



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Kirkby Fleetham Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Forge Lane
Northallerton
DL7 0SA

Previous SIAMS grade: Satisfactory

Current inspection grade: Good

Diocese: West Yorkshire and the Dales

Local authority: North Yorkshire

Dates of inspection: 27 January 2016

Date of last inspection: 5 July 2012

School's unique reference number: 121505

Headteacher: Helen Dudman

Inspector's name and number: Antoinette Drinkhill 691

School context

Kirby Fleetham is a much smaller than average rural primary school, with 33 children on roll, including six nursery children. The school is structured into three classes in the morning and two in the afternoon. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals or with special educational needs is low. The school has recently federated with East Cowton CE Primary School, sharing the Headteacher. There have been significant changes in staff in recent years.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Kirkby Fleetham Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School as a Church of England school are good

- The committed leadership of the headteacher and governors promotes a vision that is based on the Christian values of friendship, faith and respect, which influence the daily lives and achievements of the school community.
- The Christian character and values of the school contribute well to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of learners, particularly in relation to tolerance and respect.
- Members of the school community acknowledge the importance of worship in the life of the school and are able to talk about what it means to them.
- The school, which is now viewed as 'working in the heart of the community', promotes effective partnership with parents, local churches, the diocese and the wider locality in such a way that there are clear benefits for learners who make good progress and achieve well.

Areas to improve

- Provide further opportunities for the whole school community to develop a deeper understanding of and engagement with the explicit Christian nature of the school's mission and core values, to promote the best outcomes for pupils.
- Enhance monitoring, review and evaluation of the school's distinctiveness to support leaders and governors in securing the impact of the Christian vision and values on school improvement and pupil outcomes.
- Use the outcomes of pupil evaluation of Collective Worship (CW) to further enhance its wider significance and impact on the day to day lives of learners.

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

The school, through its distinctive Christian character, provides a safe, secure and caring environment in which children flourish and make good progress socially and academically. The focus of the school on its core Christian values of friendship, faith and respect underpin the life of the school and support children to work hard, achieve well and maintain good relationships. Most members of the school recognise the distinctive characteristics of these values and identify how they affect their daily lives. When asked, children eagerly describe their school as 'special' because it is a church school. Children are clear that they 'love learning' and are encouraged to lead their own learning and achieve excellence through independence, enquiry and resilience. Opportunities are well planned for pupils to experience 'an exciting and challenging curriculum' which includes visits, visitors and theme days set up with other local schools. Examples include the Tour de France project, the cluster debate, the British values project and the regular visits to East Cowton Primary for federation days and other learning opportunities. These occasions allow children to share their learning with other children from the locality, learn about the wider world and prepare for them for life in modern Britain. Attendance is excellent and children's behaviour supports effective learning. This is underpinned by the school's mission statement, 'learning through fun, friendship, faith and respect'. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural (SMSC) development is good. They can empathise with the needs of others and are keen to help in raising money for charities for example the 'grow a pound' fundraising project for the village Hall and fundraising for the Children's Society and Macmillan, donations to the World Food Programme's 'school feeding project' and the Christmas shoe box appeal. Pupils in Key Stage 1 explore a different Christian value each week and children in Key Stage 2 are currently working towards the Archbishop of York's Young Leader Award. Children are provided with opportunities to learn about Christianity and aspects of the Anglican tradition during religious education [RE] lessons and collective worship [CW]. This was evidenced by children on a recent visit to Ripon Cathedral where they were described as demonstrating their understanding of the bible, stories Jesus told and aspects of Anglican tradition through their responses to Cathedral staff. Taking into account its geographical location and community background, the school seeks opportunities for children to develop their awareness of and respect for other faiths and cultures. This is supported through links with a school in Gambia and visits to places such as a mosque in Bradford. There are close links with the three local churches, which further enhance the school's distinctiveness. Services are held in these churches at key times of the year such as Easter and Christmas. These are valued and enjoyed by children and parents alike. The school has worked hard to raise the visible profile of its Christian distinctiveness and has recently considered how to provide more explicit expressions of this in and around school. An example is the display of sheep, entitled 'He knows all of his sheep by name' where photos of children, or others, who are being remembered are placed in a special prayer thought bubble. The school has in place plans to improve its website to include a more explicitly Christian interface with the wider world.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Pupils understand the importance of collective worship (CW) in the life of the school and are able to describe what it means to them. A thoughtfully dedicated space, displaying a variety of artefacts including a simple wooden cross has been created in an area of one of the classrooms to support delivery of CW. During CW pupils respond with enjoyment and respect, evidenced by active listening, thoughtful answers and beautiful singing. Children also contribute to worship through readings, drama, prayers, music and weekly pupil led worship. They say that that they particularly enjoy this time. Adults, including governors attend CW and the school's evaluation shows that they speak positively about the experience, understanding its value and encouraging pupils to appreciate its value too. Parent worship is well attended every Friday. There is evidence of the positive impact of CW on all aspects of school life, including attitudes, behaviour, relationships and attendance. Prayer and reflection are seen as important features of the school with opportunities provided before lunch, during CW and at the end of the day. Children were particularly enthusiastic about the whole school two day residential to the Jonas Centre and described how, during the campfire session, they watched the stars and reflected on God's creation. The 'thinking of you' board is also used to focus children's

thoughts and concerns for wider national and global issues in addition to praying for members of the school community. The planned themes for worship, that include a 'value of the week' allow pupils to develop an understanding of different Christian traditions, the seasons of the Church's year and Christian festivals, although they cannot always explain these fully. Children and parents enjoy attending the services at the local churches and CW often includes Biblical material and learners are able to make some links between this, their own lives and the school's core values. Children use bible stories when they lead worship and often use innovative ways to bring them to life. This was evidenced by the description of one group hiding sheep around the room for the youngest children to find and linking his to the story of the lost sheep. Collective worship includes teaching about Jesus Christ and learners have an understanding of his important place in worship. The recent theme on Trinity has developed children's understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit and one parent described a conversation undertaken with their child in the car on this aspect and commented with surprise on their developing understanding. Monitoring and evaluation by staff and governors now identifies more clearly where improvement is needed and informs improvement planning. Children are beginning to have a greater role in this aspect, which has been identified by the school as an area for development.

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

Since taking up post in January 2014, the headteacher has strongly led and directed the development of the school as a church school. In partnership with the federation governing body she has worked hard on establishing a shared vision for the school that is informed by the Christian values of friendship, faith and respect and underpinned by the school's key values of friendship and respect. Leaders have a secure judgement of the school as a church school and know what needs to be done to improve. Capacity for further improvement has been strengthened by the recent federation with East Cowton CE Primary School. The school has strengthened CW, Religious Education (RE) and the curriculum to promote challenge, interest and enjoyment and develop the distinctiveness of the school that contribute to learners' good behaviour and attitudes together with their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Collective worship and prayer are acknowledged as an important aspect of school life and there is an emphasis on the use of values to support teaching and learning, in order to ensure pupils achieve their potential. Since the last inspection, the leadership of the school has more firmly established the process of monitoring, review and self-evaluation of the school as a church school by all stakeholders and particularly by governors, to ensure that the school's leaders are appropriately challenged. Parental engagement is strong and parents say they believe leadership is good and improving. One parent, who has extensive experience of the school commented on 'how much things have improved' over the last two years. Parents speak warmly of the impact of the school's Christian ethos which is made tangible in the care and support their children receive from staff at the school which they describe as 'very inclusive and supportive of friendship at all levels'. Children have a developing understanding of local, national and global communities This is supported through links with a school in Gambia, involving a reciprocal teacher visit and visits to places such as a mosque in Bradford. Strong links with the local churches and clergy are identified as beneficial. The relationship between school and the church is growing ever stronger, with members of the church community coming to school to help children. The commitment of the church members to school life is demonstrated by their involvement in collective worship, governors meetings and in selecting new staff when appropriate. Taking into account its size, the school provides professional development for staff and governors and understands the importance of this in developing leadership skills. The need to develop future leaders, for this school and for the wider system is also recognised.

The school meets the statutory requirements for collective worship.

SIAMS report January 2016 Kirkby Fleetham Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School