



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Christ Church Church of England (VC) Primary School

Claremont Road
Sparkbrook
Birmingham
B11 1LF

Diocese: Birmingham

Previous SIAMS grade: Outstanding

Local authority: Birmingham

Dates of inspection: 28 April 2016

Date of last inspection: 25 March 2011

School's unique reference number: 103397

Head teacher: Debbie Westwood

Revd. Dr. Richard Sudworth

Inspector's name and number: Revd. Alison M. Morris 759

School context

Christ Church Church of England Controlled Primary School is an average sized primary school with 234 pupils. The school is in an area of significant deprivation which serves Sparkbrook and surrounding areas. This one form entry school serves a community of many ethnic groups although the school population is predominantly Asian Muslim. Both figures of pupils eligible for pupil premium and Free School Meals are well above average. The number of pupils with statements is also above average. Links exist with the wider community especially with the church, foundation governors and clergy. A new headteacher has been appointed since the previous inspection.

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

- Astute spiritual leadership, commitment and dedication by the headteacher whose vision, motivated by her personal faith, is instrumental in the creation of a distinctively Christian school that is inclusive, welcoming and harmonious.
- Exemplary pastoral care and intervention strategies that overcome barriers to learning and enable pupils to realise their potential within the multi-faith community the school serves.
- Embedded Christian values; seen particularly in the excellent spiritual, moral, social and personal development.

Areas to improve

- Revisit documentation on the vision, mission statement and governance to highlight, clarify and embed further references to Christian distinctiveness to provide clear reference points for the discussion on the development of this school in the future as an academy.
- Through development of the Faith Team, engage pupils in the process of monitoring and evaluating worship with the intention of refining and further developing the expression of Christian worship to ensure inclusion of more varied Anglican traditions and practices.

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

This explicitly Christian school is outstanding in the work it does. All aspects of school life from documentation, displays to classroom practice evidence the Christian character of the school and its Christian witness. The promotion of core Christian values embraced by the school sets the expectation for how all should live and is embodied in the motto, 'God loves everyone equally'. The Christian foundation enables faith to be encouraged and provides an explicit faith context for every pupil to explore their own journey in a climate of inclusion and acceptance. As a result people of all faiths are confident to speak about their beliefs, expressing their thoughts and views in depth. They are treated with dignity, respected and valued as individuals to be fully nurtured in this caring Christian environment. Explicit Christian values support a commitment to meeting the holistic needs of each child, supported by exemplary pastoral care. This contributes very well to pupils' personal development. Pupils in all ability groups make good pupil progress and pupils achieve well, most reaching very good standards of attainment in academic work. Effective intervention programmes and excellent SEND provision ensure disadvantaged pupils' attainment is higher than that of similar pupils nationally. Social, moral, spiritual and cultural development (SMSC) is nourished and challenged through this inclusive Christian community. Religious Education also makes a very significant contribution to pupils' development, as belief matters in this school. Self-awareness, understanding and knowledge of other faiths and cultures are also enhanced through RE. Harmonious relationships are based on Christian values and high levels of challenge which are a key factor in pupils' success are both strengths of the school. Pupils are very happy and proud of their school. A 'family' ethos enables pupils to feel secure and confident to achieve well. Pupils have a good sense of self-belief, self-esteem. They are well motivated, enthusiastic and keen to attend because of engaging curriculum activities and rich learning experiences such as the theatre project with Royal Shakespeare Company. Pupils understand what it means to be a pupil at a church school and make the link to Christian teaching in the Bible. Displays of Christian artefacts and Bible quotes throughout the school plus a refurbished lobby area express the school's Christian distinctiveness and promote discussion. A consequence is that pupils are able to communicate the Christian story well. An effective school council allows pupils opportunity to contribute significantly to the decision making. They also participate in the mission of the wider community and worldwide church through fundraising and charitable giving for example to, 'Sparkbrook Food Bank'. Standards of behaviour are exemplary and pupils are aware of boundaries for correct behaviour and the explicit Christian values that underpin this attitude. A relaxed, orderly atmosphere around the school facilitates an excellent environment for all pupils' needs to be met, for progress and achievement to flourish and where differences and diversity can be celebrated.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding.

Worshipping is integral to all aspects of school life and pupils recognise the importance and significance of meeting together regularly for worship. Pupils are enthusiastic, thoughtful, attentive and responsive. Worship is distinctively Christian in character, using biblical material and imagery, resulting in pupils who can speak confidently about Jesus and his importance for Christians as well as about the Trinity. Great care is taken to ensure that worship is spiritually nourishing, accessible and inclusive in language. This successful approach allows people of all faiths to participate. Worship is planned using the liturgical calendar with themes that connect to Bible stories, Christian values and festivals. Pupils have a positive attitude to worship because the selected themes and shared human values relate to their own experiences and so meet pupils' needs. Worship makes a substantial impact upon, and contribution to, school life and pupils' spiritual development. Their belief, attitudes and behaviour are influenced by this Christian distinctiveness of worship. Purposeful pupil involvement in leading worship is through the Faith Team who participate in drama, setting up, selecting music and prayers. A variety of approaches to worship enables pupils to engage in Anglican traditions and practices. As a result pupils have excellent knowledge of Christian symbols and make good use of responsive prayers. Key Christian festivals such as Easter, which are always celebrated creatively re-enforce the shared vision and enhance knowledge. Pupils know well many Bible stories and older pupils have a very good understanding of parables, their meaning and significance for them in their daily lives. For example a pupil spoke about 'The Good Samaritan', '*Moral courage is doing something correct even though everyone is against it*'. Spiritual development

is exemplary and provides older pupils with the skills to discuss and consider the deeper aspects of a personal faith. One pupil spoke about forgiveness, *'I feel content and cleansed after being forgiven.'* Prayer and reflection which is integral to daily life and spiritual development are fostered through 'stillness' as they seek to foster spirituality and a deeper relationship with God. Response to prayer is enthusiastic with pupils speaking of how they feel personally when engaging in prayer. A pupil said, *'I like praying to God. He is there for me'*. They understand their purpose and the impact that prayers have in their lives. For example the prayer corners provide pupils opportunity to have quiet time and reflect. Links with the clergy, parish and foundation governors are very strong. Regular visits by local clergy to take collective worship, lead discussion or specific workshops on topics such as the Trinity, nurture pupils' attitudes to faith and strengthen pupils' spiritual development. Additional activities such as the Inter Faith Week and visits to Birmingham Cathedral offer a richer experience of different worship and enhance pupil understanding of other people's faith. Very detailed plans underpin the worship and provide an excellent tool for monitoring and evaluating practice. Effective evaluation records of worship from governors' observations, questionnaires and pupil interviews by the Faith Team which provide feedback for development. Addressing a focus for development from the last inspection, the Foundation Governors now have a greater role in planning, monitoring and evaluating the act of worship and its impact upon the pupils.

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

The headteacher, well supported by governors, staff and parents has a personal vision and commitment to the Christian foundation of the school. This has a profound impact which is recognised by the pupils and in the wider community. All stakeholders articulate, understand and ensure that the distinctive Christian values and ethos pervade, and are vital to, the school's vision. The parish incumbent is a regular visitor nurturing the very close relational links that exist between church and school. Both chair and foundation governors are particularly supportive of the strategic drive to improve academic progress, well-being and to develop the Christian distinctiveness even further in preparation for future change. All staff and governors have an honest and challenging view of the future developmental needs of this school. Robust and rigorous systems for monitoring and evaluating the school's impact on pupil achievement are in place. Self-evaluation and reflection is rigorous as skilled governors act as critical friends who effectively set the strategic direction for this Christian school. This has a positive impact upon the way that the school is enabled to live out its Christian vision. Significant contribution by the head teacher through targeted professional development and succession planning has strengthened the capacity to plan for future development and to ensure continued success. Exemplary relationships throughout the school show the key role that Christian values play in the community. Collective worship and RE are led inspirationally, creatively and with an enthusiasm which radiates through to the staff and pupils. The RE curriculum also provides a structured learning scheme so pupils have a deep respect of Christian values and beliefs whilst also developing an understanding of other faiths including Judaism and Islam. Purposeful, effective and strong partnerships exist with parents, multi-agencies and the wider community. Very effective cohesive links within the multi faith community are generated through active engagement with the local mosque and other places of worship. Parents are happy with the school as a church school and state that their requests and issues are dealt with efficiently and appropriately. They speak highly of the school, the care and concern shown to their children and the very professional way in which staff work. One parent said; *'It is like sending them to a family'*. They know this is a safe and secure environment which enables their children to flourish socially, spiritually and academically. All parents have confidence in the school, feel included and recognise the *'welcoming Christian faith'* that underpins everything in the school. One parent commented, *'You are always welcome no matter what religion you are'*. Parents believe pupils' needs are being met and progress is extended through enrichment days such as Barnabas RE Day and extra-curricular activities such as the computer APP club. Pupils also engage in activities such as British Values Day and reflection time to be culturally aware of their wider responsibilities within a multi-faith and multi-cultural society. Pupils have become aware of life in Malawi through the Birmingham-Malawi Partnership.

