



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Kirk Smeaton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Main Street,
Kirk Smeaton,
Pontefract
WF8 3JY

Diocese: Wakefield

Local Authority: North Yorkshire

Date of inspection: 23rd June 2013

Date of last inspection: 9th July 2008

School's unique reference number: 121573

Headteacher: Mrs R. Hanney

S.I.A.M.S. Inspector: Mrs A. Drinkhill NS 691

School context

Kirk Smeaton is a smaller than the average sized primary school. The number of children attending the school is rising, going from 75 to 99 in the last three years, 20% coming from outside the catchment area. Almost all pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is well below average.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Kirk Smeaton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School as a Church of England school is Outstanding

The school is very well managed and led by the Headteacher, who has embedded core Christian values and attitudes that link to 'Every Child Matters' into the everyday life of the school. The outstanding standard of care, support and guidance provided for all pupils is firmly rooted in the principles of love, trust, tolerance and respect. High quality religious education and collective worship make a significant contribution to the school's Christian ethos and promotes outstanding learning and behaviour.

Established strengths

- The outstanding Christian ethos of the school in which all pupils are valued and supported.
- The high level of pupils' personal, social and moral development.
- The committed Christian leadership of the headteacher, supported by a united team of staff and governors

Focus for development

- To further develop self-audit strategies and documentation to support evaluation of distinctiveness, involving all stakeholders.
- To celebrate more visually and vibrantly, the school's outstanding Christian ethos and character.

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

Pupils and parents clearly articulate the distinctively Christian characteristics of the school's values and can describe the impact they have upon school life. Parents refer to a 'calm and well organised school' where they feel welcomed and encouraged to become involved, as well as commenting on the 'approachable and caring' staff and the 'excellent leadership' of the Headteacher. Pupils confidently state that, 'it is top standard here' and that 'Church pulls you together'. There are strong links between the Church and the school, which was particularly emphasized when children and

older parishioners were observed participating with mutual enjoyment, in a group called 'knit and natter'. Children work and play together very well at both key stages. Playground buddies organise games and when conflict arises, they use the school's well embedded behaviour policy, which is based on Christian values, to ensure a swift and fair resolution of any difficulties. Children are aware of the needs of others less fortunate than themselves and show this through fundraising for local and national charities. Children's experience of communities different from their own is addressed by partnership work with a large ethnically diverse school in Sheffield and through themed weeks and enrichment activities throughout the year. Nurture groups and recovery programmes are effectively used to enhance the social and academic learning of vulnerable pupils. Excellent teaching and high expectations ensure that children make good progress and achieve well in maths and English, at all key stages. First-hand learning experiences such as involvement with the Royal Shakespeare Company enhance and support pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. Reflection has a high profile in school. Each classroom has a reflective area with Christian artefacts and prayers, and there is a 'circle of peace' in the outdoor area, which is valued and used by pupils. Religious Education (RE) is well taught and children enjoy their learning 'from' and 'about' this curriculum area. For example, when presented with the creative RE problem of planning and designing an ideal, multi-faith school, pupils showed a deep level of understanding of the issues that should be taken into consideration. Younger children also demonstrated a perceptive comprehension of the links between Christian and Islamic values linked to a lesson on the story of Bilal. Pupil attainment in RE is effectively tracked and shows that children achieve well. RE makes significant contribution to pupils' spiritual development and social awareness.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Worship and prayer play a central part in the life of the school and make an important impact on children's spiritual growth. Careful curriculum planning links 'Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning' (SEAL) and parts of the RE to the worship programme, an area identified for development by the previous inspection. These links provide an effective opportunity for exploring Christian values in a creative and inspiring way. There is a structured rolling programme of Wednesday worship themes that link to Bible stories. This is supported by the vicar and celebrated in the form of child led, narrated dramas called a 'whoosh'. This approach brings the Bible to life and children are very appreciative of this. The collective worship observed was excellent. Pupils were attentive, participated well, sang with great enthusiasm and were reflective at appropriate times. The school has acted upon recommendations from the last inspection and has evaluated the impact of worship on learners and involved the children and staff in this evaluation process. The school meets the statutory requirements for collective worship

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

The Headteacher clearly expresses and shares her Christian vision with all stakeholders, through personal example and commitment. Christian values are firmly embedded in the daily life of the school. All staff articulate and demonstrate this in the way they support pupils and each other. This is a highly inclusive school and the quality of care, guidance and support provided by the staff provides pupils with a safe and secure learning environment in which they can develop academic, social, moral and spiritual skills for life. Children are very well mannered, achieve well and make good or better progress in their learning. Foundation governors support and challenge the Headteacher and her staff to ensure that school improvement has a high priority. They participate in school evaluation and are aware that policies should reflect the school's Christian foundation. A recent learning walk around school was used by governors to monitor the impact of Christian values on pupil behaviour and learning. The relationship between the school and the local church community is strong. Children regularly visit the church to celebrate major festivals and use it as a resource for learning. Partnership with parents is excellent and parents value the opportunities they are afforded to participate in the life of the school. The school also supports Initial Teacher Training in partnership with several universities. Staff benefit from a high level of in service training and support in all areas of the curriculum. This has included 'Maths Specialist Teacher' training, leadership training from the National College and finance and business training. Governors have also attended Diocesan Succession training to prepare for future leadership across church schools.

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