



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Whinmoor St Paul's Church of England VA Primary School

Whinmoor Crescent
Leeds
LS14 1EG

Diocese: Ripon & Leeds

Local authority: Leeds

Dates of inspection: 4th February 2014

Date of last inspection: 9th December 2008

School's unique reference number: 108051

Headteacher: Mrs Sheila Storey

Inspector's name and number: Mrs Lynne Gillions 662

School context

Whinmoor St Paul's Church of England Primary School has 206 children on roll and 42 children in the nursery. The proportion of children eligible for the pupil premium is average. The proportion of children from minority ethnic groups is below average. The number of pupils with special educational needs and children in local authority care has increased in the last year. The governing body has been through a period of change with only three governors having served more than a year. The chair of governors has been appointed in the last year.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Paul's Church of England Primary School as a Church of England school are good

- This is a happy school, where children are well cared for and nurtured, reflecting the underpinning Christian values of the school.
- The strong relationships across the whole school community contribute to the sense of family in the school.
- The links with the church make a significant contribution to the school's Christian ethos and which reflects the underpinning Christian values of the school

Areas to improve

- Develop a robust system of monitoring and evaluating the school's performance as a church school which feeds into the School Development Plan to secure future improvement.
- Further increase pupil involvement in collective worship by widening the year groups involved and creating more opportunities for children to become involved in regular worship in school.
- Building on current assessment procedures in RE, develop a tracking system which enables leaders to monitor progress accurately and effectively identify next steps.
- Increase children's understanding of global communities.

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

Everyone speaks of the school as a place where children are cared for well and individuals are loved and nurtured. Parents spoke very positively of the support given to pupils and families, particularly during difficult periods. Staff were described as 'being alert to problems' and in the case of one child, 'they never gave up on him'. School was seen as being like a family. Relationships across the whole school community are good and pupils and staff are happy to be there. Relationships with the church are particularly close and mutually supportive as the church shares the school building. The Christian ethos is a valued part of the school's identity and some stakeholders spoke of Christian values such as love, tolerance, forgiveness and reconciliation contributing to the daily life of the school. These values contribute to the social, moral, spiritual and cultural development of the children and teachers identify opportunities for their further development throughout the curriculum. Collective worship and religious education in particular offer children opportunities for spiritual development, though some children need more support in clarifying and expressing their thoughts confidently. Christian values were evidenced in relationships between the children where behaviour was observed to be good and children were polite and friendly to each other. Children are given opportunities to take on responsibilities in classes and on the School Council. They can also join a range of clubs including sports clubs, film club, worship craft club which is run by church members and harmony club which explores other religions. Children show a respect for other faiths and are developing an understanding of diversity.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship plays an important part in school life and is valued by all stakeholders. Parents said their children sometimes talked about it and recounted some of the stories they had heard. During the inspection, some children found it difficult to express how it affected their daily lives. However, children do show a good understanding of Biblical teaching. The link with the church is very positive. Children share in the Tuesday service of corporate worship with the parishioners and church leaders also lead weekly collective worship. The children are well placed to learn about Anglican traditions though there is scope for this to be further developed. Christian festivals are celebrated with special services and pupils play a part in the planning and delivery of these and some of the weekly worship times led by the church leaders. Pupils also lead class worship in upper Key Stage 2. In an act of class worship in Year 6 pupils had planned their own worship based on the parable of the talents. Pupils enjoy participating and would benefit from more opportunities to make meaningful contributions to collective worship. They would also benefit from the involvement of other Christian communities to broaden their experience. Pupils show some understanding of the Christian view of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit and saw them as equally important though they were keen to point out that they all had the freedom to follow their own beliefs. A whole school act of collective worship focused on the Holy Spirit saying 'it keeps us going and it keeps us strong'. Some children were invited to participate at the front. The remainder listened well and answered questions which demonstrated some of their previous understanding. They sang enthusiastically and there was an opportunity for prayer and a brief opportunity for reflection. Formal prayers are also used at lunchtime and at the end of the day. Themes for collective worship are appropriately based on Christian values and teaching and they support the social, moral, spiritual and cultural development of the children. Using the long term themes, medium term plans are produced by the Headteacher in consultation with church leaders. All teaching staff and other worship leaders then interpret these plans to deliver their collective worship. Pupils are asked for their views on collective worship termly but it is not clear how these are fed into the improvement cycle.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

Religious education is given a high profile in school and standards of attainment are at least in line with other subjects. Pupils are mainly positive about the subject and parents feel it is an important element of school life which 'helps to develop the whole child and make life choices'. Pupils are developing a range of skills. In a good Year 1 lesson, children were offered a range of statements and they had to choose those which would characterise a good friend. They discussed these in groups and this was then linked to the story of the Good Samaritan and was also used as a challenge to manage their own behaviour at playtime and then report back on who had demonstrated those qualities of friendship. In Year 6, pupils had been asked to research a saint of their choice and the teacher focused them well on three particular questions which helped them analyse their findings and draw out their understanding of saints. There was clear use of vocabulary such as 'commitment', 'martyrdom' and 'sacrifice'. They were then encouraged to imagine what qualities they would see if they were to meet a real live saint. Children gave thoughtful responses throughout the lesson. Differentiated tasks were available for some children so that they could access the tasks appropriately. Drama, art, craft, debates and discussions support the teaching of religious education and pupils are given opportunities for reflection and application to their own lives. Pupils learn about other faiths and cultures and are sometimes given opportunities to learn from visitors, some of whom are parents. Occasionally, pupils of other faiths also talk about their experiences, for instance by bringing in a prayer mat and explaining its use. Pupils have visited a nearby parish church and a Buddhist temple but would benefit from visits to other places of worship. Assessment procedures, which show individual progress, have been put in place since the last inspection. In some classes children also comment on what they feel they have learnt themselves. The school plans to start monitoring religious education on the new electronic system in the summer term. This will enable leaders to track progress more effectively and identify areas for improvement more clearly. The subject leader is new in post and is currently on a course leading to a specialist qualification in RE. She recognises the need to improve the monitoring and evaluation of RE so that the governing body and leaders can clearly identify progression.

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

There has been significant instability in the leadership team in recent months and only three of the governors have more than one year's experience. The chair is also relatively new in post. This has meant some unsatisfactory practice in the past is still to be addressed. Very little monitoring and evaluating the school's progress as a church school has taken place which means that whilst governors are very supportive of the school's Christian ethos they are not able to rigorously justify their views. However, the current governing body are very aware that improvements need to be made and are determined to turn the situation round. A governor has been chosen to lead on church school improvement and he is keen to put new, robust procedures in place. In the last term, the monitoring of school performance has greatly improved and this needs to be extended to those areas which address the school's performance as a church school. Governors are keen to access appropriate support from the diocese in this process as they are presently undergoing a wholesale review of the governing body and its structure and want to ensure good practice is put in place. Governors know that Christian values are at the heart of the school and its curriculum but these are sometimes implicit rather than explicit. The school has very good relationships with parents who appreciate the accessibility of staff and the good communications between school and home. They say that the school helps their children become good citizens. The school works with other agencies such as SMART who support some vulnerable pupils. The church and school have a mutually beneficial relationship which is appreciated by all stakeholders. Children would benefit from some links with wider communities, especially any which would help enhance their understanding of global issues.