



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

<p>Newbrough Church of England Aided Primary School Fourstones Hexham NE47 5AQ</p> <p>Previous SIAMS grade: Good</p> <p>Diocese: Newcastle</p> <p>Local authority: Northumberland</p> <p>Dates of inspection: 24 March 2015</p> <p>Date of last inspection: 26 April 2010</p> <p>School's unique reference number: 122298</p> <p>Headteacher: Cath Newson</p> <p>Inspector's name and number: Canon Brian Hedley NS619</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">School context</p> <p>Newbrough is a smaller than average sized primary school and serves four rural villages in Northumberland. There have been significant staffing changes over the last two years; the current headteacher took up post in October 2012. In September 2014 the school successfully changed from a first school to a primary; as yet there are no pupils in Years 5 or 6. Numbers of pupils who have special educational needs are above average; those supported by pupil premium are much lower than average. The majority of pupils are White British. An Ofsted inspection took place in February 2015.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Newbrough Church of England Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A dynamic, pro-active leadership team ensures that Christian values are embedded and continually drive this highly aspirational school forward • Inspiring worship and times for reflection and prayer sustain and develop the spiritual life of the school, its individual members and the community • The newly-adopted RE curriculum is enabling pupils to think more deeply about their own spiritual development and their response to living in a diverse world • Outstanding partnerships between parents, carers, local churches and the school are serving families extremely well
<p style="text-align: center;">Areas to improve</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give children time in RE lessons to follow up marking, especially that which seeks to further challenge and encourage deeper thinking • Broaden the range of governors involved in the evaluation of the effectiveness of the

school as a Church school, and interweave the SIAMS Schedule with whole-school monitoring to create a greater overall awareness of how the school's strong Christian ethos is being sustained and developed and is raising achievement

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

Since the appointment of a new headteacher just over two years ago and its recently acquired primary school status, Newbrough has developed a well-expressed shared Christian vision which is now reflected in the slogan 'Dream, Believe, Achieve'. This, combined with governors' all-pervading totally driven desire to meet the unique needs of every single child, has resulted in a highly effective and creative curriculum where love, respect and forgiveness form the basis of strong, nurturing relationships and personal growth. Pupils make good progress because teaching is good and often outstanding. Enthusiastic staff work hard to respond to the specific needs of all; they use their experience and skill to plan and deliver a tailor-made curriculum. Learners feel secure and happy because of the outstanding care they receive summed up by one pupil who said that, 'they care about every single person here and we are all helped to do our best'. A grandparent expressed gratitude and admiration for the extensive efforts made by the school to see 'every child as special' and to ensure that they had 'the best possible chance to do well.'

Behaviour is excellent: children are welcoming, open and generous and understand that they need to take responsibility for themselves, one another and the world in which they live. One child said that, 'We always help each other out. Some people believe in God here, but even if you don't, like me, you are always welcome'. Parents confirmed that the school extends its 'fabulous care' to adults, too, and that the Christian ethos spills out into the communities where, as a result, strong bonds of friendship, respect for all and genuine care for one another pervade day-to-day life.

The recently adopted Religious Education syllabus, carefully planned daily acts of collective worship, reflection spaces and opportunities for prayer and reflection are playing an important part in promoting the Christian character of the school and in developing the spirituality of pupils.

As the school looks forward to gradually extending its provision into Years 5 and 6, the task of sustaining and developing these successes will need to be well-planned and implemented.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Children and staff are clear about the importance of daily worship which is at the heart of school life. They recognise it as a time for everyone to come together to think about God and to explore Christian teachings in more depth. A carefully constructed and delivered programme has addressed the issues raised at last inspection and is also ensuring that greater opportunities are provided for thought, prayer, reflection and action and for children to develop their own beliefs. The school's chosen core values are underpinned very well. One child explained that, 'the stories we hear and think about in worship tell us what Jesus or someone else did in a situation and we can copy them if we agree it's right'.

Governors are clear that all worship is to be inclusive and that those who have differing views should develop the confidence to share them. This is exemplified by a pupil who said, 'I don't actually believe in God but I know how to respect a Christian', and another who said, 'It's ok if you don't join in with the prayers - I respect people who do want to pray by sitting quietly'. Others said, 'I think we are allowed to think for ourselves', and, 'I put my hands together then open them to let my thoughts go up to heaven'.

Close partnership working between local religious ministers and the school offers a range of different Christian traditions and expressions of being Church. As a result, there have been a number of combined events where both church and school have come together to generously support local, regional and national charities as an expression of the commandment to 'love thy neighbour'.

The evaluation of collective worship ensures that actions are taken to develop the offering of it further. For example children have asked for more outdoor worship having experienced a small sample of it, and to sing more. These requests are currently being implemented.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

The school meets the statutory requirements for Religious Education (RE). The subject is placed at the heart of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and underpins the Christian ethos. Recent pupil tracking suggests that learners make good progress; scrutiny of work revealed many insightful, mature comments from the more able children. However, because the new diocesan syllabus and its assessment have been adopted recently it is difficult to quantify progress over time.

Children say that they enjoy lessons but some remarked that they sometimes 'have to listen for ages'. They particularly enjoy talking about their thoughts, feelings and ideas and like it when they 'go to the tables for activities'. The subject teacher is sensibly continuing to make adjustments to the programme offered and is gaining further confidence in managing assessment and classroom time so that attainment begins to improve even more rapidly. One aspect that would help enormously is for children to be given time at the start of each lesson to respond to the helpful written comments made by their teacher after work has been completed; this would deepen their response or challenge their thinking even further.

Learners are given opportunities for reflection and to deepen their questioning skills; to aid this there are many really good examples of interactive displays throughout the school which relate RE teaching to every day life such as, 'How can we Show Love and Care', 'Learning from Jesus', 'Stories Jesus Heard' and 'What is the Trinity?' Children expressed appreciation of the Prayer Station and Easter Garden, one saying, 'I just like to stand and look and take it all in.'

Parents say that their children are keen to talk about what they have learned when they get home. One poignant example of this shared by a proud mother was a beautifully written song about God's love for everyone, penned by her son. Other parents said that RE helped their children to care for one another, helped them to be forgiving, and was a subject that affected their thinking and behaviour.

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

The leadership team and governors have worked relentlessly with the head teacher over the last two years to consistently articulate and share the school's distinctiveness and vision; this has ensured that core Christian values remain at the heart of school improvement and that all decisions are driven by the needs of the children. A clear understanding of what it means to be a Church school is reflected in the wording of governors' policies which form the bedrock of the curriculum. As a result pupils do well because of the good teaching and outstanding care they receive.

Excellent relationships with another nine schools in the locality result in enriching experiences for all. As a result of generous sharing of expertise and continued staff development at all levels, leadership within partnership schools and beyond is significantly enhanced.

A well-focused governing body is wisely and ably led. Involvement in strategic planning and

evaluation means that governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. For example the decision to ensure that the monitoring and evaluation of the impact of RE becomes more robust is timely, given the introduction of the new diocesan syllabus and associated assessment and tracking procedures. In relation to the effectiveness of the school as a Church school, governors would gain from aligning their excellent discussions and decision-making with the descriptors in the SIAMS Evaluation Schedule. This would create a greater overall awareness of how the school's strong Christian ethos is being sustained and developed and is raising achievement.

Partnership with the local churches and community groups are highly effective because, together with the school, they share joint responsibility for the care, well-being and flourishing of the whole community.

SIAMS report March 2015, Newbrough CE Primary School, Fourstones, Hexham, NE47 5AQ