

## Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

| St John's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School and Nursery |                                       |                         |            |  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|------------|--|
| <b>Address</b>                                                              | Laund Nook Belper Derbyshire DE56 1GY |                         |            |  |
| <b>Date of inspection</b>                                                   | 26 June 2019                          | <b>Status of school</b> | VC primary |  |
| <b>Diocese / Methodist District</b>                                         | Diocese of Derby                      | <b>URN</b>              | 112875     |  |

|                                                                                                                                                              |              |                  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|------------------|
| <b>Overall Judgement</b>                                                                                                                                     | <b>Grade</b> | <b>Good</b>      |
| How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish? |              |                  |
| <b>Additional Judgement</b>                                                                                                                                  |              |                  |
| <b>The impact of collective worship</b>                                                                                                                      | <b>Grade</b> | <b>Excellent</b> |

### School Context

St John's CE Primary School and Nursery has 480 pupils on roll. The school has a very low level of religious and cultural diversity and very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and pupils with special educational needs and disabilities are below national averages. The school is currently undergoing building work due to increasing pupil numbers. Since the previous inspection there has been a new headteacher who took up their post in 2015 and who presided over the 'Good' Ofsted judgement in December 2017.

### The school's Christian vision

We develop unique, confident and happy children, within an exceptional Christian learning community, preparing and empowering them for life in a changing world.

### Key findings

- A strong partnership has been developed between school and St Peter's Church. This has supported the Christian distinctiveness and strengthened the family feel within the school which is valued by all members of the community.
- The teaching of religious education (RE) has improved, as more cross-curricular opportunities are available as class teachers now deliver these lessons. Teachers deliver well planned lessons within a progressive curriculum. Pupils can recall what they have learned, as well as explaining what this means to them in their own lives.
- St John's Christian vision underpins the inclusive nature of the school. All pupils are welcomed, supported and cared for, including those with learning difficulties or disabilities, allowing all to flourish.
- The pupils live out the values that are central to the school's Christian vision. Learning behaviours are strong, perseverance is readily discussed, and respectful actions are evident.

### Areas for development

- To embed within the curriculum regular opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of how and why they should be the voice for those less fortunate, or do not have a voice of their own, in order to become courageous advocates.
- To develop the curriculum, skills and expertise of staff and pupils at St John's, focused around the links and friendship with Scott Lane School in Kolkata, so that effective practice can be developed and then shared more widely.

How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?

### Inspection findings

St John's vision is clearly articulated by leaders. It sets out what it means to be an inclusive Church of England school. A family ethos welcomes pupils from all backgrounds, and those who may have additional needs. The school created a medical room to support a child's needs and have now secured additional funding to allow for the room to be extended. St John's is well led by the headteacher and senior leaders. They see that the Christian vision is pivotal in developing the school as 'a family', enabling all to flourish. Policies are beginning to show how they are underpinned by the school's Christian vision. Not all policies reflect the school's vision, as the full cycle of revisions have yet to be completed. The school has secure self-evaluation, and appropriate development plans are in place to secure better outcomes for all pupils. Therefore, attainment and progress are good and are broadly in line with national averages.

Partnerships with the church and other organisations provide additional opportunities for pupils' academic, spiritual, social and cultural development, enriching their experiences. A Year 1 pupil spoke about the recent visit to school from a representative of the Derby Open Centre. 'We were taught about Hindu weddings. They wear different clothes compared to a Christian wedding and get to have henna patterns.' New staff are given support and training in church school education through the diocese. In response to their previous denominational inspection recommendations, governors now monitor the school's effectiveness through formal visits and by supporting in practical ways. They know the school well, contributing to plans for school improvement. The school's Christian vision extends to staff. Staff questionnaires have promoted discussion on well-being. Due to the chaplain providing valuable spiritual support, adults also flourish spiritually, emotionally and professionally.

The Christian vision underpins all relationships. Staff model a caring and respectful approach. Pupils are encouraged to live well together through the Positive Behaviour Policy that encourages personal responsibility, respect for others and the environment. Older pupils look after younger pupils in their role as Playground Pals. A caring, Christian culture ensures all are treated with dignity and respect, resulting in everyone feeling valued. One parent spoke of the school as being, 'A big, happy family.' Bullying incidents are rare, confirming that the school's Christian vision and practice have a positive impact on the community. Pupils are happy, hardworking and feel safe. As a result, attendance is above average, and behaviour is good.

Subjects are taught thematically through the 'Cornerstones curriculum' model. It is enhanced with extra-curricular activities, many of which are sports related, widening pupils' horizons and life experiences, and developing perseverance and resilience. The impact of this was voiced by one child, 'We get the chance to be in loads of sports teams. It's helped me to persevere. I keep going when I'm in class, even if I find it tough.' Pupils are not yet able to articulate how they have challenged injustice and inequality. Early identification of learning and personal needs is carried out so that pupils make good progress. Intervention strategies and nurture provision have a positive impact on pupils' learning, and on social and emotional development. Staff speak passionately about the impact of this support. One parent of a pupil who has been attending the 'Look who's talking' group added, 'My child has loved coming and has gained so much from it.'

Leadership of RE is good and the subject has been given high priority. Prior to September 2016, adults other than class teachers taught RE. The leadership team decided that teachers would deliver the subject to their own class. Cross-curricular links are made, developing pupils' thinking and reasoning skills when reflecting on 'big' philosophical questions such as what heaven would look like. Pupils now have a greater depth of understanding in the subject. The RE subject leader undertakes diocesan training and supports staff by analysing planning and feeding back on strengths and further improvements. The 'Understanding Christianity' resource is having a positive impact on pupils' deepening knowledge of the Bible and the ability to critically engage with text. Pupils are aware of Christianity as a worldwide faith. St John's have worked closely with St Peter's Church, and through this positive relationship, two members of staff visited Scott Lane School in Kolkata. Although this aspect of the curriculum is not fully developed, pupils have been able to learn about the hardships that children face in Kolkata, as well as some of the similarities in their daily lives. This feeds into the Christian vision and ethos where appreciating diversity is integral.

The collective worship coordinator has developed a well-structured collective worship programme, which is values-led and in line with the school's vision. The whole school community talk with enthusiasm about the positive impact that it has had, reaffirming the caring, family ethos of the school. A parent spoke about how it has influenced their child's thinking, 'My child came home wanting to talk about what they could do to support another child in school who has additional learning needs.' The collective worship coordinator works closely with Reverend Anne from St Peter's, who regularly leads worship in school, as well as hosting acts of worship at church which Key Stage 2 pupils lead. Parents hold Anne in high regard, and this supports the strong relationship between school and church. Staff feel well supported and deliver engaging class and year group worship due to the planning support provided by leaders. The impact of the values-led approach can be seen in how pupils behave. During a break time several children waited patiently for an adult to finish talking before they asked a question about keeping their playground tidy. An integral feature of collective worship are biblical teachings, and these are used to further reinforce the school's Christian vision. Monitoring and evaluation by the leadership has further improved this element of worship. More time is now given to exploring these teachings and developing the pupils' understanding of what they can take from them in their daily lives. Pupils can articulate an informed and evaluative understanding of what Christians believe about God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and how prayer and reflection can help provide support. One child described prayer as, 'Being able to ask the Light of the World to make things better if we are struggling.' There are many varied opportunities on offer for pupils to pray and reflect, both within class and in a whole school prayer space, where older pupils support younger pupils to tackle problems together through prayer.

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| Headteacher                 | Roger Averis   |
| Inspector's name and number | David Wood 907 |