



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

### **Bishop Lonsdale Church of England Primary School and Nursery (Aided)**

186 St Alban's Road

Derby

DE22 3HH

**Previous SIAMS grade: 2**

**Diocese: Derby**

Local authority: Derby City

Dates of inspection: 23 April 2015

Date of last inspection: 17 June 2010

School's unique reference number: 112914

Headteacher: Malcolm Hetherington

Inspector's name and number: John Horwood 177

#### **School context**

The school is an average-size primary school with 245 pupils. It is an inner city school housed in a relatively modern building surrounded by spacious green areas. It became an academy in June 2014, sponsored by Derby Diocese Academy Trust. The school still refers to itself as a school and this report will also do this to avoid confusion. The majority of pupils are of White British backgrounds with the remainder from a wide range of faith and cultural backgrounds. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Bishop Lonsdale Church of England Primary School and Nursery as a Church of England school are good**

- Leaders and managers, including governors, provide outstanding leadership of this church school by living out and promoting their vision which is rooted in Christian values. This is seen throughout the school by the excellent relationships which demonstrate pupils' outstanding preparation for life in modern Britain and a multi-cultural society.
- Christian values are the foundation of school life and are intrinsic in the religious education (RE) curriculum and have a significant impact on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Collective worship uses Bible material and Christian teaching to help pupils relate the school's Christian values such as love, care and justice to their own lives. This, in turn, allows them to develop into mature, sensible and caring individuals whose behaviour is outstanding and has a positive impact on their learning and progress.

#### **Areas to improve**

- Embed the recently developed RE assessment system across the school and ensure that RE helps pupils develop a greater understanding of different Christian denominations.
- Develop a greater engagement of parents with school and church activities.

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

The school is popular with parents many of whom send their children to the school because it has strong Christian values. The headteacher has a strong and sincere faith which is respected and supported throughout the school community. He leads by example in ensuring that the care and well-being of pupils is of the highest standard and his clear vision for the school, based on Christian values, is supported by governors, staff and clergy. The Christian values of love and care permeate the whole school and are reflected in the excellent relationships across the school. Throughout the day pupils all work and play together within a caring and harmonious atmosphere where every pupil is able to achieve well in both their academic and personal skills. Pupils say they learn well because teachers care for them and ensure that they enjoy lessons whilst working hard. They understand the importance of equal opportunities, fairness and justice which contribute to their outstanding behaviour. Pupils' spiritual development is supported by the priority given to opportunities for prayer and reflection around the school and by the religious education (RE) curriculum. Pupils talk confidently about religion both in lessons and to adults around the school. All aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Pupils learn and understand about Christianity and especially about Anglican traditions. Although St Luke's Church is in an interregnum, the headteacher, the foundation governors and the chaplain are maintaining excellent support for pupils' understanding. The curriculum and the rich cultural mix of backgrounds within the school support pupils' awareness of diversity and prepare them for their future life. There are good links with schools in other countries. Pupils' understanding of Christianity as a world-wide faith is not fully developed but the RE planning shows that this aspect is scheduled for delivery. Parents are extremely supportive of the school and of the headteacher. They agree with the inspection findings that Christian values permeate school life and that both RE and collective worship are important beneficial elements of the provision. Christian fellowship is demonstrated by the school and parents working together to encourage good attendance. However, although the headteacher has successfully encouraged a higher number of parents to attend the recent Easter church service, parents' involvement with other activities is underdeveloped. No pupil spoken to could identify any way the school could be improved.

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

Collective worship takes place at the start of the day and is attended by all pupils, teachers and teaching assistants who all wholeheartedly join in. Older pupils help with organising worship and all year groups have the opportunity to say prayers that they have written. A worship club has recently been formed with over one third of pupils wanting to be involved – this group, who met for the first time during the inspection, is to be given more responsibility for organising its own collective worships. Collective worship is well planned over a four-year cycle and is linked effectively to Christian values. It is regularly linked to stories in the Bible and helps pupils relate the Bible to every-day life situations. There are frequent references to God and to Jesus. Resources to support worship are good and create a reflective and respectful atmosphere within the school hall. Candles are used to help pupils develop an understanding of the Trinity and of Anglican traditions. Pupils' participation and enjoyment in worship helps their understanding of the impact of Christian values on lives. Questioning and responses within collective worship, together with responses to a pupil questionnaire, confirm that pupils have a good understanding of what Christian values mean. The impact of collective worship is shown by older pupils' confidence in discussing their experience about previous collective worships. They explained how visitors and activities within worship make the worship memorable. Pupils attend a Mass in St Luke's Church twice a year and services for Christian festivals and special school events. This supports pupils' understanding of Anglican traditions and broadens the range of experiences they have of collective worship. Prayer and periods of reflection are seen as part of daily life and opportunities for these occur regularly during the day. The collective worship coordinator monitors the impact of worship and

presents this information to governors.

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

Pupils' work and school records show that all pupils make good progress from their individual starting points in RE. Attainment levels at the end of Key Stage 2 are generally above average. This is because learners, who are motivated and enjoy lessons, are all given the support they need. The school promotes a 'can do' culture and this is shown in pupils' good standards of presentation and written work. Teaching of RE is good. The chaplain regularly supports pupils' learning by working alongside the class teacher for pupils in Key Stage 2. Leadership of the subject is good and the well-trained coordinator ensures that staff are fully supported to teach the subject. The new assessment system enables teachers to judge the progress of pupils as they move through the school. This system, as well as the systems for monitoring progress, is recent and not yet fully embedded to impact on results. The subject leader ensures that the teaching of Christianity is effective whilst also developing pupils' understanding of other faiths and cultures. At present pupils are not given enough guidance about the various Christian denominations in Britain. RE is seen as an important subject in the school and the time allocated meets requirements. The school has chosen to base the RE curriculum on the Derbyshire Agreed Syllabus which provides for pupils of all abilities. Pupils all have at least one RE lesson each week and the good balance of learning activities makes a significant contribution to Christian values and to pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils talk confidently about religious concepts and to ask questions and 'debate' issues with their teachers. They particularly enjoy the practical aspects of RE lessons such as the 'godly play' activities.

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

The headteacher and the foundation governors are passionate about the part that Christianity plays in supporting every pupil both academically and with their life skills. They work extremely well to ensure excellent links between the school and the church community for their mutual benefit and this includes working closely with the school chaplain who comes from a nearby parish. The headteacher writes a report for the church annual general meeting and visits the church to speak to the congregation. Foundation governors visit the school regularly to update the schools' self-evaluation as a Church school and to observe collective worship. Leaders ensure that the Christian character of the school is clearly evident in documentation and on the school website. Information about the school and the church is shared between the two bodies. Pupils, staff, governors and parents all contributed to the review of the vision statement. Leaders give very high priority to the school being an effective church school and it is a standard item on the agenda at meetings of the governing body. The requirements of the current SIAMS framework have been used to support this process and have enabled leaders to have a secure and accurate understanding of the school's performance and distinctiveness. The issues from the previous inspection have been addressed. The planning documentation has been improved and the partnership with St. Luke's has improved in spite of the interregnum. The self-evaluation of the school as a church school is accurate and is fully supported by the inspection evidence. Becoming a member of the Derby Diocese Academy Trust has strengthened the link with the diocese and the support the school receives from them. This has particularly benefitted the RE provision through training opportunities and the opportunities to disseminate information about best practice to teachers. The training available through the diocese is also helping staff become skilled for leadership roles in the future. Both RE and worship meet the statutory requirements. Pupils' fundraising for a wide range of charities, both local and further afield, demonstrates their commitment to Christian stewardship and helps them to understand the needs of others in a wider cultural context.

