

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

### St Laurence Church of England Primary School

Collingwood Road, Long Eaton, Nottinghamshire. NG10 1DR.

<b>Current SIAMS inspection grade</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Derby</b>
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Date of academy conversion	March 2014
Name of multi-academy trust	Derby Diocesan Academy Trust
Date of inspection	10 July 2017
Date of last inspection	19 April 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Primary 141824
Head of School	Ronni Barker
Inspector's name and number	Anne Lumb 333

#### School context

This is a smaller than average primary school with 245 pupils on roll which became an academy in March 2014. The school has experienced a difficult period resulting in significant changes in staffing. The current Head of School and Executive Headteacher (shared with Loscoe Church of England Primary School) have been in post since January 2017. The school serves the local community with an increasing number of pupils joining the school from outside the catchment area. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage, although there is a growing number of pupils who speak English as a second language. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs is slightly higher than the national average. The local church is located a mile away.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Laurence Church of England Primary School as a Church of England school are good

- Children are nurtured and valued as unique children of God thus enabling them to achieve their full potential within a Christian context.
- Collective worship roots the school's Christian values and virtues within biblical teaching so that positive relationships are lived out and evident throughout the school.
- Leaders articulate a distinctively Christian vision which impacts on the children's wellbeing and academic achievement.

#### Areas to improve

- Integrate the *Understanding Christianity* resource within the religious education curriculum so that children are enabled to develop their enquiry skills and deepen their understanding of the Christian faith and its global diversity.
- Develop an assessment system for religious education (RE) so that tracking of progress in RE is included in termly pupil progress meetings.
- Provide opportunities for children to plan and lead collective worship thus increasing their ownership of worship time.
- Develop a more systematic approach to monitoring and evaluating the Christian character of the school in order to ensure that development of church school distinctiveness is integrated within the overall school development plan.

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

This is a nurturing church school community where children are encouraged and enabled to achieve their potential within a Christian context of living life to the full. Each child is valued as a unique child of God with individual needs and abilities. Staff are working hard to ensure that all children, including those with special educational needs or disabilities, not only make good or better progress academically but that they also develop the Christian values and virtues which are at the heart of school life. These are viewed as being inextricably linked. Staff therefore monitor both the academic progress and the social and emotional wellbeing of the children. Nurture groups enable the children to develop social skills and increase their confidence ensuring that they are able to participate fully in the learning experiences in the classroom. As a result parents are confident that their children are making good progress in their learning whilst commenting that 'there is a holistic feel' with 'children and staff caring for each other.' Attendance is improving as a result of recent strategies which include working with particular children and their families. Changes to the start of the school day have resulted in increased parental engagement and a growing sense of involvement in the children's learning. Christian values and virtues, rooted in biblical teaching, are at the centre of the positive relationships displayed throughout the school. Children speak of the 'special bond' between them and display genuine hospitality to visitors. The Christian value of forgiveness is at the heart of school life since children learn to say sorry and to both give and receive forgiveness. Each day begins afresh as forgiveness is available for everyone and the children speak of 'forgiving, having hope and doing the right things.' Opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development contribute to a sense of confidence, expressed by the children, that everyone is special and that they can 'talk about God and what he means to us. They let you believe what you want and help you to understand more.' Links with the local church are good so that children have an increasing awareness of the school's church school status, parents identify more closely with the local church and collective worship provision has been enhanced. The children engage positively with RE lessons which contribute to developing children's understanding of the values and virtues. Through RE they gain an understanding of different world faiths which is enhanced by visits to several places of worship. However, there is a limited understanding of Christianity as a global faith.

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

Collective worship is well-managed and led. It is central to school life and as such is highly valued by all members of the school community. Children engage enthusiastically with the central messages of collective worship which explore the school's Christian values through active engagement with the biblical narrative. The exploration of these values continues throughout the school day since it is woven into the curriculum and the children have access to reflection areas throughout the school; 'we help each other, encourage each other and know how to say sorry and forgive' children comment. 'Values sheets' which are taken home encourage the children to continue to explore these values with their parents leading to a greater sense of parental involvement. Children take responsibility for setting up the collective worship space and sometimes lead prayers. However, they are not yet fully involved in planning and leading collective worship. Prayer is increasingly important within the school day. Children engage in saying, writing and reading prayers both formally and informally. They value opportunities to use classroom reflection areas to pray and reflect; a year 6 boy commenting that his favourite place in the school is the class reflection area because 'I can calm down and think there.' The local vicar has an important role in the life of the school; regularly leading collective worship, providing support with developing the collective worship programme and becoming integral to the school community. The church is increasingly used for celebrating Christian festivals as the links between church and school develop. The children are developing an age appropriate understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Recent teaching on the Trinity captured the children's imagination so that good learning happened and as a result children can talk about the Trinity with increased confidence.

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

Religious education is being effectively led and managed. The subject is now monitored so that standards of teaching and learning are improving. The RE curriculum is based on the Locally Agreed Syllabus and, increasingly, use of the *Understanding Christianity* resource. Improvements in long-term planning along with diocesan training are having a positive impact on the quality of the RE curriculum being delivered in the school. Children engage enthusiastically with RE and are able to recall factual knowledge about the religions they study. For example, a recent trip to the local church being explored through creating a stained glass window in early years and a year 4/5 class producing an information booklet on Christian artefacts and colours. The children are less confident about answering questions of meaning and purpose and are not yet given enough opportunities to develop their questioning and enquiry skills so that their understanding can deepen. Planning is now in place to secure progression in RE allowing teachers to identify more accurately the achievement of learners in RE. Appropriate curriculum time is devoted to RE and the balance of Christianity and other world faiths is in line with

the Church of England *Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education*.

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

The school's distinctively Christian vision is articulated clearly by leaders and this is having an impact on ensuring that all children achieve their God given talent and potential. A difficult period in the school's recent journey has required effective leadership to secure rapid improvement in all areas of school life. Leaders are committed to building on the school's Christian foundation so that, the vicar comments, 'living, learning and loving are integrated.' This has resulted in a clearer sense of direction increasingly rooted in the Christian narrative and guided by the *Church of England Vision for Education*. Although numbers have increased recently, the school has maintained a 'family feel' where staff comment that they are 'genuinely one big happy family.' Consequently staff and pupil wellbeing are highly valued. A committed governing body increasingly secure the impact of the vision through ensuring that church school distinctiveness is on the agenda at every full governing body meeting and being a 'critical friend' to senior leaders. Monitoring and evaluation take place informally but this has yet to be formalised. The developing partnership with Loscoe Church of England Primary School provides good opportunities to secure future church school leadership at all levels in both schools. Partnerships with the local church, the diocese and the diocesan multi-academy trust have resulted in the school's senior leaders and governors being well supported through a difficult period of change. Parents are highly supportive of the school, attending collective worship in large numbers and commenting that they appreciate such opportunities to join with the school to celebrate the children's achievements and nurture the children's spirituality. The development points from the previous inspection have been effectively addressed. The statutory requirements for collective worship and RE are being met.

SIAMS report July 2017 St Laurence's Church of England VA Primary School Long Eaton Nottinghamshire. NG10 1DR.