



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

### North Cerney Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

North Cerney  
Gloucester GL7 7BZ

**Previous SIAS grade: Satisfactory**

**Current SIAMS grade: Good**

**Diocese: Gloucester**

Local authority: Gloucester

Date of inspection: 26 February 2015

Date of last inspection: 31 March 2010

School's unique reference number: 115640

Headteacher: Jane Burr

Inspector's name and number: Andrew Rickett 201

#### School context

North Cerney is much smaller than the average size primary school with 60 children on roll arranged into three class groups. It is situated in a rural setting with a significant number of children coming from outside the school catchment area. Most children are from a white British heritage. The proportion of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above the national average as is the number entitled to receive the pupil premium. Attendance is slightly above the national average. A new school hall was opened in January 2015. The headteacher is part-time and is supported in her role by an assistant headteacher.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of North Cerney Church of England School as a Church of England school are good

- Christian values make an important contribution to the children's wellbeing and are increasingly becoming integral to their learning.
- Children express their views and opinions on matters of faith and belief with thoughtfulness and confidence.
- School leaders, including governors, have ensured that the school's Christian distinctiveness has developed since the previous inspection and have a clear understanding of what needs to be done to continue this improvement.

#### Areas to improve

- Ensure that a shared understanding of spirituality enables children and adults in school to discuss matters of faith and belief in greater depth.
- Develop challenge to the quality of discussions which explore children's personal spirituality across all areas of the curriculum so that they engage at a deeper level.
- Develop the monitoring and evaluative role of the ethos committee by ensuring that it more regularly gathers feedback from children.

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

The school has made good progress since the previous inspection to place its Christian ethos more firmly at the centre of school life. A renewal of the school's vision to 'give children faith in their future' is now understood and referred to by all members of the school community. Children and their parents articulate what this means to them in terms of faith in 'ourselves and others', as well as a faith which has its roots in a personal belief. The identification of three core values that exemplify the vision has further strengthened its impact particularly on the quality of relationships throughout the school and the children's wellbeing. Forgiveness, trust and honesty are clearly understood by children to be values that are based on Bible teaching and are taught through collective worship. These three core Christian values are effectively used to support the school's approach to behaviour. The core values are becoming more integral to children's academic progress as opportunities to explore them in depth are increasingly used as a regular part of learning. This is also the case with the development of the children's own personal spirituality. The opportunities for children to express their 'spirit' have produced some insightful and inspiring results that show the children's ability to reflect on matters of faith and belief in considerable depth. However, these opportunities have not been fully developed across the whole curriculum and there is a lack of clarity over the meaning of spirituality among the school community. Therefore, at present the renewed Christian vision makes a very good impact on the children's wellbeing and is increasingly becoming integral to academic attainment in which children make at least expected progress compared with national expectations. Religious education (RE) makes an important contribution to the children's learning through links to their social, moral, spiritual and cultural (SMSC) development. Good opportunities in RE to explore the contribution of the core Christian values to SMSC development help create links between the Christian ethos and curriculum which are becoming increasingly stronger.

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

The completion of the building of a new school hall and its opening in January 2015 is making a dramatic difference to the quality and impact of collective worship. The fact that there is now a dedicated space for worship means that there is greater continuity to worship themes because permanent displays can be used to show how the children's understanding of values develops over time. A permanent worship table with cross, candles and Bible is now a constant reminder to the whole school community of the place of worship within the life of the school. These developments enhance the work that the school has done to improve the quality and impact of collective worship since the previous inspection. Worship themes themselves are now firmly rooted in Christian teaching and delivered through effective planning that highlights specific values which are made relevant to the children's own lives. Children make links between values such as forgiveness and the teachings of Jesus and are able to reflect on how this affects their own relationships. The place of prayer in the life of the school and the children's understanding of the purpose of prayer has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Children talk openly about prayer and have the confidence and maturity to consider questions such as 'why don't prayers always seem to work?' There are good opportunities for children to pray throughout the school day and children say that they enjoy writing their own prayers. The lighting of three candles at the start of acts of worship helps children to remember the Trinity. They enjoy discussing the nature of the Trinity and respond with enthusiasm and vigour when sharing their ideas on the purpose of the Holy Spirit to the lives of Christians. Children and governors are involved in gathering views on the impact of collective worship although this is not sufficiently regular to provide ongoing evidence of the impact of worship themes. Although children have good opportunities to be involved in collective worship through participation in drama and story-telling, which they enjoy, there are fewer occasions for them to plan and lead worship regularly and therefore give them more ownership.

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

The headteacher, together with staff and governors, have ensured that the school has addressed the areas for development from the previous report. They have also taken this further by reviewing the school's underlying Christian ethos so that it now has greater meaning and purpose. The impact of this is that, because there is a more confident expression of the school's distinctive church ethos, explicit Christian values and an openness to discussing spirituality together makes a greater difference to the lives of both children and adults in the school community. Progress in moving the Christian ethos forward has been successful because good procedures are in place that monitor the impact of new initiatives and accurately identify what further needs to be done to continue that improvement. School leaders have a good capacity to continue to improve as a church school. An aspect of the continual development of school leaders is the role of the ethos committee and how their current skills to evaluate impact need to develop as the school continues to move forward as a church school. The inclusion of parents as part of the ethos committee strengthens its effectiveness as it helps to ensure that Christian distinctiveness is placed more at the centre of the whole school community. Staff professional development has ensured that the school is aware of latest developments in areas such as RE which has made an important contribution to the school's progress as a church school. Strong links between school and parish church, through the regular involvement in collective worship of the 'Open the Book' team and the partnership with the churchwardens and members of clergy, put both communities at the heart of life in the village. The school meets the statutory requirements for collective worship and religious education.

SIAMS report February 2015 North Cerney CE VC Primary School GL7 7BZ