



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Heversham St. Peter's Church of England Primary School

Leasgill, Heversham, Milnthorpe, Cumbria LA7 7FG

Previous SIAMS grade: Inadequate

Current inspection grade: Good

Diocese: Carlisle

Diocese of Carlisle

Growing Disciples

Local authority: N/A
Date of inspection: 9 June 2016
Date of last inspection: 23 May 2013
School's unique reference number: 142105
Headteacher: Cleo Cunningham
Inspector's name and number: Anne B. Woodcock 445



School context

The school joined the Good Shepherd Multi Academy Trust in June 2015. Heversham is a very small school. It serves a rural community near Milnthorpe in the South Lakes. The vast majority of the 26 pupils are of White British heritage. Most come from affluent backgrounds. A much lower than average proportion of children are known to attract the pupil premium grant. The school supports a lower than average proportion of pupils with additional needs. The headteacher has been in post for two years, following an extended period of uncertain leadership.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Heversham St. Peter's as a Church of England school are good

- The headteacher's purposeful leadership, ably supported by dedicated staff and governors, has secured a distinctly Christian school community.
- Caring relationships, based on Christian love, trust and respect, reflect the school's mission statement and support all members of the school family.
- Pupils' very good behaviour and attitudes to life and learning are based on their understanding of Christian compassion and friendship.
- Strong links with the church make a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual growth and to the school's Christian character.

Areas to improve

- Provide opportunities for pupils to regularly plan and lead collective worship so that they further develop their understanding of the nature of Christian worship.
- Improve the evaluation of the impact of collective worship by involving a wider range of school members.
- Develop a portfolio of assessed work in religious education (RE) to support assessment and demonstrate pupil progress and achievement.

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

The school's core Christian values are explicitly expressed by all members of the school family. Children know and use Christian compassion, friendship, trust and perseverance in their relationships. 'Jesus gave us Christian values. They teach us how to live a good life,' explained a Year 4 pupil. The values are clearly displayed and promoted across the curriculum so they influence all aspects of school life. As a result, behaviour is very good and pupils' attitudes to life and learning are positive. They are eager and confident learners who enjoy learning and want to achieve the high standards set for them. Standards of attainment are consistently good. All pupils make good, sometimes rapid progress from their starting points. Those with additional needs are well-supported. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development is well-planned. As a result children explore and question ideas and beliefs across the curriculum. Outdoor learning ensures that children explore and appreciate the natural world and collaborate on group projects. They are aware of their responsibilities to care for God's world. 'God made our world and we have to look after it,' stated a Year 2 child. Visitors provide first-hand experience of diverse cultures, both Christian and non-Christian, such as Indian dancing and African drumming. Children are increasingly reflective. They value and use the school's indoor and outdoor reflection areas because they helped to design them. Pupils' personal development is good because they are given repeated opportunities to exercise choice and take responsibility for themselves and others. School council members explain, 'We raise funds for charities to help those less fortunate than us. It is the sort of thing God wants us to do.' RE supports children's understanding of diverse cultures and beliefs. Through the study of Christianity and major world faiths, they develop a growing awareness of diversity.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship is valued and enjoyed by the vast majority of children. 'We especially enjoy worship when we help to act out stories and read because it helps us to understand and remember the message,' explained a Year 5 pupil. Themes explore Christian values and festivals. There is a strong focus on Bible teaching. 'Open the Book' worship held each week and delivered by members of the church, is having a very positive impact on children's knowledge and understanding of Bible stories. Parents say their children often talk about the stories and their meaning at home. Older pupils explained how Jesus used parables, such as the Good Samaritan and the Prodigal Son to teach about compassion and forgiveness. The vicar supports planning and clergy lead worship each week. Special festival services, which are attended by parents and friends, are held in the church. Children have a developing understanding of the nature of God. 'God knows everyone. You can't see him but he is always there. He made the world,' explained the youngest children. Older pupils talk about Jesus as the Light of the World and Son of God and the Holy Spirit as God's power and gift. Prayer is a key feature of worship. Children write and use their own prayers and they know traditional prayers and graces, such as the Lord's Prayer. Children are given time to consider their personal responses to the worship theme. Pupils participate willingly and actively, singing joyfully and listening attentively. Those of no faith say that they feel included. Recognising that children have limited opportunities to plan and deliver acts of worship, the school has recently instigated a worship council. However, as this is a new venture, the impact is yet to be embedded and evaluated. Regular and effective monitoring and evaluation by governors and staff has led to significant improvements. However, the school recognises that, by involving pupils, parents and visitors more formally, further insight as to the impact of worship will be gained to support future planning.

The effectiveness of the religious education (RE) is good

Very significant improvements have been made since the last inspection. Children have a positive attitude to RE because they enjoy their learning. They experience a range of

approaches and activities which meet the varied needs and abilities of mixed- age teaching. 'RE can be hard because it challenges you to think about what you believe. It helps you make decisions,' explained a Year 6 pupil. Lessons are well-planned and resourced. A good balance is achieved between learning about and learning from religion. As a result, children have a developing knowledge of aspects of the Christian faith and the life of Jesus and are able to apply what they have learned to their own lives. Children enjoy finding out about how Christians and people of other faiths worship and live their lives. RE contributes significantly to children's SMSC development through the study of Islam, Judaism and Hinduism. Older children are able to make connections between the faiths. For example, in a lesson about the Trinity, pupils discussed the different ways in which Christians, Muslims and Hindus understand God. 'We need to know about what other people believe so that we can respect them and not offend them,' explained a Year 5 pupil. Assessment systems are in place to track pupil progress and identify gaps in learning. Marking and pupil feedback identifies the next steps in learning. Pupils make good progress from their starting points and standards are in line with those achieved in other core subjects. However, at present the school does not have a portfolio of assessed work to support assessment and show pupil progression. RE is well managed and supported. Governors' monitoring and evaluation is very effective. Governors observe lessons, talk to staff and children and carry out work scrutinies alongside the headteacher. Written reports provide feedback and identify areas for development.

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

The headteacher and governors have worked tirelessly to re-establish the school's distinctive Christian character and effectiveness. The actions taken to fully address the issues from the previous inspection have been swift and robust. Highly effective governor and staff training, together with the headteacher's drive and ambition, have resulted in significant improvements to all aspects of church school leadership and management. The review of the mission statement and choice of core Christian values ensured that the school's Christian character was made explicit. They drive all that is achieved in school. Governors have established an effective self-evaluation process which engages parents and pupils. Church school issues are prioritised within school improvement planning. Governors monitor and evaluate the work of the school effectively through visits and discussions which are formally recorded. RE and collective worship are well-managed and supported, leading to significant improvements and higher standards. The school meets statutory requirements for RE and collective worship. The partnership with the diocese has been instrumental in developing the school, through training and support. Governors and leaders managed the transition to academy status sensitively and benefits are already being seen in areas of financial and other management issues. Senior leaders have managed difficult staffing and budgeting decisions, brought about by the falling roll, sensitively and with Christian compassion. The collaboration with the church and local community impacts strongly on children's experience of Christian giving and support for others. Children enjoy helping to raise funds and they support local events, such as the church strawberry tea and singing in care homes. Their understanding of wider world issues such as poverty and the environment is well-supported. 'People have ruined parts of the world through greed and war,' stated a Year 6 pupil. 'We need to help sort it out if we can.'

SIAMS report June 2016 Heversham St. Peter's CE Primary School, Heversham, Milnthorpe LA7 7FG