



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

St Chad's CE (C) Primary School

The Gateway
Red Street
Newcastle under Lyme
Staffordshire
ST5 7AB

Diocese: Lichfield

Local authority: Staffordshire

Dates of inspection: July 4th 2014

Date of last inspection: July 1st 2009

School's unique reference number: 124465

Headteacher: Miss S Clarke

Inspector's name and number: Huw D Bishop 344

School context

The school is a two form entry voluntary controlled school, located at the heart of the community it serves. The number of pupils with special educational needs is just below average and those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average. The majority of pupils are of White British Heritage with just over 5% having English as an additional language. Mobility has increased since the last inspection, with many pupils joining part way through the year.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Chad's as a Church of England school are outstanding

- Every child feels secure and loved because of the clear and distinctive Christian values which guide every aspect of school life. As such, pupils achieve well in their learning academically, spiritually and socially.
- In worship which is lively and interactive, the uniqueness of each pupil as a child of God is lifted in praise. This is carefully linked to their religious education and other curriculum areas and leads to outstanding spiritual development.
- Relationships in school reflect the Christian values of love and friendship. They are lived out by all members of the school family and extend to pupils' lives at home.
- The headteacher and leadership team, supported strongly by the governors, use a robust system of self-evaluation that is based around a distinctive Christian vision.

Areas to improve

- With the strong connexions that already exist with the parish church, develop the evaluation of collective worship, to include all who deliver worship to inform planning and lead to ongoing improvement.

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

The Christian character of the school makes a significant impact on the academic achievement and the progress that pupils make across the curriculum. The emphasis that the school places on Christian values and their impact on daily life also influences the support that is given to pupils which reduces barriers to learning significantly. As a result, pupils have very positive attitudes to learning. Attendance is strong – pupils want to be at school. They feel they are missing out if they are not! One parent explained how the school had ‘amazingly turned around’ the learning attitude of her child to result in a realistic hope for future success. This had happened through effective pastoral support, steeped in care and compassion and securely based on Christian values. Relationships are a key strength of the school and are very evident with pupils, staff and parents. Pupils also care for each other, as seen through their ‘play leader’ scheme where older pupils support younger ones on the playground. They have to apply for these positions and demonstrate their qualities and suitability to be successful. The Christian values that are so central to the school also have a significant impact on its distinctiveness. They are described as a ‘a living entity’ and have a high profile in a range of effective displays around the school. They are carefully linked to gospel stories that help pupils to put them into a Christian context. Pupils can talk about them well and explain the difference they make to their own lives, as well as to others through their charitable work. A Year 2 lesson considering how the value of kindness is shown in real life situations was very effective in drawing out pupils’ understanding of a range of moral issues and the impact they have on peoples’ lives. Pupils’ ability to talk about these situations was outstanding. The high level of enjoyment in this lesson also contributed well to the way the school works as a family. Pupils also learn about other faiths and cultures and show a mature respect and tolerance for diversity. The impact of this means that pupils have a wide knowledge and understanding of the world around them. There is a strong emphasis on building self-esteem through the school’s Christian ethos and its promotion of key Christian values. This contributes strongly to the way pupils are prepared for their next steps in learning. They leave the school in Year 6 with God’s love firmly implanted in their hearts and are reminded of it in their personal Bible, presented to them at the parish church.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective Worship is an important and key part of the school day. It gives an opportunity to worship as a community, to share the values that are central to the school and to move forward into the new school day with inspiration. Collective worship is based firmly on Christian values and teaching from the Bible. It is varied and provides opportunities to pray, praise, reflect and listen. The theological basis of collective worship is emphasised by the centrality of the cross and the Bible which is open at all times in the main hall, and pupils understand this. The school vision statement ‘building together for a better future’ is always linked to working with God, so the idea of Christian vocation is constantly nurtured. The observed worship was creative, well planned and appreciated by all. It was an inclusive spiritual moment which needed a personal as well as community response. Prayer is at the heart of worship at the school and pupils pray in whole school worship and in class, lunchtime and at the end of the day. The school ‘creed’ is said every day in Key Stage 2 classes. A topical prayer is included on the front page of every school newsletter and this is greatly valued by parents and pupils. Opportunities are given for pupils to worship in the parish church and in smaller groups in school. Worship provides opportunities for pupils to become familiar with Anglican traditions and practices and they talked confidently about the seasons of the church’s year, the liturgical colours, the centrality of the altar and its significance in worship. Pupils sing in worship with great joy! The excellent relationship between church and school ensures that the school community is familiar with the church and they feel at home when visiting. Planning for

worship is carried out by the headteacher in consultation with other staff and the children. However, the further development of worship in consultation with the newly arrived parish priest would give opportunities for pupils and worship leaders to plan, lead and evaluate new and significant aspects of worship together.

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

The headteacher shares and promotes a very clear Christian vision for the school. She works hard to ensure the development of the whole child to reach their full potential by enjoying every learning experience and giving them essential skills for daily life. Pupils make good progress as a result of good teaching, excellent pastoral support and relationships which are based on Gospel values. This vision is shared, agreed and expressed by staff, pupils, parents and governors and all are inspired to continually improve their engagement and performance. Excellent relationships between the governors and the school have positively enhanced the educational provision for pupils. The headteacher values greatly the support from the foundation governors and the parish priest. They visit the school regularly, work alongside classes and lead a Christian club, 'Faith and Fun' for pupils in the parish church. The parish church is involved practically and prayerfully in supporting the school. Examples of this include funding transport to diocesan events, end of year presentation of Bibles to Year 6 pupils and raising funds for 'Masoyi', a parish project to support HIV sufferers in Africa. The wider Christian community is also involved through visitors from other Christian churches who lead worship. Staff at the school are supported on their spiritual journeys informally and in times of personal need and governors work closely with the school to ensure that future Church school leadership opportunities are available to staff. The school's aim as a church school to 'learn more about faith', which was negotiated with the school community, drives the vision forward and is reflected in the school's documentation, prospectus, newsletters and discussions with parents who want their children to come to the school. This distinctive Christian vision was the reason one parent made an active choice to keep her child at the school, despite an offer of admission being made from another school. The impact of the changes made since the last inspection has ensured that the school's effectiveness continues to be outstanding and its capacity for sustained improvement is excellent.

SIAMS report July 2014 St Chad's CE (C) Primary School, Newcastle ST5 7AB