



The National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools
(Carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005)

Thurlaston Church of England (Aided) Primary School

Inspection Report

Address of School:	Desford Road Thurlaston Leicestershire LE9 7TE
Telephone Number:	01455 888243
Email Address:	office@thurlaston.leics.sch.uk
School Category:	Voluntary Aided
Unique Reference Number:	120201
Type of School:	Primary
Diocese:	Leicester
Local Authority:	Leicestershire
Inspection Date:	12 th June 2013
Reporting Inspector (and No):	Mrs Sheila Grice (165)
Appropriate Authority:	The governing body
Chair of Governors:	Rev Jerry Taylor
Headteacher:	Mr Gavin Beetham
Pupils on school roll:	108

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Desford Road
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Diocese: Leicester

Local authority: Leicestershire

Dates of inspection: 12th June 2013

Date of last inspection: 11th June 2010

School's unique reference number: 120201

Headteacher: Mr Gavin Beetham

Inspector's name and number: Mrs Sheila Grice (165)

School context

This is a small village primary school which is organised into four teaching groups. A good proportion of the children come from outside the catchment area, with several transferring mid-year. The overall figures of children with SEN are below the national average and attainment at the end of KS2 is above national averages. Attendance is good. Most children are from a white British background. The incumbent is also the chair of governors.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Thurlaston Church of England (Aided) Primary School as a Church of England school are good

Thurlaston Church of England (Aided) Primary School is an extremely effective church school where children achieve well and thrive. The school is committed to its Christian foundation. Relationships across the school are excellent and there are very good links with local churches and the local community. The Christian ethos is clearly evident in all aspects of school life.

Established strengths

- The very strong Christian ethos which permeates all aspects of school life
- Outstanding relationships between children, staff, parents and governors which are rooted in the Christian character and values of the school.
- Extremely well behaved children who are confident and articulate and enjoy school
- Children's social, moral and spiritual development

Focus for development

- Broaden the inter-faith and inter-cultural links to deepen children's cultural understanding
- Increase opportunities for children to plan and lead worship
- Develop a process to seek the views of parents and carers over the school's distinctive Christian character

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

Thurlaston CE (Aided) Primary School is a very welcoming school with a strong Christian ethos. The recently introduced eight Christian values, which are rooted in biblical teaching, are being consistently taught across school and they are clearly having a very positive impact on children's understanding of what it means to 'Live the Christian Way of Life'. Children talk

confidently about Christian values and can give personal examples of when they have achieved a 'ticket' because they put these values into practice. The school now needs time to ensure these values are firmly embedded into all aspects of school life. Pupils make good progress and those with special needs are effectively supported. The wealth of displays in classes and around school affirms that this is a church school and children speak positively about their 'Christian school where we are taught Christian values which help us to be better people'. The school has a very effective praise and reward system and the weekly celebration assembly is enjoyed by children and parents. Children value the partnership with a school in Nigeria and they speak enthusiastically about their fund raising efforts (in particular the enterprise project) which have paid for a Nigerian teacher for the last three years .This partnership has helped to develop their cultural awareness and understanding of what it means to be part of a world-wide church. However, this now needs developing further so that children have a deeper understanding of other cultures and faiths. Parents recognise and speak very highly of the school's happy, safe, Christian atmosphere and they value the care shown by adults.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship has a central place in the life of the school. Worship is carefully planned, drawing on Diocesan themes and led by teachers, the headteacher or the vicar. Worship is clearly based on the Bible and children have a good understanding of different Christian traditions in worship. They recognise the importance of the candle, 'Which reminds us that Jesus is the light of the world', and they expect to say prayers during worship. Children particularly appreciate being able to write in the special book in the library which is often used for prayers in whole school assembly. Prayer holds an important place in the life of the school and children clearly value prayer saying, 'God is listening and he will help us' and 'God comforts me when I am scared'. During the act of worship observed, based on trust, children were fully engaged, particularly enjoying the contribution of the volunteers who made the noise of Gideon's army. A favourite with the children are the 'Open the Book' assemblies, held each half term, which are led by different groups of children. School has identified the need to increase opportunities for children to plan and lead worship in the future. There is a good system of evaluation of collective worship, involving the children, which identifies areas for improvement; an example of this is an increase in opportunities for reflection during worship. Visits from the vicar, together with termly services in the parish church, attended by parents, help to strengthen children's spiritual development. The collective worship governor attends assemblies 4 times a term and she has a good understanding of improvements needed.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

Religious Education helps children gain an understanding of Christianity and other world faiths, including Islam, Hinduism and Sikhism. Children demonstrate a growing knowledge of the Christian faith and can articulate the Trinity as Father (in heaven), Son (Jesus came down to earth) and Holy Spirit (lives in our hearts), so God in three forms. Children enjoy RE lessons and can compare and contrast different faiths. Their knowledge of the Bible means that it is possible to encourage children to think more about the meaning and relevance of Bible stories, rather than just the content. The good teaching observed in all four classes was characterised by a lively, interactive approach which challenged the learners to develop their spirituality and skills of enquiry and reflection. Children worked thoughtfully and confidently as a result of the excellent adult pupil relationships in all classes. The very youngest children were able to discuss 'What it means to be a Christian' and the oldest children clearly understood the divine nature of Jesus. The opportunity to reflect on their learning about what it means to be a good neighbour challenged the children in KS1 to think about their relationship with people they didn't really like. Children in KS2 were able to make links between the Christian beliefs of creation with the Muslims explanation as to how the world began. Marking consistently challenges children to think more deeply and children respond well to teacher's comments. Standards are in line with national expectations and improving. Careful monitoring and evaluation by an experienced and dedicated RE coordinator means that staff have a good understanding of how to improve teaching & learning.

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

The headteacher, staff and governors work well together to ensure that this is an effective church school. Everyone at school knows and values each child and staff work hard to meet the needs of every child. This was particularly a previous year when a young child was absent from school for six weeks and a teacher visited the home once a week to make sure they didn't fall behind their peers. The headteacher provides strong and inclusive leadership which is firmly rooted in Christian beliefs and values. The school's vision is clear to all on documentation and adults and children have a good understanding of what it means to 'Live the Christian Way of Life'. Evaluation procedures have improved significantly and the RE coordinator and RE governor both have a good understanding of strengths and areas for development of this church school. The school has not yet formally monitored the views of parents about the school's distinctive Christian character and this would add a further dimension to the quality of the school's self- evaluation. All development points from the previous inspection have been successfully addressed. The creation of the sensory garden was a community effort and it provides a wonderful place for the children to spend time 'in peace' when necessary. The vicar has been instrumental in building up trust within the local community and partnerships with both local churches are very strong. Parents and children particularly value the 'Monday Club' which makes a strong contribution to children's knowledge and understanding of Christianity. The school is developing wider links internationally and this will be an important part of the children's understanding of wider communities.



Judgement Recording Form

Name and address of School: Thurlaston Church of England (Aided)
 Primary School
 Desford Road
 Thurlaston
 Leicestershire
 LE9 7TE

Postcode: LE9 7TE

School's Unique Ref No: 120201
 Date of inspection: 12.06.2013
 N/S Inspector (and No): Mrs Sheila Grice (165)
 Type of church school: Aided
 Number of pupils (NOR): 108
 Phase of education: Primary
 Diocese: Leicester

Has Diocesan Quality Assurance been obtained for this report? Yes
 Critical reader: Stephen Gleave

Rating 1-4

Overall/Summary judgement: How distinctive and effective is the school as a Church school?	2
How well does the school, through its distinctive Christian character, meet the needs of all learners?	2
What is the impact of collective worship on the school community?	2
How effective is the religious education? (voluntary aided only)	2
How effective are the leadership and management of the school, as a church school?	2
The school meets the statutory requirement for collective acts of worship?	Yes
The school meets the statutory requirement for religious education?	Yes

Grading used in Section 48 Inspection Judgement Recording Form (The same as Ofsted/Section 5)

1 = Outstanding	2 = Good	3 = Satisfactory	4 = Inadequate
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