



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

West Heselton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

High Street
West Heselton
Malton
YO17 8RD

Previous SIAMS grade: Good

Current inspection grade: Outstanding

Diocese: York

Local authority: East Riding

Date of inspection: 13 March 2015

Date of last inspection: July 2010

School's unique reference number: 121541

Headteacher: Rachel Wells

Inspector's name and number: Sarah Morton 804

School context

West Heselton Primary School is a much smaller than average-sized school. Currently there are 44 pupils on roll. All pupils are of White British heritage and speak English as their first language. Nearly half of the pupils have specific learning needs or are considered vulnerable learners. The local church is a short walk away. Within the school's local area there are three other churches. A new vicar was appointed in September 2013 and has recently returned from paternity leave. The school's most recent Ofsted inspection [October 2014] found it to be outstanding.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of West Heselton as a Church of England school are outstanding

- Distinctively Christian values are deeply embedded in the daily life of the school so that pupils make links from the Bible stories to Christian values and their own lives.
- Collective Worship is a central part of the life of the school and develops learners' understanding of personal prayer and reflection very well.
- The very good behaviour of all learners results from the very good relationships between all members of the school family creating a caring and nurturing Christian environment for all pupils.

Areas to improve

- Ensure that the classroom reflection spaces are well resourced so that pupils have good quality artefacts and materials consistently available to support personal reflection and prayer.
- Ensure that learners of all ages more frequently plan and lead collective worship to

enhance their understanding and enjoyment of worship.

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

West Heselton Primary School is outstanding at meeting the needs of all learners because its distinctively Christian values such as courage, peace and thankfulness are lived out each day in all aspects of the school's life. All pupils make rapid and sustained progress through the school and achieve very well as a result of the school's Christian vision that 'children are at the centre of all we do'. This vision is very clearly demonstrated in the school's outstanding Christian nurture and care for every pupil. Pupils maintain good attendance and parents say that their children want to come to school because of the individual attention that they receive. The school's Christian distinctiveness results in the very good relationships amongst all members of the school community that support pupils' outstanding behaviour. The links between behaviour and the school's values were shown in worship recently by three children who described how this half term's Christian value of Justice helped them to resolve a playground incident. They say 'our values help us to think how to be'. Pupils also describe how the value of Christian service translates into action by the various fund-raising activities that they plan and carry out. The strong impact of the school's Christian character on each individual's Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural [SMSC] development is demonstrated through the rich and vibrant curriculum that has religious education [RE] as its most important component. Each half term's curriculum topic begins and ends with RE. Work in books and written evaluations show the very good learning that has taken place so that RE makes a very good contribution to the Christian character of the school. The distinctively Christian curriculum provides exciting and wide-ranging learning experiences both through this school being a Forest School and through the strong links with the nearby churches. The school has made good progress since the previous inspection in ensuring that children learn more about the culture and faiths of other UK communities. In a recent RE lesson the youngest children worked well together to identify the features of a range of faiths that they had studied, describing what they had learnt from their visit to a Sikh temple.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Daily acts of Christian collective worship are central to the life of the school. These 'unite the whole school at the best time of day', putting the Christian values of the school into context. All classroom staff and the vicar lead worship and adults explain how worship makes a difference to their lives saying, 'it makes me feel whole'. Pupils and staff evaluate worship and suggest improvements. Parents are pleased with the strong links between the school and the local churches that help their children understand the distinctive features of different Christian traditions. For example, older pupils can explain why the school altar has a purple cloth on it and that the lighting of the special candle means that it's the start of worship. They say 'it shows the light of Jesus, that God is here'. Very careful planning of worship and links with RE help pupils to learn more about Jesus and to develop their understanding of the Trinity. The thoughtful choice of topics ensures that worship is relevant to all members of the community. Regular telling of Bible stories brings the Christian values of the school alive for pupils, as do the inspirational life stories of more recent Christians. For example, pupils explain how the story of David and Goliath reminds them that even little ones can be brave, and 'we can match the value to the Bible story, like with David'. Collective worship ensures that all pupils learn to value prayer and reflection. Together pupils write special prayers for use at specific times of day. They all take turns to lead prayers and choose hymns and take part in the worship that celebrates the main Christian festivals. However, pupil leadership of worship is currently underdeveloped and pupils would like to be more regularly involved in planning and leading worship. The school has made good progress since the last inspection as shown by the much improved numbers of sessions for pupils to worship through singing. This is now done with great enthusiasm and enjoyment. Pupils are pleased with the development of the outside reflection area. An older child explained 'here you can pray, you can listen to the natural

surroundings or you can just be quiet – no-one will disturb you’. The school is making some progress with the area for development from the previous inspection that focussed on indoor reflection areas. This required the school to ensure that displays and artefacts appear prominently in classrooms to develop pupils’ spiritual understanding. The careful display of treasured artefacts brought back from Forest School activities prompts pupils’ reflection. However, ensuring that the classroom reflection spaces are consistently well resourced with good quality artefacts and materials will provide more fully for personal prayer and reflection. A feature of the outstanding school worship is the way that it is integrated into the school’s enriched and lively curriculum. Last term’s ‘Keep calm and carry on’ topic was linked to the Christian value of peace. Pupils made poppies and took part in the ‘Poppy Walk’ to the church in the next village. Here they laid their poppies near the altar. The service included the two minutes’ silence and concluded with ‘The Last Post’ played by a member of staff. This worship experience had a profound effect on members of the school community.

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

This small village school is led by a very able and committed head teacher who works continuously with the whole school community to secure high quality Christian education for all pupils. She has taken full advantage of the school’s rural setting to develop the school as a Forest School. This means that all pupils regularly engage with the God-created world and experience awe and wonder when observing special events such as the hatching of eggs. She and the staff ensure that the school’s explicitly Christian vision impacts positively on the achievement and well-being of all learners, including those with learning difficulties. As a result of their visits to school, governors confirm that all pupils are valued and respected and those with special needs are welcomed into the school as much as anyone else. All groups evaluate the effectiveness of this as church school. For instance, the weekly pupil voice worship means that pupil evaluations are gathered and used to identify future improvements. Similarly, governors review the impact of their actions on pupils’ well-being and achievement each term and adapt their work accordingly. The head teacher’s support for colleagues taking on leadership roles within the school and her work for the diocese promotes future leadership across church schools. The whole school provides leadership to other schools in developing the Forest School project. Parents and carers recognise that the school has a strong Christian vision. They know about the Christian values and enjoy joining in with worship for major Christian festivals. The school’s Christian distinctiveness ensures that partnerships with the vicar, local churches, the diocese and parents have a very positive impact on the lives of pupils. The school meets statutory requirements for RE and collective worship, which are well led and managed.

SIAMS report March 2015 West Heselton VC Primary, York. YO17 8RD.