



Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

| | |
|---|---|
| Newchurch St Nicholas Church of England Primary School | Dark Lane Newchurch in Rossendale Lancashire BB4 7UA |
| Current SIAMS inspection grade | Good |
| Diocese | Manchester |
| Previous SIAMS inspection grade: | Good |
| Local authority | Lancashire |
| Name of multi-academy trust/ federation | N/a |
| Date of inspection | 6 October 2016 |
| Date of last inspection | September 2011 |
| School's unique reference number | 1193990 |
| Headteacher | Jane Thistlethwaite |
| Inspector's name and number | Gillian Rhodes 657 |

School context

Newchurch St Nicholas C of E Primary School is smaller than average. The majority of pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs or disability is close to the national average. The percentage of pupils receiving funding through pupil premium is significantly above national average. Since the last inspection there have been several changes in senior leadership. The current headteacher has been in post since September 2015 and the deputy headteacher joined the school at the start of this school year. Following an interregnum, the vicar of St Nicholas Church has been in post since July 2016.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Newchurch St Nicholas as a Church of England school are good

- The headteacher's vision for the school as a distinctive Church of England school is inspirational and instrumental in bringing about improvement in the life and performance of the whole school.
- Christian values have been re-established as the foundation for all aspects of school life and their impact on relationships and the lives and achievements of learners is recognised by members of the school and community.
- Religious education (RE) and collective worship effectively support the development of the Christian character and values of the school.

Areas to improve

- Ensure that the opportunities identified in the wider curriculum to develop spiritual awareness and understanding are realised in order to deepen the impact of the Christian character of the school on the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of pupils.
- Develop pupils' awareness of Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith in order to broaden understanding of diversity in local, national and global communities.
- Enhance the spiritual understanding of pupils by providing opportunities for them to plan and lead worship.
- Include all stakeholders in systematic monitoring and evaluation of worship in order to provide insight into the influence of worship on the whole school community and promote improvement.

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

Through a review process involving all members of the school community, distinctively Christian values have been re-established as the foundation for all aspects of life at Newchurch St Nicholas school. Core values of trust, hope, thankfulness, friendship, forgiveness and truthfulness are the principles on which teaching and learning, behaviour and relationships are based. Children and adults in the school family recognise that these values are rooted in the Bible and in the teachings of Jesus Christ. The school's Golden Book records and rewards examples of children living out Christian values and as a result children are proud to conduct themselves according to these values. Pupils make progress and achieve at least in line with national expectations. Attendance is in line with national averages. The impact of Christian values on the moral and social development and attitudes of pupils is increasingly recognised by parents. 'We can see how the positive way children behave in school is being brought home,' explained a parent. The spiritual life of the school is developed through RE and worship. Opportunities to develop cultural and spiritual awareness and understanding have been identified in the wider curriculum. Increasing use is being made of the nearby church for worship and as a resource for teaching and learning in RE. RE is recognised by all members of the school as important. Pupils of differing abilities are presented with appropriate challenge. Quality displays around school illustrate pupils' responses to learning about Christianity and other faiths and to thinking about the impact of faith on believers and on themselves. They do not as yet have many opportunities to learn about Christianity in other parts of the world and understand its variety and diversity.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Worship is central to the life of the school. Children and adults value coming together for reflection, praise and prayer. Themes for worship are based on the school's chosen Christian values, Christian festivals and the Church's year. Collective worship regularly includes biblical material and children are able to make links between this and the school's Christian values. Increasingly children are using the language of the school's values as discussed in worship to determine behaviour and resolve conflict. A pupil said, 'We forgive people who do things wrong.' Children explain that the values of hope and truthfulness underpin their attitudes to learning and conduct. Another pupil said, 'If I make the wrong choice I will try to make the right choice next time.' The ritual and practices of worship provide experience of Anglican tradition through familiar prayers such as the Lord's Prayer and through responses at the beginning and ending of worship. Prayer marks key points in the school day. Consequently children understand prayer as part of everyday life and some are able to explain that they use prayer at home to talk to God. They enjoy being given the opportunity to contribute prayers to worship. Artefacts on the worship table reflect the Trinity and older children are able to describe how the three objects, Bible, crucifix and candle, remind them of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Cloths in liturgical colours mark the changing seasons of the Church's year. Innovative events such as the Easter Readaround and Pentecost stations effectively develop pupils' understanding of key Christian festivals. Worship is carefully planned by the RE and worship co-ordinator. Links are explicitly made between worship themes and RE teaching. The leading of worship by the vicar and other members of staff is beginning to broaden the range of experiences for pupils. An ethos group meets weekly to enjoy discussion and creative activities related to worship and values. This provides increased opportunities for pupils to be engaged in planning and leading worship. This is an aspect for development recognised by school leaders. Monitoring and evaluation of worship by pupils has led to changes in organisation and worship practices. Requests to sing more often and a more varied selection of hymns have been acted upon. Children readily speak of how they now enjoy singing and are able to identify their favourite hymns and explain why they like them. Staff and governors have contributed to evaluation of worship but as yet this is informal. Monitoring and evaluation of worship by all stakeholders is not yet systematically planned and implemented.

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

Following the inspirational example of the headteacher, school leaders and governors live out, promote and express a clear vision for Newchurch St Nicholas school which is rooted in Christian values. Consequently, the character and purpose of the school, as described in its motto, is to 'Nurture, Succeed, Nourish' all members of the school family. Parents, governors and staff share a vibrant, positive outlook for the future development of the school and its pupils which is based on honest, thorough self-evaluation of performance and distinctiveness. School improvement plans includes Christian ethos, RE and worship. These plans recognise the progress made

and set challenging targets and strategies for further improvement. Leaders and staff have identified opportunities across the curriculum to embed the Christian character of the school and its impact on the spiritual awareness and understanding of pupils. Links with the local church are strong and increasingly of mutual benefit. Traditional celebrations for Harvest and Christmas take place in the church. New events such as carol singing and charity coffee mornings are organised jointly by school and church and attended by pupils, families and parishioners. The recently appointed vicar is already a familiar presence in the school and the local community and is a unifying force. Children understand Jesus' command to love our neighbours. Consequently they support a variety of local and national charities such as the foodbank, the village community association, Christian Aid and Children in Need. Parents feel welcomed by the school and its leaders. They are confident that their children are well cared for and safe and that any concerns they may have are dealt with swiftly and sensitively. The parents group FAITH – Friends Association In The Heart of Newchurch – organises a variety of events such as quizzes and fairs which bring parents and families into school and build confident, positive relationships. The school has strong links with the diocese. Year 6 pupils develop understanding of the wider church by attending a leavers' service at the cathedral. The headteacher and RE and worship co-ordinator have benefitted from diocesan training in Christian distinctiveness which was cascaded to all staff. This effectively supported the review of the school's Christian values. Governors have attended training in their strategic role and as a result, they are more confident when challenging school leaders in the realisation of their vision for the school. Newchurch St Nicholas C of E Primary School has the leadership capacity, drive and ambition to build on the revitalised foundation of its Christian ethos and values to the benefit of its pupils, their families and the extended school and local communities.

SIAMS report October 2016 Newchurch St Nicholas Church of England Primary School BB4 7UA