



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Ashby-de-la Zouch Church of England Primary School

Burton Road
Ashby-de-la-Zouch
LE65 2LL

Previous SIAMS grade: Outstanding

Current inspection grade: Outstanding

Diocese: Leicester

Local authority: Leicestershire

Dates of inspection: 4th February 2015

Date of last inspection: 1st February 2010

School's unique reference number: 120190

Headteacher: Liz Powell

Inspector's name and number: Stephen Gleave 798

School context

Ashby Church of England Primary is a medium sized school with 303 pupils currently on roll. It is situated in the centre of the market town attracting pupils from a wide area. The intake overall has a varied social composition. Children are predominately from a White British background with a small number (7.4%) from a range of ethnic backgrounds. The overall figure of children with special educational needs is around the national average.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Ashby Primary as a Church of England school are outstanding.

- Christian character is evident in every aspect of school life and is explicit throughout the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of each child.
- The school has identified six Christian values which staff, pupils and leaders clearly live out every day. The values have a real tangible impact on the life of the school.
- Learners enjoy and value religious education (RE). Christianity is at its heart and other religions are studied and respected. This makes an excellent contribution to Ashby as a Church of England school.
- The behaviour in and around school is outstanding. Relationships between all pupils and adults are clearly based on the Christian values enabling every child to achieve well.

Areas to improve

- Establish firmer links with local church schools and the diocese in order to engender a greater sense of belonging and enrich the lives of the learners.
- Teach pupils about God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit to develop their understanding.

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

The school has identified the Christian values of compassion, endurance, forgiveness, friendship, trust and wisdom. These are on display in the school hall and in every classroom. These values are truly at the heart of the school and they are identified in documents such as the school development plan. They are also demonstrated every day by pupils and adults to create a true sense of 'family' of which the school is justifiably proud. This has a significant impact on the pupils as learners. They are able to clearly articulate how the true Christian values guide their lives both in and out of school. Their attendance and academic progress are both good as the Christian, caring, nurturing environment helps them to excel. Care and support for vulnerable children and families is a key feature of the school's work. The Achievement for All programme has seen lower attaining pupils make rapid progress so that their attainment is much closer to that of others. The school sees support for the disadvantaged, either academically or socially, as a key part of its Christian mission. The behaviour of the learners is outstanding. This contributes to the excellent relationships that are evident in every aspect of school life as the Christian values are truly lived out. For example behaviour issues are usually resolved by reference to the values of trust and forgiveness. Pupils understand and value this and it enables the school to thrive. Pupils highly value religious education (RE) lessons. They are made to be fun and engaging for the pupils. Standards are high and pupils speak with great enthusiasm about what they have learned about Christianity through the Bible and the life of Jesus. Other religions and faith communities are understood and respected. RE clearly makes a telling contribution to shaping the Christian Character of the school. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is outstanding because of the impact of the school values. Pupils are very reflective and are able to clearly and confidently talk about their thoughts and beliefs. They can demonstrate an outstanding ability to use a wide range of vocabulary to describe feelings and emotions. They can accurately describe how the Christian Character and values of the school shape their daily lives. Biblical teaching has a clear, very positive, influence on children's high level of respect and politeness. One child said being in school is like, 'Love thy neighbour'.

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

Records show that Biblical teaching and Christian values are central themes of collective worship. The school follows the Diocesan termly plan whilst linking in the school values on a daily basis. Evaluations indicate that the impact is outstanding which is a view shared by parents, governors, staff and pupils. Worship is led by a variety of leaders from both within and outside the school including clergy. Pupils can describe many different experiences of worship and recount the Christian message that they delivered. This is an example of the great value that is placed on collective worship by the whole school community. Learners are fully involved in the planning and leading of worship. An example of this is the recent worship highlighting the Ebola crisis in Africa which everyone described as memorable. This was instigated, planned and led by pupils. High quality displays in the school hall reflect the strong Christian element of worship as well as the values and ethos of the school. Pupils engage with worship enthusiastically whether as a leader or in answering questions, singing or joining in with prayers. Prayer and reflection are central to the daily life of the school both during worship and at other times. There is a prayer tree in the foyer where children can write and hang their prayers. There are also prayer books and boxes in classrooms. Prayers are taken from these and read out in class at lunchtime. Each class has a short period of prayer and reflection at the end of the school day. This time gives a wonderful opportunity to relate the events of the day to the pupils' beliefs and school values. Learners have a very clear view of the purposes of prayer and reflection and this contributes to high quality behaviour and attitudes. However, pupils' understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Ghost is not well developed. Christian festivals and other events are held at the local church. These are greatly valued by all and are strongly supported by parents. The inspirational and inclusive nature of worship contributes to its impact which is outstanding because of its widespread influence.

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

The Christian vision is clear to see and is acknowledged and clearly articulated by all leaders and stakeholders. The highly effective implementation of this vision is secured through evaluation and strategic planning. Leaders are passionate in promoting the positive impact of Christian values on children's lives and the whole life of the school. This has had an outstanding impact on standards, behaviour, Christian Character and the well-being of the whole community. Christian values are the fundamental driving force in the strategic management of the school and this is reflected in every facet of school life. Governors and senior leaders regularly discuss the impact of Biblical teachings on the work of the school. These discussions are clearly evidenced in minutes and other documentation provided by the school. This has enabled educational, social and economic barriers to be overcome to create a special place where children thrive both educationally and spiritually. The partnership with the local church and community is strong. The incumbent, who is a very active governor, has been instrumental in promoting this. The headteacher and leadership team lead by example. They demonstrate high levels of pastoral care in safeguarding the emotional well-being of children and their families. The curriculum is planned to develop the Christian character of the school and meet the needs of all learners. Theme weeks this year include topics such as 'Remembrance' and 'Exploring Christianity Week'. After the week parents are invited into school to view the results of the pupils' work. The curriculum also makes an important and valuable contribution to the outstanding behaviour and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the children. School leaders have robust systems in place to monitor the impact of Christian values on the life of the whole school. The development of all staff and governors as leaders in a church school is fully maximised. This means that leadership is of the highest order both now and for the foreseeable future. Governors are regular visitors to the school who know the school very well. The parents and children are consulted whenever possible. The school is very open and transparent in its desire to do the very best for every parent and child. This is fully appreciated by pupils and their families. RE and worship are very well led and this facilitates outstanding practice in both areas. The school does not have a strong sense of being part of the broader Christian church because its involvement with the Diocese and other church schools is limited. The school has extremely effective leadership ensuring that the distinctive Christian character has an outstanding impact on pupils' personal and academic development and the well-being of the school community.

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