



## Exploring Christian Distinctiveness in our School Environment

# Introduction

Self-evaluation of a church school's distinctiveness remains as important as ever and schools are encouraged to be creative as they seek to demonstrate the impact of their Christian character on the daily life of the school. The main focus of a successful evaluation should always be on the impact. Whilst schools are rightly proud of the things they have provided for their children it is the difference which is made by this provision which really matters. Church school inspectors gather a range of on-site self-evaluation evidence and this will include a learning walk of the school environment.

This booklet provides some questions that you can use to help you plan and conduct an evidence walk to gather evidence of Christian distinctiveness in your school environment.

Before your walk you might want to consider the following questions.

Who will participate and why?

What is the role of pupils, and how can they effectively be involved?

How and when will you feedback the evidence collected to the staff that have been visited?

How will next steps be identified?

Who is responsible for planning the next walk?

How will you decide the focus for the next walk?

How will you celebrate achievement?

How will your school provide an overview of the next steps, including a description of learning opportunities for staff?

Paying attention to these questions as part of the planning of the walk will help your walk to be a successful and useful learning experience for all those involved.

# Christian Character

- What is the Christian vision and the associated values of your school? Is this visible in displays? Is it linked to collective worship? The wider curriculum? Pupil work?
- Is the Vision Statement visible to all? Is there a child friendly version?



- Are there reflection corners? How do pupils use them? What is the impact?
- Is their evidence of SEAL work linked to your Christian vision and associated values?
- Is there evidence of provision/intervention to support vulnerable groups/children?
- Does information on displays reflect how the school is living out its Christian vision (e.g. links with school rules/ classroom rules)?
- Are their displays showing spiritual development in different areas of the curriculum?
- Are appropriate links to Bible story/teaching made in displays?



- Is outside space used to promote spiritual development?



- Is there evidence of links with schools in cities or different areas to the school, community celebrations, fund raising and charitable giving?
- Is there evidence of any links the school has with local churches, local faith communities, the local community, the diocese, the wider world church and the global community?
- Is there a notice board for communicating with parents?
- Do you celebrate other world cultures across the curriculum and in displays around school?
- Are there a range of reading books and other artefacts available which help pupils understand being part of a multicultural society?





# Collective Worship

- Is there an area of the school that is designated for worship times?
- Is there a collective worship display? Are themes displayed for all to see?



- Can Learners articulate the importance of collective worship? Do they have an opportunity to reflect and evaluate collective worship?
- Is there any evidence of pupils' attitudes to collective worship e.g. writing or display of their ideas or responses, photographs?



- Are there symbols and artefacts reflecting the Anglican dimension/Christian character of the school?
- Are there any displays/photographs showing links with the Church, celebration of festivals/saints days?



- Are there prayers displayed in school?
- Is prayer highlighted in different places other than the hall throughout the school?



- Does what is taught and experienced in collective worship translate to the day to day actions of the whole school community?



# Religious Education

- Are there examples of high quality pupil work displayed in classrooms or other areas of the school?
- Is there any evidence of RE linking with other curriculum areas?



- Is there evidence of RE supporting pupils understanding of the Anglican dimension e.g. displays of visit to church, baptism, development of prayer?



- Is there evidence of the teaching of world religions e.g. displays artefacts, visits?



- Is there evidence of pupil voice in relation to learning in RE?
- Is there any evidence of assessment opportunities in RE?



