



Emmanuel School, Derby

Inspection report

This inspection was carried out under section 162 (A) of the Education Act 2002 as amended. Bridge Schools Inspectorate (BSI) has been approved by the Secretary of State in the Department for Education (DfE) to undertake inspections in designated independent schools within membership of the Christian Schools Trust (CST) or the Association of Muslim Schools UK (AMSUK).

DfE number:	831/6000
Association:	CST
Date of inspection:	17 th -20 th September 2012
Lead Inspector:	Mrs C Broomhead
Team inspectors:	Ms S Munir Mr R Southey
Age range of pupils:	3-11 years
Number on roll:	49
Full-time:	12 boys 27 girls
Part-time:	7 boys 3 girls
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need:	None
Proprietor:	East Midland Christian Fellowships
Head teacher:	Mrs C Pearson
Address of school:	Juniper Lodge 43 Kedleston Road Derby DE22 1FP
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The purpose and scope of the inspection

The main purpose of the inspection is twofold. It is to advise the DfE whether the school continues to meet the requirements for registration, and to determine whether the school's religious ethos continues to meet the expectations of its association. Ofsted monitors the work of independent inspectorates, including a sample of inspections, and you can find the latest evaluation of the work of The Bridge Schools Inspectorate on the Ofsted website.

Information about the school

Emmanuel School was established in 1988 under the auspices of the East Midland Christian Fellowships (EMCF) and they are the proprietors of the school. Directors of EMCF are represented on the school's governing body. The school's mission is: 'Educating the whole child to make a difference in the world and bring glory to God. To develop children with a compassion for others in order that they make a positive impact on society and find fulfilment in relationship with God. To ensure that each child meets their full potential in all areas of the curriculum and in so doing brings glory to God. To promote the development of the whole child: spiritual, intellectual, social, moral, emotional and physical'. The age range in the school has changed since the last inspection and is now 3 to 11 years. The school was last inspected by BSI in October 2009.

Evaluation of the school

Emmanuel School is a very successful school which meets its aims and has gone from strength to strength. Visitors are struck by the warm, welcoming environment. This is a happy school which is buzzing with activity. The pupils' smiling faces reflect how much they enjoy coming to this school. They are cared for and nurtured extremely well by a highly skilled team of staff whose dedication and commitment to the children is, as one parent says, 'second to none'. As a result, pupils are polite, courteous and feel safe in school. The school's Christian ethos is threaded through all aspects of school life and is evident throughout each day. Parents are full of praise for the staff and enthusiastically play an active part in the life of the school. The school provides an excellent all-round education that values the academic and the spiritual. Pupils are encouraged and supported to achieve their best. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) have an excellent start to their school life and this excellence continues into the primary classes. Governors and staff have worked hard to bring about further improvement since the last inspection. They regularly monitor the work of the school and ensure that it complies with all independent school regulations and prioritises pupils' health and safety. The governors willingly contribute their expertise within school for the benefit of the pupils' education and well-being.

Quality of education provided

The curriculum is carefully and creatively constructed and of good quality. It enables pupils to develop well academically, socially, emotionally, spiritually and physically. The core aims of the school and its Christian perspective are threaded throughout curriculum planning and in practice in the classroom. The school provides a broad

and balanced curriculum based on the National Curriculum, and including French at Key Stage 2. Personal, social and health education has a clear programme of study and is taught as a distinct lesson on the timetable as well as across all aspects of school life. There is a whole school approach to planning and reviewing the curriculum. The school has detailed schemes of work for all areas of learning. These ensure progression through the key stages. The better schemes also show the work planned and resources prepared to suit the wide range of ability found in classes. Where such detail is not in place, teachers rely on adapting their teaching within lessons to meet individual needs. For instance, they will expect more able pupils to write extended paragraphs or will give more specific verbal guidance to those who are less able. The school recognised that mathematics needed further development. A new mathematics scheme has been introduced which incorporates assessment and provides for work at different levels of ability.

The curriculum is enhanced by trips out of school, for instance the Key Stage 2 pupils visited Sudbury Hall as part of their history lessons. For pupils with a particular talent or gifting in music the school provides brass, flute, recorder and clarinet tuition. The provision for the Early Years Unit is excellent. The Early Years Foundation Stage pupils have a well-planned and varied range of activities that are designed to cover the Early Learning Goals. The school has recently introduced a system whereby each subject has a nominated teacher with responsibility for its oversight and development. As a result, the school is well placed to continue to develop the curriculum provision further.

As a result of the outstanding teaching and assessment, pupils thrive and make good and sometimes exceptional progress in their learning. Teachers are skilled at planning varied lesson activities which capture pupils' imagination, maintain their interest and concentration and promote independent learning. Teachers give careful thought to how they communicate with pupils and as a result are very successful in helping them to build on what they already know, to grasp new concepts and to consolidate what they have learned. They explain tasks very clearly, which helps pupils to get on with minimal support. Lessons are fun. The pupils particularly enjoy the practical activities, such as the role play seen in a literacy lesson in the Year 1 and 2 class. Pupils are encouraged to think for themselves, to ask questions, and to develop enquiring minds. In most classrooms, displays are of very high quality. They are bright, colourful and include a good balance of pupils' work and other resources which aid pupils' learning and reinforce the school's ethos and values. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is exemplary. They listen intently, show consideration for one another, and respond instantly to any gentle reminders about classroom rules and routines. Teachers know pupils very well and show exceptional care for their well-being and personal progress. They have very high expectations and provide very good individual guidance.

Teamwork is a real strength, which is particularly important in this school because some classes are taught by two teachers on a job-share basis and classes include pupils from two year groups. Communication between teachers is excellent, both in relation to planning lessons and to sharing information about pupils' needs and progress. Teachers' planning is detailed in respect of objectives, activities and resources to be used and the best practice makes clear how teachers take account of pupils' ages, needs and abilities. Where this is not so explicit in the planning,

teachers are skilled at picking up where pupils may be having difficulty and then varying their expectations of individuals within lessons. The school benefits from specialist advice from one of the governors with expertise in special educational needs.

Assessment is regular and detailed. A whole-school system for assessing pupils' attainment and progress has been established. Staff have embraced this and use it with confidence. This enables the school to set challenging targets for each pupil and to track their progress over time. They quickly identify where pupils may be falling behind and take steps to adjust their lessons to address this. There are examples of excellent marking which show pupils what they are doing well and point to what they need to improve. However, some marking is not so positive or specific enough to be helpful.

Pupils' achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage is well above average by the end of Reception year. By the end of Year 6, pupils achieve standards in English which are higher than those found nationally for their age. In mathematics their achievements are good, but closer to the average found nationally.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is seen as a vital part of school life and is foundational to its ethos and aims. It is not seen as a distinct lesson but interwoven in the teaching, and all aspects of school life. Provision for this aspect of pupils' development is outstanding. The pupils are given freedom to explore the Christian faith in a vibrant and attractive way. In nearly all lessons, pupils are taught how the 'heart concepts' are relevant to what they are learning and their everyday lives. The heart concept could be based on a Bible verse or a desired attitude. The staff model Christ-like attitudes and the pupils happily embrace the loving and grace-filled way the staff treat one another and the pupils. The school encourages the pupils to keep healthy spiritually by explaining to them regularly 'how to keep their relationship with God healthy and real by talking to Him and reading His word'. The school also encourages pupils to pray for each other.

There is a strong focus on personal responsibility and character development. The high standards of behaviour are a positive outcome of the focus on the individual and the clear moral standards expected. The pupils show a high level of self-respect and subsequently respect for adults and peers.

They are given a range of opportunities to develop people skills, such as teamwork or valuing other people's contributions. The pupils regularly visit the nearby residential home for the elderly and mix with the residents. The pupils also help to support a local church's work with the poor by packing 'welcome boxes' with food and other items. The school supports a young child in India and keeps in touch by writing letters. The use of older pupils to mentor younger ones is an example of the effective opportunities given for developing maturity and responsibility.

The school has developed its provision for cultural awareness further since the last inspection. A group from the Kurdish community visited the school to explain their culture and share their costumes, music, dance and food with the pupils. The pupils

are happy and confident and are very positive about the school and in particular the opportunity to develop their Christian faith. The school's reward system and special assemblies help to celebrate pupils' success and foster a positive and encouraging experience that contributes to the development of self-confidence. Pupils love coming to school, as seen in their good attendance. This excellent provision adds significantly to pupils' well-being and their opportunities to make a positive contribution to society and the world of work in the future.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is outstanding throughout the school including in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The school provides a caring and nurturing environment in which parents and carers feel their children are safe and well cared for. This high quality care forms a strong foundation to the school's Christian ethos. This is seen in the school's warm, welcoming, inclusive and friendly atmosphere, in which pupils feel valued as individuals. The outcomes are evident in pupils' exceptional behaviour. They are respectful, well-mannered, polite and courteous. Their attitudes and relationships with adults and each other reflect the Christian values on which the school is based. Parents say, 'I love the caring family atmosphere in which my children are learning...the school encourages loving relationships and there is an emphasis on kindness towards others....it's like leaving her with family everyday'.

The school has all the required policies in place, including the safeguarding policy, which has regard to national guidance, and these are implemented effectively and supported by detailed risk assessments. Procedures to ensure pupils' safety are robust and all staff are appropriately trained.

Pupils take on responsibility willingly. Older pupils contribute well to school routines and to the well-being and personal development of younger or more vulnerable pupils, by acting as peer mentors and taking part in 'family groups'. Bullying is rare but if it did occur, pupils say it would be dealt with swiftly and effectively. All pupils say they are looked after well by the staff and are confident to talk to a friendly and understanding adult if they are injured or have any concerns. Pupils feel happy, safe and secure in school.

Pupils understand and articulate well the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle. They make good choices in school, regularly drink water, enjoy a range of healthy foods and snacks and take part in a broad range of activities available that help them keep fit and healthy. Pupils are encouraged not to waste food. A principle of learning to like what God has given them is adopted.

The school works very effectively with external agencies, including voluntary organisations, the local authority and the church, so that pupils are cared for and supported. The school has devised a three-year accessibility plan, which ensures it fulfils its duties under the Equality Act 2010.

Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

The school is meticulous in ensuring the suitability of people who work with the pupils. Procedures for checking staff and volunteers are thorough and comply fully with regulations. The school has a single central record which shows clearly that the required enhanced CRB checks are in place.

Premises of and accommodation at schools

The school is based in a Victorian building near the centre of Derby. The accommodation lends itself well to the small class groups. Classrooms are spacious and staff are skilled at creating a light, bright environment for learning. The pupils benefit from a specialist ICT room and a library. The outside areas are adequate. Pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage have access to a pleasant grassed area and older pupils have their own playground. The local recreation area is used for sports activities. The building is on three levels, which means that it is not suitable for people in wheelchairs.

Provision of information

The school provides a good range of information for parents and others. Partnership and communication with parents is extremely good. Parents value the opportunities they have to join their children in the classroom at the start of each day. This helps children to settle quickly and gets the school day off to a good start. Parents also appreciate that staff are available in the playground at the end of each day so that they can informally raise any points with them. Regular newsletters keep parents informed about day to day matters and forthcoming events. Detailed reports are sent to parents each year giving information about how well their child is progressing and what they need to do to improve further.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

The school's policy and procedures comply with regulations. There have been no formal complaints in the last twelve months.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Unit is outstandingly effective. The ten Nursery pupils and the seven in Reception often work together to their mutual benefit but there is also sufficient time for Reception pupils to be given further challenge when they work separately on adult-led activities, including phonics. The strong Christian ethos pervades all aspects of their learning. Developing pupils' independence and responsibility is at the very heart of the Early Years Unit's work.

Pupils make excellent progress. The very small class sizes enable teachers to get to know their pupils very well and anyone at risk of falling behind is quickly identified and provided with support. The close links with outside agencies, such as the speech and language service, mean that extra support for individual pupils is readily available when required. Pupils' progress is monitored carefully against their starting points in each area of learning. The development of pupils' communication and

literacy skills is a strength. By the end of Reception year, most pupils' language and communication skills are above the levels expected nationally.

The quality of teaching is exceptionally good. Skilful questioning and consistently challenging dialogue develop children's thinking, independence, confidence and problem-solving extremely well. A particularly effective feature of the teaching is the way in which staff interact with pupils to promote the development of spoken language and their knowledge and understanding of the world. Teachers constantly evaluate the provision to ensure the school provides a supportive and stimulating environment that enables every pupil to learn through practical and enjoyable activities, which are chosen to meet the needs of all pupils. Pupils work collaboratively and understand the need to take turns as they wait patiently to use the computer and the interactive whiteboard. They are developing high levels of resilience, independence and confidence. Assessment is thorough and well used. Staff frequently observe pupils in their day-to-day activities, often recorded through photography, and their comments are full of insight about what the observations show in terms of the pupils' development and progress. Teachers record each pupil's experiences in an individual 'pupil profile' that highlights milestones in their achievement towards the Early Learning Goals.

Curriculum topics and activities are varied and allow pupils to follow their interests. For example, pupils enjoyed having visitors from different cultures to taste foods from various countries, wear traditional clothes, dance and listen to music. The strong focus on expressive arts and design and physical development enables pupils to learn in a healthy, exciting and stimulating environment. Pupils recently visited a doctor's surgery as part of their topic how people help us. They had the opportunity to learn about the doctor's role, take part in role play and independently ask questions and take photographs of anything that interested them. The extensive and highly imaginative outdoor areas are well used to encourage pupils to explore the wider world and develop an awareness of how to play safely. There is a very good balance between activities led by adults and those chosen by the pupils themselves.

Behaviour is outstanding. Pupils are trained in the Biblical principles of a cycle of acceptance, repentance and forgiveness. Teachers set excellent examples in their relationships with and respect for the pupils, who are cherished as unique individuals. All requirements for ensuring pupils' health, well-being and safeguarding are of high quality and all statutory duties are met. Pupils feel relaxed, safe and secure and flourish in this vibrant and exciting environment.

There are strong and effective relationships with parents who are kept fully informed about their children's progress. They say that they feel fully involved in their children's learning and in the life of the school.

The Early Years Unit is very well led and managed. The leader of the unit monitors the work of all staff very effectively through regular and detailed observations and inspires their confidence. They make a strong, knowledgeable and effective team. They are enthusiastic and have opportunities to extend their professional development through training.

Compliance with the regulations

The school meets all of the regulations for registration and the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

Meeting the expectations of CST

The school's religious ethos continues to meet the expectations of CST.

What the school could do to improve further*

As part of future development the school might wish to consider:

- Bringing about greater consistency in curriculum planning for the ability range, in marking, and in checking the accuracy of assessment, by sharing the excellent practice which already exists within the school.
- Raising standards in mathematics to the same high level as those in English.