

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Ossett Holy Trinity Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Church St, Ossett, WF5 9DG	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese	Leeds
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Local authority	Wakefield
Date of inspection	25 January 2018
Date of last inspection	29 November 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Aided 108260
Headteacher	Auriel Wray
Inspector's name and number	Lynne Gillions 662

School context

Holy Trinity School has 363 pupils on roll. It has a one and a half form entry with nine classes in total. Pupils are mainly of white British origin. The proportion of pupils receiving SEND support is below national averages as is the proportion of pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding. The school has a relatively stable population. Since the last inspection, there is a new chair of governors but the same headteacher is in post. Overall, staffing is also stable.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School as a Church of England school are good

- The headteacher, deputy and governors ensure that Christian values are explicit and deeply embedded in this school. Stakeholders recognise the impact they have on all areas of school life.
- Children's behaviour is exemplary. They learn well and this leads to good progress and achievement which is usually above national averages.
- Children are happy and enjoy school and they express themselves confidently.
- Children are given opportunities for reflection which encourage them to go beyond superficial responses to more thoughtful and considered views.
- Relationships throughout the school are strong, children are cared for well and they experience an exciting curriculum which enables them to flourish as individuals.
- The school works well with other partners both locally and globally and this is widening children's understanding of diversity and different communities.
- The school is well supported by local churches and the diocese and they play an important role in encouraging the outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils.

Areas to improve

- In religious education, ensure all children are appropriately challenged and are given clear feedback which enables them to recognise their achievements and understand the next steps in their learning.
- Increase children's understanding of the Christian view of God and of Anglican practice.
- Governors should collate evidence from current monitoring activities, identify any gaps and put in place a more robust and systematic timetable of monitoring so that they have a stronger evidential base. This will enable them to support and challenge the school more effectively and identify areas for development to feed into the School Improvement Plan.

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

The school has a number of Christian values including hope, forgiveness, truthfulness and courage. They are thoroughly integrated into school life and are acknowledged by everyone as having an impact on standards, behaviour, relationships and the care and welfare of pupils.

The school has a history of high achievement above national averages. Whilst 2017 saw a fall in reading attainment at Key Stage 2, pupils had generally made good progress. The school quickly moved to encourage reading and the displays around school and the pupils' enthusiasm show that the measures are effective. Stories such as *The Boy with the Striped Pyjamas* and *The Boy Who Cried Wolf* are used to exemplify the school's current Christian value of truthfulness. This demonstrates how Christian values are integrated into the wider curriculum.

The school demonstrates some outstanding practice in developing spirituality with a specially designated reflection area where a member of staff works with groups of children. This is a safe and welcoming space where children are encouraged and challenged to think through spiritual issues. When talking about truthfulness one child said that when you told a lie the guilt was like a worm eating away at an apple from the inside. Children discuss different scenarios which help them explore the current Christian value. There are also reflection areas in the classrooms which enable children to engage with spiritual and moral topics. Opportunities for spiritual development are threaded through the curriculum. Beautiful banners were made to exemplify the Christian values which have been displayed in church, the Hand to Mouth Team visit and help children explore their spirituality and religious education (RE) focus days all encourage pupils' development. Along with the school radio station and a stimulating curriculum which links the spiritual and secular this all helps to develop children's confidence and build their capacity to express their own views.

Relationships across the whole community are strong. A display of individually sewn fish states, 'We may all be different fish but in this school we swim together.' This exemplifies the teamwork and support which is evidenced throughout the whole school community. Children are considerate towards each other and behaviour overall is excellent. The school buddy system gives children an opportunity to support each other and parents really appreciate the way their children are helped by the older buddies to settle quickly when they first start school. They also know that their children are well nurtured and they can talk to any member of staff if they have any concerns.

Children are gaining huge benefit from a link with a school in Mara. Following the deputy head's visit to Tanzania, a number have activities have raised children's awareness of another global culture and they speak positively about their African friends. 'It teaches me gratitude. We have lots but we aren't always as happy as people in Tanzania.' The school has also raised funds for a new roof for the Mara school. Measures are in place to ensure this link is sustainable. A recent link with a school in Dewsbury with a different ethnic profile is also beginning to enrich children's understanding of different faith communities. These links are giving children a real respect for diversity.

As a result of the embedded Christian values, the creative curriculum and the different initiatives that the children experience, their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship is a valued part of school life. Children can give examples of how Christian values and Bible stories make an impact on their own lives. One child explained how the Good Samaritan taught him to be kind to people who weren't necessarily his friends. Another said that the story of Daniel in the Lions' Den had shown her the importance of being honest just as Daniel had stuck to the truth. Children are sometimes given challenges such as looking after an egg or a jelly baby for the day to teach them about responsibility.

Collective worship is planned by the co-ordinator in discussion with the vicar. There is a half termly focus on a specific Christian value and biblical material is used regularly. All teaching staff, the vicar and a local Methodist minister lead worship. Special services and Christian festivals are celebrated in the church and these are very well attended by parents. On entry to school, upper foundation stage children are presented with a Bible at a special service and parents were very appreciative of this gesture.

Since the last inspection, a pupils' collective worship council has been formed. They now meet to evaluate worship and this has led to increased and wider pupil participation sometimes using *Open the Book* material to dramatize Bible stories. Children also write and read prayers and they play an important role in leading the special services in the church. They enjoy the responsibility and as well as developing their spirituality it is building their confidence.

Children are a little confused about the Christian view of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit and would benefit from creative ways of enriching their understanding. They are also unsure about some Anglican practices such as the use of ecclesiastical colours to represent different seasons of the church year. It would be helpful to integrate these traditions into collective worship in school.

In acts of collective worship, children are invited to reflect and pray. They also enjoy singing and parents said that their children sometimes sing the songs at home and also talk about issues that are raised during worship. Prayers are also said during the course of the day and children are given regular opportunities to write prayers for use in worship.

Whilst children are involved in evaluating collective worship, it would be helpful to gain a wider range of responses from other stakeholders. These could then feed into the governors' monitoring and evaluation cycle and give a fuller picture of the effectiveness of collective worship.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

Standards in RE are at least in line with national expectations and sometimes higher. Pupils make good progress as they move through school. They develop a range of skills as they experience a curriculum which is stimulating and creative. Activities such as drama, hot seating, art, ICT, visits to church and visitors in school help enhance learning. Special focus days also offer exciting activities to encourage learning. Experiences such as the journey to church to meet Mary and Joseph bring teaching to life.

Children show an understanding of aspects of different faiths and can identify some similarities and differences between them. They understand the importance of learning about different beliefs and cultures and they are respectful of other faith communities.

Teaching and learning overall is good but there is scope to give lessons a clearer focus so that all children are appropriately challenged. There is an over reliance on differentiation by outcome which does not always challenge the more able pupils and feedback is not specific enough to help them understand their next steps in learning. Assessment is in place and some is directly linked to the new Understanding Christianity materials. These materials are beginning to increase staff confidence in taking children's learning to a deeper level. Summative assessment is undertaken so that information is available to track pupil progress and achievement. This should be shared with governors to assist them in monitoring the subject.

The subject leader and vicar have held meetings about the new materials and curriculum for RE and this has enabled him to keep abreast of current and forthcoming changes to the curriculum. The vicar supports the teaching of RE and sometimes children visit the church for occasions such as a mock wedding. These experiences help enrich children's learning.

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

Leaders and governors are totally committed to the school's Christian foundation and the values that are actively promoted. The headteacher and deputy head are effective in leading the whole school team to establish a culture which is founded on Christian principles and which all stakeholders recognise and value.

Leaders ensure that Christian values are clearly communicated and lived out in the school community. This has a significant impact on achievement, behaviour, relationships and pupil welfare and results in a happy and harmonious community where staff support each other and pupils thrive.

Leaders allocate resources which support the staff in providing a vibrant environment which celebrates pupils' achievements and promotes the Christian ethos. A fine example is the provision of a quiet, reflective space with a member of staff released to work with small groups. This investment is bearing fruit and making a strong contribution to children's spiritual development.

Leaders track pupil performance and respond to any areas causing concern. There are a range of monitoring activities in place which address the school's performance as a church school. These include an annual questionnaire to parents, RE lesson observations and book scrutiny. When governors visit the school, they submit reports on their visit. However, governor monitoring needs to be more systematic and rigorous with planned monitoring activities throughout the year. School leaders also need to ensure that outcomes from their monitoring are shared as appropriate with the governors. This will build a stronger evidence base and help governors evaluate the school's performance more effectively.

There are effective partnerships with other schools, the church and the diocese. Parents also work in partnership with the school. Along with the links with schools in Dewsbury and Mara this is giving children a good understanding of local, national and global communities.

Since the retirement of the collective worship co-ordinator and RE subject leader, the headteacher and deputy are overseeing these areas. The future leadership of these areas is under consideration.

Staff and governors receive appropriate training to enable them to fulfil their roles. This ensures that the children thrive and progress well in a supportive and caring environment.