



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Newbold Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Cranborne Road
Newbold
Chesterfield
S41 8PF

Previous SIAS grade: Outstanding

Diocese: Derby

Local authority: Derbyshire

Dates of inspection: 8 October 2015

Date of last inspection: 6 October 2010

School's unique reference number: 112879

Headteacher: Kerry Marsh

Inspector's name and number: Alison Woodhouse 777

School context

Newbold Church of England Primary School converted to an Academy in July 2014 as part of the Derby Diocesan Academy Trust. The school is slightly below average in size with 186 pupils on roll of which almost all are of white British heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is slightly higher than the national average. The headteacher is in her first term as substantive headteacher having been the acting headteacher since January 2015. The school building provides spacious facilities including the outdoor areas and St. John's Church is within walking distance from the school.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Newbold as a Church of England school are good

- Newbold is underpinned by core values which are confidently expressed as Christian. The whole community recognises and values the clear Christian ethos.
- Collective worship is an integral part of the school day where everyone feels involved and valued.
- Religious Education (RE) has a high profile in the school and pupils' show positive attitudes towards this subject.
- A strong and developing Christian vision is evident in the nurture and care for everyone within the school community.

Areas to improve

- Finalise the work initiated on reviewing the school's Christian vision.
- Extend the provision beyond the school building for quiet reflection and prayer.
- Ensure assessment in RE is developed to achieve the highest standards.
- Embed the pupils' knowledge and experience of other cultures and faith communities.

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

The atmosphere at Newbold is characterised by a tremendous sense of warmth, care and respect. The recently appointed headteacher has responded swiftly to address the challenges that the school currently faces, whilst not forgetting to attend to the expectations of the school as a church school. Pupils' behaviour is of a very high standard and staff, parents and children talk confidently about the links between this behaviour, the school's Christian values and the teachings of the Bible. This has impacted on the academic provision and current information on achievement shows that the school is improving significantly in meeting the needs of all learners. Pupils have a high degree of involvement in school life and share their opinions through various committees such as 'the school management team' and the 'anti-bullying committee.' They know that their opinions matter and that they are responded to positively. This was evident in their enthusiasm and understanding of the Christian values recently discussed across school. Parents have nothing but praise for the new headteacher describing the significant constructive changes that have taken place in recent months stating she is 'passionate about the school and very approachable.' The school provides good opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and is developing opportunities for cultural understanding across the curriculum including RE. Bright, informative and interactive religious themed displays are everywhere about the school, ensuring RE is treated as a core subject. Links with St. John's parish church are strong as the Christian ethos of the school is shared in the community and the school is known locally as 'the church school.' Father Nigel commented that 'this is the most distinctively Christian school I have worked in'. It is evident that the school is rooted in and influenced by its Christian ethos. These links are explicit and enable the pupils and church members to view each other as part of an extended family. There is a strong sense of history in the community as the school has been part of the community for over 230 years. With a new headteacher in post the school is in the process of revisiting its Christian vision and symbolism without losing the historical connections. Due to some of the recent changes, certain strategic plans are in their infancy, meaning their impact is yet to be realised.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

An impressive act of worship was observed reflecting the diligence of all staff as they have recently reflected upon worship in school. A new approach based upon 'seeing anew' echoes the teamwork of the whole school community. Pupils think that the focus on Bible stories and prayer through their worship times helps them in their day-to-day life and they are encouraged to evaluate worship as they leave the hall. Collective worship is well-planned and makes good use of diocesan guidance. This ensures there is a broad and balanced range of Christian themes. Worship in church celebrates festivals and key events in the Christian calendar. Visits by Father Nigel enhance pupils' learning about the Anglican faith and traditions as evidenced in discussions and displays on themes such as the Trinity. Collective worship has also been well-supported and enriched by local church members. Parents value the opportunities to be involved with worship being highly supportive of services at the church such as at Christmas, Harvest and Easter. They describe school as 'like a church,' and children's worship in church as 'remarkable.' Prayer is very important to the pupils. They pray at key points throughout the day and are keen to share these prayers on a prayer tree with high prominence in the entrance hall. They are increasingly writing their own prayers and have a space in school where they can 'pause for peace.' The collective worship leader has ensured that pupils play an active part in discussing and setting up worship. As yet, the children do not have opportunity to plan and lead worship themselves. The new worship team changes every half term with the outgoing team training up the incoming team with things they have learnt, having a positive impact on relationships. This means more and more pupils are able to become actively involved in the setting up of worship. The whole school community are keen to develop prayer opportunities by creating opportunities in outdoor areas.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

The headteacher has ensured that the profile of RE has been raised alongside a recent introduction of the locally agreed syllabus. The governor for RE has regular contact with the school to look at standards of RE and report back to all governors. RE is now seen as a core subject by all members of staff and effective lessons reinforce the Christian values which underpin all aspects of the daily life of the school. Development points from the previous inspection have been addressed; consequently, there have been improvements in RE teaching and in the achievement of pupils. All staff are judged as good or better and this was reflected in all RE lessons observed on the day. In one lesson, creative use of the outdoors enabled pupils to explore 'trust.' In another, 'the journey of life' was expressed through drama. Displays reflecting the school's Christian foundation and ethos are around the school and each class has an RE display along with literacy and maths underlining its core subject status. Planning and teaching reflect a comprehensive understanding of the subject material. Pupils, clear about lesson objectives, are focussed and attentive. The climate in all seven classes was good and teachers provided relevant learning for the range of abilities. Appropriate priority is given to the teaching of Christianity and the leader for RE described 'Christianity as the backbone of RE throughout school.' As a result, children's understanding and knowledge of Christian beliefs and practices is well developed. Opportunities are planned into RE to visit other places of worship as a result, there is an emerging understanding of other faiths. The RE leader is developing her role by attending diocesan training and making effective use of half termly non-contact time aiming for outstanding RE across the school. The RE governor ensures standards in RE are kept as a priority for a core subject. This alongside the weekly timetabling of RE means the statutory requirement for RE is fully met.

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

The enthusiasm of the newly appointed headteacher provides an excellent example of Christian commitment. She enjoys the willing support of a caring staff who have welcomed a new era of leadership stability at the school. An updated vision of this proudly Christian school, involving appropriate consultation, is being developed at an impressive rate. Parents and carers are very positive about the future of the school, whilst being grateful that change and development are being undertaken at a pace which respects their children as individuals. Although in the process of being updated, the vision and values at Newbold are distinctively Christian, and have a positive impact on the whole school community. This impact was endorsed by one member of staff who stated 'Church is underpinning the school' meaning there is a genuine ethos of respect flowing through all aspects school life. Governors are hard-working and knowledgeable about many aspects of school improvement. Despite recently changes in leadership and governance, evaluation in terms of the school's church school status demonstrate a shared vision for the future. Strategies for the monitoring and evaluation of key areas such as RE and collective worship are identified, and evaluation clearly shows progress in addressing development points from the previous inspection. A foundation governor has described the new leadership as 'inspirational and proactive, valuing the staff and their wellbeing.' This demonstrates that the systems in place ensure the Christian vision is translated into practice and lived out by the whole school community. As a result, Christian values permeate the life of the school. Working closely with the headteacher and leader for collective worship and RE, governors are involved in the life of the school and actively support events reflecting the church status. These links are demonstrated in experiences such as; worship in church each half term; the celebration of mass in school at the end of each term; 'Moving On' to support pupils' transition as well as the exploration of Anglican traditions. Many links are reflected in the church magazine with a regular feature written by the RE leader. Parents equally have a strong relationship with school and take advantage of the open invitation extended to make comments and ask questions about any aspect of school life. They feel welcome in school and enjoy attending special events.

SIAMS report October 2015, Newbold school, Cranborne Road, Newbold, Chesterfield. S41 8PF