



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Hawsker-Cum-Stainsacre Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Hawsker
Whitby
YO22 4LA

Previous SIAMS grade: Satisfactory

Diocese: York

Local authority: North Yorkshire

Date of inspection: 26 November 2014

Date of last inspection: September 2009

School's unique reference number: 121498

Headteacher: Carl Hardwick

Inspector's name and number: Judy Jones 797

School context

This smaller than average school has 54 pupils aged between 4 and 11. It serves the village of Hawsker and surrounding hamlets and also takes increasing numbers from Whitby some three miles away. The children are predominantly of White British heritage and the proportion eligible for pupil premium is average. The proportion of children with special educational needs is above average. A higher than average number of pupils joins the school after the Foundation Stage.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Hawsker cum Stainsacre as a Church of England school are satisfactory

- The school's Christian ethos gives children a sense of security that encourages them to study purposefully and achieve well.
- Children have a good knowledge and understanding of the Bible and Christian traditions and know how Bible stories can relate to their everyday lives.

Areas to improve

- Increase the role of governors in guiding and monitoring the work of the school as a church school so that the distinctively Christian aspect of the school becomes a coherent part of the school's planning for improvement.
- Forge stronger links and partnerships with the Church at all levels, in order to enrich children's experience and make the school's distinctive character explicit.
- Enrich children's experience of collective worship by enabling them to plan and present some of the worship sessions.

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

Children thrive and make good progress in this small and caring school. As one pupil said: 'you can get on with your work because the atmosphere is calm and you know everyone thinks the same way'. Other children agree and can relate this feeling of shared values to what they have learned about the life of Jesus and His teachings. When asked, they can explain what being in a church school means, and for a number who have come from other (usually non-church) schools the distinctiveness is particularly clear-cut. They comment on the friendliness, the sense of being in a family and the total absence of bullying. Children's social and moral development is strong and the school is very successful in getting children who arrive with a troubled history to settle in and take a pride in being part of the school community. Exclusions are unknown. Parents are very pleased with the way the school is helping their children to learn and to form stable friendships. Consequently children enjoy school and attendance overall is good. Children's spiritual development and their knowledge of other faiths and cultures are good and well reinforced by innovative RE lessons. For example in a Key Stage I lesson, children who had been told the story of Mother Theresa and had prepared questions, sat enthralled as one of the other members of staff, dressed as Mother Theresa, answered their questions. Children say it is important to know about such faiths as Islam and Judaism 'so that we can respect them.' Although Christian values are embedded in the way adults and children behave and relate to each other, they are not always explicit. For example, classroom displays provide purely practical information such as the week's worship theme and the hymns to be sung but do not include inspirational material or children's work.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is satisfactory

Collective worship is an important part of the school day and reinforces the features of tolerance and respect that children see as important values. It is distinctively Christian and is well organised through a comprehensive four year programme of themes that has been agreed by staff. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection when there was no effective policy. Children enjoy worship because teachers use role play and illustrated stories that challenge and entertain while making serious points. Worship often includes stories of great men and women, and children are used to relating the meanings of these stories to the life of Jesus and to their own lives. For example, in discussing the achievements of Yuri Gagarin, older children suggested the qualities such as courage and perseverance that Jesus showed, and that Gagarin must also have possessed. They listen attentively and are keen to contribute when asked. Such stories extend children's knowledge beyond their own experience. This is important because first-hand experience is limited since the parish has no incumbent and the only outside visitor is the local Methodist minister. Worship includes time for prayer and reflection which children take seriously because they understand prayer as 'talking to God'. They are familiar with the Lord's Prayer and sometimes make up their own prayers. Older children have a good grasp of the idea of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit and can explain it in simple terms. Although children often take an active part in worship there are few opportunities, at present, for them to plan and lead worship themselves. The newly appointed coordinator for RE and worship is looking at ways to increase children's participation.

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

The head teacher has a clear vision for the school as a thriving Christian community. The supportive Christian ethos, in which children are cared for as individuals and none are overlooked, enables children to feel safe and confident. As a consequence they willingly do their best and enjoy success. Academic achievement is a priority and governors are good at overseeing and evaluating children's progress. Planning for RE is thorough. As a result children's knowledge of their own and others' faiths is good. However, planning and evaluating

the school's work as a church school is less developed. This was a focus for development from the previous inspection and has been only partly dealt with. A number of initiatives, such as the production of a booklet of prayers of thanks to say before school lunch and classroom notice boards related to worship are useful additions but are not part of a coherent strategy and there is more to do. The school uses the church building for physical education and celebrations. As a result children are familiar with the layout of the church and some features of Anglican practice. However there are no other productive links with the parish. The lack of an incumbent for several years, coupled with the difficulty until very recently of appointing foundation governors, has hampered the development of the school as a church school. Consequently the Governing Body has not given enough attention to the distinctively Christian aspect of the school, so the Christian ethos, though a strong influence on the work of the school, is not sufficiently explicit. The school meets statutory requirements for RE and worship. There is sound capacity for improvement in its work as a church school because the RE coordinator, through a new programme of professional development, is developing links with other RE coordinators. In addition a new and very experienced foundation governor has just been appointed by the Diocese.

SIAMS report November 2014 Hawsker cum Stainsacre CE VC School, Hawsker YO22 4LA