

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Christ Church Voluntary Aided Church of England Primary School	
Kielder Terrace, North Shields, Tyne and Wear. NE30 2AD	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese	Newcastle
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Satisfactory
Local authority	North Tyneside
Date/s of inspection	5 July 2017
Date of last inspection	11 March 2013
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Aided 108614
Headteacher	Gill Taylor
Inspector's name and number	Alan Baker 903

School context

Christ Church is a smaller than average Primary school of 205 pupils, including Nursery provision, and continues to grow slowly in numbers. It serves a socially disadvantaged catchment area with above average numbers of pupils receiving a free school meal. Pupil mobility is high. Generally, the percentage of pupils with English as an additional language is below national average and those with special educational needs is in line with national average. The headteacher has been in role for four years and is supported by new senior leaders. The school currently has no allocated vicar in place but accesses a range of support from the local diocese.

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

- Pupils and their families are clear in how the caring, supportive ethos of the school helps them to thrive and develop.
- A clear mission statement and core Christian values have been chosen by the school community, who articulate the positive impact this creates on behaviour and care in the school.
- Varied and reflective worship impacts on the aspirations and attitudes of pupils and draws regularly on support from the local Church community.
- Focused and on-going development of religious education (RE) has created a subject which pupils value as a way to learn about Christianity and other world faiths.
- The insightful and committed Christian leadership of the head teacher has brought the Christian character of the school to the fore and her passion has ensured the full support of the community she leads.

Areas to improve

- Further development of opportunities for all pupils to grow in personal spirituality through prayer, reflection and worship leadership.
- Greater involvement of governors in moderating performance and setting the future Christian direction of the school.
- Continue to support the teaching and assessment of RE so that achievement remains at least good.

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

The school commitment to encourage each pupil to 'Let their light shine', is evident in all areas. The proportion of pupils achieving a good level of development in EYFS is above national average. In KS1, progress for pupils is good from low starting points when they join the school. Results for phonic screening in year one is above national average. Responsive and focused support for pupils has led to improved progress for KS2 pupils which is now in line with national expectations. This is achieved by systems which closely monitor progress for individuals and groups of pupils, ensuring timely interventions in which impact is measured.

The care for pupils and their families is exceptional, creating a supportive atmosphere. By developing the role of the Special Educational Needs Coordinator, many strategies to support the social and emotional needs of pupils and families are in place. Parental feedback demonstrates how the school works hard to forge relationships with families in need and the appreciation they have for the positive impact this has on their lives. Pupils are clear that everyone is valued and treated equally. Context specific Christian values of respect, forgiveness, trust, compassion, friendship, thankfulness and koinonia support pupils to articulate how the Church character of the school shapes their actions and attitudes. Behaviour of pupils is a strength and demonstrates the compassion, which staff and leaders show in supporting pupils and their families through times of adversity.

Opportunities to pray and reflect in school are growing and pupils are keen to use and develop these spaces. Regular and exciting opportunities to be involved in charity support, particularly links with Kenya, give pupils purpose in their actions. They clearly and passionately share their understanding of equality and speak of all members of their own, and the world community, as equal.

Staff and governors of the school describe a happy and supportive atmosphere. This has significant impact on their own spirituality, with several accessing the local parish church for personal confirmation, weddings and christenings. They give their all to support pupils, and each other, by living out the Christian values of the school. Staff commitment to worship and RE allows them to continually embed important messages, through their interactions with pupils and adults alike. Impressively developed floor books, combined with creative teaching and recording, gives pupils the confidence to share how the things they learn impact positively on their lives.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

The school community enjoys services of worship and experiences a range of leaders and styles. Links with the local church, including weekly visits for whole school worship, give pupils strong experiences of distinctly Christian services. They participate in worship with confidence. Themes based around the school values help pupils to articulate how their actions are shaped by the biblical stories and teachings of God and Jesus, which they hear. Pupils describe God and Jesus as their 'role models', with one sharing that 'God gives us wisdom. He leads you, so you know what to do'. Development of themes, through house worship, gives the opportunity to learn with pupils of other ages. This offers additional impact in understanding and living out the messages learned. Older pupils particularly enjoy the links forged with local Catholic and Church of England schools, through the Easter passion parade, Emmaus Youth Village and Cathedral leavers' service. As a result, pupils have a good understanding of the different denominations of Christianity.

The pupil worship team lead in the offering of prayers, sharing of stories and reviewing the success of worship. Their prayers are spontaneous and reflective of a community which shows great love and support to others. Other, younger pupils show great enthusiasm to partake in leadership opportunities which are available as they get older. Pupils see prayer as a way of 'talking to God' and they enjoy this part of worship. The school community, generally, is less clear about how prayer and reflection can impact on life outside of worship. Their explanation of whom we offer prayer to shows a growing understanding of God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

Links with the local Church are strong, offering pupils opportunities to develop their own spirituality, both in school and through the regular visits they make. The school have worked hard to gather support in the absence of a school vicar. Involvement of members of the Church and local circuit is important in the delivery of worship, although the school desires further clergy support in the planning, leadership and governance.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

Great progress has been made in the development of RE since the previous inspection. The RE lead, with support from the diocese, has grown in her knowledge and passion for the subject. New systems for assessment show pupils achievement to be in line with data for other subjects. Standards of presentation, marking and assessment are comparative with those in English. The head teacher is very involved in developing the importance and impact of the subject and governors are increasingly aware of the successes. The subject continues to make great strides year on year.

RE is given high importance by leaders, who work hard to keep their knowledge up to date with new and relevant training. The majority of teaching is shown to be good, through regular observation and scrutiny. Focused support is given to staff, through training and modelling, in order to develop their confidence to deliver the subject effectively. This impacts positively on standards, particularly in the recording and evidencing of more creative and inspirational practice.

Use of the Blackburn syllabus gives structure to planning, which is regularly reviewed and altered to suit the needs of staff and pupils. Teaching is increasingly creative and interactive. 'We do lots of drama which helps us understand things clearly', one pupil commented. Regular visits to and visitors from a range of Christian and other faith organisations, broaden the experiences pupils receive in RE and they talk with enthusiasm and enjoyment about the subject. This understanding is clear in discussion with pupils, who have a strong knowledge of Christianity and particularly enjoy the chance to learn about other religions. Their learning from RE supports their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding of a multi-faith society. Pupils also enjoy learning about the beliefs of practising Christians, giving further context to the values they work hard to live out.

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

Since the previous inspection, the school has followed a continual and impressive course of progress as a successful Church school. This is, in no small part, due to a head teacher who clearly understands the value and benefits that the Christian aspect of the community brings. Her personal involvement in worshipping at the local Church has developed strong relationships and created opportunities for both organisations. She articulates and demonstrates the school values with passion and enthusiasm, which, in turn, has had a positive impact on all leaders of the school.

Creation of a clear mission statement and adoption of explicitly Christian values have given direction to the decisions leaders make. This has generated a supportive ethos, which is evident at all levels. Staff, parents and pupils attribute the good behaviour and attitudes of pupils, to the warm and clear leadership given. A continually shared vision has allowed the school to progress, particularly in RE and worship, which are given great importance and meet statutory requirements. Thorough self-evaluation allows the school to identify areas of weakness and act effectively, to ensure that the needs of the community are well served. Staff feel valued and see the benefits and impact of the values of the school. They are keen to support the Christian character and newly created management positions ensure opportunities to develop future leaders. This is particularly evident in the development of the RE coordinator, who has been supported to grow in to a knowledgeable and committed leader.

Members of the Church continue to grow in their understanding of the importance of their relationship with the school. Many mutually beneficial interactions create trusting relationships for the community. The whole Church and school community thrive in this warm and welcoming environment, where leaders strive to provide relevant and responsive opportunities to support the needs of all. Pupils and parents appreciate the many partnerships which have been created to offer them support to develop as happy families and enjoy being part of the Christ Church community.