



## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

### **Carnforth Christ Church Church of England Primary School**

North Road, Carnforth, Lancashire, LA5 9LJ

**Previous SIAMS grade: Good**

**Current SIAMS grade: Good**

**Diocese: Blackburn**

Local authority: Lancashire

Date of inspection: 26 March 2015

Date of last inspection: 13 October 2009

School's unique reference number: 119522

Headteacher: Daniel Hargreaves

Inspector's name and number: Anne B. Woodcock 445

#### **School context**

Christ Church is a small primary school in Carnforth. Most of the 91 pupils are of White British origin and come from mixed socio-economic backgrounds. The number of pupils attracting the Pupil Premium grant is lower than average. The headteacher has been in post since September 2014. A significant number of governors have been appointed in the last two terms.

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

- The headteacher's Christian vision inspires change and brings rapid improvement to all aspects of the school.
- Explicitly expressed Christian values are reflected in supportive, nurturing relationships throughout the school.
- Pupils' understanding of Christian love and friendship contributes to their high standards of behaviour.
- The school's inclusive character has a very positive impact on pupils' spiritual growth, personal development and well-being.

#### **Areas to improve**

- Provide opportunities for pupils to regularly plan and lead collective worship independently so that they develop their understanding of the nature and purpose of Christian worship.
- Extend pupils' understanding of diverse cultures and faiths through Religious education by providing more first-hand experience.
- Strengthen the role and work of governors by working together with staff and parents, to develop the renewed school ethos and values.

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

The school's Christian character is immediately felt by visitors. Christian values clearly influence all aspects of school life. Children say that these values help them in their relationships and life choices. 'You treat others as you want to be treated. You should love and care for everyone, even those you don't particularly like,' explained one Year 5 pupil. Parents value the nurturing relationships which support their children and enable them to develop and grow as individuals. All children are treated as individuals special to God. As a result they are supported and encouraged, enabling all to achieve their potential. Teaching is good. Pupils enjoy their learning because it is fun and challenging. They make good progress from their starting points and standards of attainment are good. Children's personal and spiritual development is good because they have many opportunities to express their ideas through music, art and sports. All children sing and learn to play musical instruments, performing for others in the local community and at school events. Displays reflect the high quality of learning experiences provided. They make a significant contribution to the school's explicitly Christian character because they demonstrate the importance of Religious Education (RE) and worship. Children are increasingly reflective, describing how their lessons and cross-curricular experiences help them to consider 'big questions' like fairness and poverty. Pupils explain that they raise money for charities and help others because they know that is what Jesus wants people to do. Themed weeks, during which children explore other cultures such as India, extend their understanding of diversity and support their spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development. All members of the school family recognise that the strengthening relationship with the church, together with the school's focus on spirituality, is having a very positive impact on the school's distinctive Christian character.

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

Collective worship is an important and valued feature of the daily life of the school. Children say that they enjoy worship. One Year 6 pupil commented, 'It involves everyone and we feel part of it.' Worship themes are well planned and delivered by staff and visitors. They are firmly based on Bible teaching and Christian values. There is a clear focus on the person of Jesus. As a result, pupils have a good knowledge of stories and events in Jesus' life and the way in which Christians across the world celebrate festivals. Children's understanding of God was ably demonstrated by a Year 5 pupil who explained, 'The Trinity is three representations of God in one person.' Pupils are engaged in worship, often helping to act out stories or read from the Bible. They are encouraged to reflect, leading them to consider how the themes impact on their own lives. 'Worship helps me to think a lot about what I should do in certain situations,' explained a Year 6 pupil. Time is given for prayer throughout the day. Children write their own prayers and are familiar with traditional prayers and graces. Clergy and visitors from Christian organisations, such as the Northern Interschool Christian Union, provide experience of different styles of Christian worship. The church is used for school worship regularly as well as at festival times. Children value their church visits and have a growing awareness of traditional Anglican worship and practice. Significant improvements have been made in the monitoring and evaluation of worship since the last inspection. Staff, governors and pupils are engaged in the evaluation process and this has led recognisable improvements in the delivery and impact of worship. However, although pupils are involved in delivering some aspects of worship, they have limited opportunities to plan, lead and evaluate worship independently.

### **The effectiveness of the religious education is good**

Children enjoy and are challenged by their work in RE. A group of Year 5 and Year 6 children said, 'Lessons are fun and interesting and you get to do all sorts of different activities.' Lessons are well planned and delivered by teachers who have sound subject knowledge. A very good balance is achieved between learning about and learning from religion. Children are reflective

and enquiring learners. For example, in one lesson, young children explored the symbols of Easter, using their prior knowledge to consider what made Easter special. A pupil in one group decided, 'Jesus died on the cross for us all and rose again, that's the important bit, but we love the chocolate too!' Pupils make good progress in RE and the standards attained are in line with those of other core subjects. The high quality of pupils' work is reflected in their work books, class scrap books and displays. RE is well-led, resulting in continued improvement in the delivery and effectiveness of the subject. Regular monitoring and evaluation and robust assessment procedures are well-established. They provide quality information about pupil progress and the standards achieved. RE makes a positive contribution to pupils' SMSC development. They understand that Christians around the world worship and live in different ways. They respect different cultures, explaining, 'You can't judge others by the clothes they wear or the way they live.' However, their knowledge of aspects of Islam and Judaism is limited. A focus on this aspect of RE would deepen their knowledge of diversity.

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

All members of the school community fully recognise that, although the headteacher has been in post for less than a year, the impact of his vision on the development of the school's Christian character is substantial. Audits of collective worship and the school's Christian character, carried out with the staff and governors, have provided powerful insight and resulted in rapid change. Governors monitor and evaluate the work of the school effectively, ensuring that church school issues are prioritised within school improvement planning. The focus on spirituality and the strengthening of the relationship with the church are examples. Governors support ongoing change through visits, sharing pupils' work and observing lessons and worship. Issues from the previous inspection have been addressed, but governors recognise that further improvements are needed in order for the school to be outstanding. As there are a significant number of new governors, their effectiveness and knowledge are understandably somewhat limited. They are not fully involved with staff in the review and development of the school's core values and distinctiveness. RE and collective worship are well-led. They contribute significantly to the school's Christian distinctiveness and to pupils' SMSC. Parents and members of the church are particularly encouraged by the deepening church links. They say it brings a welcome dimension to the school which is valued by their children. Partnerships with other local church and community schools support teaching and learning. Diocesan support provides for continued professional development to provide effective succession planning. Pupils know that their opinions are valued and acted upon. Through the school council they are developing the outdoor play areas. They are proud of the way they support each other and share their talents and skills in the community. One child explained, 'We want to show a good example, be fair and nice and help others.'

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