: Sandra Furno

Inspector's name and number: Carole Snelling NS 519

School context

Christ Church voluntary aided primary serves an inner city area of Newcastle and is located where there is no longer a direct catchment area. It is a beacon of social diversity where many languages, faiths and cultures are celebrated. The school welcomes asylum seekers, refugees and families whose first language is not English. There is significant family and pupil mobility which impacts on attainment and learning outcomes of some pupils. A strong partnership exists with the church and schools in the Ouseburn Learning Trust.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Christ Church Primary as a Church of England school are good

- The passion, determination and enthusiasm demonstrated by the head teacher and her team have ensured that every child is nurtured, has the best educational opportunities, and is valued as a child of God.
- Christian values of trust, love and forgiveness result in excellent relationships within the school community; care and tolerance is given to each person and the importance of faith is recognised.
- The good and sometimes outstanding Religious Education (RE) teaching has contributed to the understanding of world faiths, cultural diversity and social, moral, spiritual and cultural (SMSC) and development.

Areas to improve

- Further enhance the children's enjoyment of worship by allowing them to choose themes, and to plan and deliver worship to give them a greater sense of ownership and responsibility.
- Invest in high-quality training for all involved in delivering worship and Religious Education in order to further develop learning opportunities for pupils.

- Develop a mechanism to ensure that pupils know the next steps they must take to improve their learning in RE.

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

Christ Church is a vibrant multi-faith, multi-cultural school in an area of social deprivation and an ever-changing pupil community. It is thriving on diversity, welcomes everyone and is fully inclusive. The message of God's love for all and the Christian values of respect, friendship, love, forgiveness, perseverance, and trust together with growing spirituality are at the heart of school life. Values are appreciated as being Christian and parents of children of other faiths are happy to recognise them as part of the church school ethos. Christian values are lived out daily; they are absorbed by pupils; however, because of the number of pupils with English as an additional language they are not so easily articulated. The modelling of these values by staff is seen in the genuine caring interactions with pupils. The impact of this is evident in the caring and supportive relationships between all in the community. Children are polite, well mannered and very well behaved; they demonstrate respect and love for their neighbour. One child commented, "when it comes to love, you should love each other and God". New pupils are made welcome and immediately befriended by the children and staff. The feeling of belonging is such that international families, who leave, keep in touch with school. There are no recorded incidents of bullying or pupil exclusions from school. Every child is encouraged to "Reach for the Stars" based on the teaching that all have gifts and are loved and valued by God.

Achievement and progress of pupils is in line with expected progress given their complex starting points. The restricted schooling that children from international destinations have encountered, results in learning gains being made more slowly than some of their peers. Skilled teaching of phonics and English as an additional language allows pupils to make good or better than expected progress and to rapidly access the curriculum. Children enjoy coming to school, they feel safe, happy, listened to and respected, and this is reflected in the rising rates of attendance. They have a very positive attitude to learning independently and in groups and this has an impact on their rate of progress. The curriculum is adapted to ensure that the variety of cultural backgrounds, faiths and British values can be explored. Display values children's achievements and talents, reflect the curriculum work that has been undertaken and supports Christian distinctiveness. The topics explored in the RE and worship make positive contributions to SMSC development. Families from all faiths are instrumental in aiding children to understand some of the faith and cultural traditions of their own heritage. Iranian New Year, a multi-faith Harvest Breakfast, Eid and Chinese New Year have all been celebrated. Residential stays, theatre trips, excursions to the countryside, sports, after school clubs, arts and music give pupils time to reflect on the beauty of the world beyond their daily experiences and contribute to spiritual development. Pupils particularly enjoy and excel in singing, an activity to which even the newest pupil can relate, creating a shared time of feeling good about themselves and raising their spirits. Children are equipped to leave school with an understanding of Christianity as a world faith and an exposure to opportunities which enable them to explore their spirituality.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

The worship policy states that the aim of collective worship is to provide a setting in which the integrity of those present is not compromised but in which everyone finds something positive for themselves. The school has succeeded in enabling this to happen for pupils from a variety of backgrounds and faiths. The head teacher is the worship coordinator and she works

effectively with the local vicar, who is also the link governor for RE and worship, to plan, deliver and evaluate worship. Themes reflect Christian values, Anglican traditions, Biblical teaching, major Christian festivals and celebrations from other faith traditions. Over time worship affords opportunities for SMSC, prayer, reflection and celebration through the medium of song, music, drama and Biblical stories. Children learn about the nature and teaching of Jesus and know him as the Good Shepherd. Prayer is a feature of school life at the start of the day, lunchtime and at home time. Children know the Lord's Prayer and the response to the peace. Every classroom has a children's prayer board and a quiet reflection area which contributes to opportunities for pupils' spiritual development. Worship plays a central part in the life of the school and is enjoyed by pupils, staff and parents. A pupil questionnaire showed that children especially enjoy "Open the Book" presented by a church group once a week, and singing every day. They say worship makes them peaceful and helps them to think, it makes them happy because everyone is there together. Parents enjoy Friday worship which celebrates achievement, effort, good attendance, raises pupils' self-esteem and contributes to community cohesion. Increased pupil involvement and participation in planning, delivering and effectively evaluating worship would allow them a greater sense of ownership. The impact of worship goes beyond the delivery, and Christian values are followed up in lessons; this has resulted in improved relationships and behaviour. Children use their talents for the benefit of others and share their awesome singing with various groups in the community. Charitable enterprises include supporting the Soup Kitchen and Christian Aid.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

The school has adopted the agreed Diocesan Syllabus which allows for the teaching of Christianity and other major world religions. An enthusiastic leader of RE ensures that planning is shared and the subject is well resourced. The profile of RE has been enhanced since the last inspection. A link governor, guided by the coordinator, is involved in monitoring the teaching and learning. The teaching over time is good and is sometimes outstanding. A variety of learning activities allows pupils to engage with the topic and skilful teacher questioning allows pupils to make progress. Children enjoy their learning, and are fully engaged. They have good recall of prior learning and subject vocabulary and are prepared to share their views. Pupils say they like to find out what others believe and why, they appreciate time to think about things and specially enjoy tasting different foods at festival times. The introduction of RE class scrap books celebrates and values children's work. Learning about and from world faiths, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism, play an important part in the development of social cohesion. Christianity is taught as a world religion and pupils have discovered how Easter is celebrated across different cultures. The coordinator is making significant efforts to ensure that there is a deeper understanding of Christianity and of the life and teaching of Jesus. There is considerable differentiation by task, input and expected outcomes to meet the individual needs of the pupils. Book work is marked with positive feedback and children respond to comments. Assessment is teacher-led and takes place once each term. The coordinator moderates the recorded levels, which are currently not shared with pupils. Children need to be guided in their next steps for learning in order to make further progress. Progress is in line with core subjects and sometimes exceeds expectation as it is informed by pupils own beliefs. Themes from worship are followed up in RE contributing to the development of SMSC. RE is given a high profile at Christ Church and it impacts on the daily life of the school by reinforcing the school values of love, trust, forgiveness, perseverance and respect.

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

The accurate evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for development by the governors and headteacher has created a vision for the school with Christian values at its heart. Leaders and governors are successfully addressing the challenges presented for pupils at this multi-faith, multi-cultural school, which has a high level of pupil and family instability. The mobility of families means a great deal of attention is devoted to safeguarding and Prevent duty and in ensuring that each child is cared for and nurtured. Every pupil is encouraged to achieve to the best of their ability and to develop their God given gifts. Given their starting points pupils make good progress in line with national averages and the gaps between disadvantaged pupils and their peers is narrowing. Governors successfully plan for the development of the school's Christian ethos through the improvement plan and monitor this at their termly meetings. Although governors make regular visits to school, formally recording their observations would add to the support and challenge offered to leaders. Governors ensure that those they appoint to leadership roles are able to support the Christian ethos and values, enabling Christ Church to grow in strength as a church school. The vibrant faith and cultural community enables SMSC development opportunities and children experience on a daily basis how faith impacts on people's lives. Christianity across different cultures is celebrated. Foundation governors are frequently in school and one who is also the parish priest, monitors RE and worship. Governors have addressed the areas for development from the last report and consequently RE has gained a more prominent part in the curriculum and in supporting the Christian ethos. Links with the Diocese, local clergy and parish are strong and are valued by the school. Partnership with the Ouseburn Learning Trust allows staff and governors to share their expertise and to learn from good practice in teaching, learning and governance. Parents are highly satisfied with the education of their children, and are reassured by the way in which faith is shared and respected. Residential and cultural visits are valued as an opportunity to learn about the richness of British values, life and culture. The school models how Christian values are reflected in many religions, teaching tolerance, love and respect and gives the children of all faiths a voice, which in turn breaks down barriers and prejudices. "I am special, together we are awesome" is true of the staff, parents and children at Christ Church primary school. Love of neighbour is consistently lived out at Christ Church school.

Arrangements for RE and collective worship meet statutory requirements.

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