

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Hawsker-cum-Stainsacre Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School	
Hawsker, Whitby, YO22 4LA	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese	York
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Satisfactory
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Date of inspection	12 July 2018
Date of last inspection	November 2014
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Controlled Primary 121498
Acting headteacher	Claire Barber
Inspector's name and number	Nigel Castledine 652

School context

This school is much smaller than the national average, serving a rural and coastal community near Whitby, on the edge of the North Yorkshire moors. Over recent years, the school has experienced considerable changes of leadership and staffing. The current acting headteacher is the substantive head of nearby Fylingdales Church of England Primary School. A formal federation between the schools has been agreed from September 2018. The numbers of disadvantaged pupils or those who have special educational needs or disability are below national averages. The school is a member of the Esk Valley Teaching Schools Alliance.

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

- The pervasive Christian vision of the school underpins the drive for the highest standards of education and nurture for every pupil.
- Timely diocesan support has guided and secured the leadership and governance of Hawsker-cum-Stainsacre CofE School, enabling its Christian distinctiveness to shine out and inspire all the school community in every aspect of its life.
- Caring, supportive relationships between all pupils at this church school are effectively modelled for them by the friendly, helpful rapport between the members of the staff team, governors and parents.

Areas to improve

- Develop the governing board's role in evaluating the impact of the school's Christian distinctiveness on standards of education and pupil nurture. This ensures a strong, influential Christian ethos remains at the heart of school life.
- Utilise the pupil worship team as the role model for further development of pupil-led worship, so enabling pupils to plan, deliver and evaluate worship with increasing independence through school.
- Deepen pupils' insights into religious education (RE) by developing their theological understanding of Christian concepts, in order to enhance their religious literacy.

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

This school is a place of happiness and excitement, where pupils enjoy the challenges of their education, in a Christian family setting which emphasises the unique value of each pupil, known and unconditionally loved by God. All are nurtured and supported on their educational journey towards becoming successful life-long learners.

Strategic planning by senior staff and governors has encouraged many positive, creative and beneficial changes within school life. Pupils have also contributed to the development of the school through the use of 'pupil voice' which enables their opinions and ideas to be taken into consideration by senior leaders. Rigorous tracking monitors how well pupils are achieving, and how successfully the school is meeting pupils' specific individual needs. Potential blocks to pupils' learning are identified with suitable interventions or support put in place at the earliest opportunity. Although the low numbers of pupils in each year group make meaningful comparisons with national figures impracticable, the internal school data shows that pupils make good progress through school. Almost all pupils achieve or exceed national expectations by the end of Year 6.

The school has chosen four core Christian values comprising compassion, respect, friendship and forgiveness, which are explored through worship, RE and engaging classroom displays. The school's emphasis on Christian compassion has nurtured a warm family atmosphere in school and encourages respect for the views and contributions to school life of all. The staff emphasise each of these Christian values with pupils, using activities such as class or group discussion to highlight and explore their significance. For example, in a pupil discussion about these Christian values and their importance, a Year 6 child emphasised, 'Really, we should consider our school values as equals because they are all very important in the life of our school.' This comment emphasises that pupils understand the importance of the link between Jesus' teachings, their behaviour and their attitude to others.

All pupils are encouraged to develop a sense of personal aspiration for the future. They are helped to value their education, growing in confidence and personal pride in their achievements. Pupils enjoy being in school, and want to be there regularly. The very small minority of pupils for whom full attendance is a concern are supported and encouraged by senior staff interventions. Pupils are encouraged to build friendships that show Christian concern, respect, affection and forgiveness, and are given praise and encouragement for doing the right thing. Staff use the school's policies to resolve any instances of poor or thoughtless behaviour with a strong emphasis on forgiveness and restorative justice. Any rare incidents of bullying or discrimination are dealt with effectively and compassionately by the staff.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is supported through a wide range of cross-curricular discussions, experiences and activities, as well as within RE and collective worship. The school grounds and classrooms all have invitingly set-out reflection areas that pupils frequently choose to use for personal reflection and prayer. Pupils also benefit from spiritual learning gained through experiences such as exploring York Minster or the interactive Whitby Hope Community Church bus.

The coastal setting of the school inspires pupils to celebrate God's creation in creative ways and to see themselves as its custodians. For example, a conversation amongst a group of pupils motivated one to comment, 'Fish shouldn't be killed by plastic. They're part of God's world and we've got to look after them.' Similar approaches ensure pupils have many other occasions to consider the awe and wonder of God's world. They also ensure pupils can put forward ideas and answers to the big questions of life and belief, such as, 'Why did God make the world?'

Pupils frequently show their Christian concern for others and their stewardship of resources in their school lives. For example, they support both local and international charitable giving enthusiastically, and willingly join in community activities. Given its rural location, the school recognises the need for pupils to be culturally aware. This and ensures the curriculum gives pupils a rounded experience of life in contrasting locations both within the UK and world-wide. Pupils grow in understanding of the need to respect and welcome diversity in life-style, belief and culture as well as appreciating the global, multi-cultural nature of Christianity and other world faiths.

Pupils' positive engagement, participation and enjoyment of RE is indicative of the interest that the subject generates and the emphasis given to it as a core subject of the school. RE is taught by each class teacher as a discrete subject using the agreed syllabus for North Yorkshire, but it is also an influential part of the integrated wider curriculum. However this is currently limited by the scope of the learning approaches in use, particularly with regard to the teaching of Christian concepts. The enthusiastic RE subject leader supports and quality-assures learning outcomes in both schools, ensuring that RE benefits from joint planning and teaching approaches that enhance pupils' religious literacy.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Inclusive daily worship brings the school community together through its themes, which evoke consideration of personal discovery, awe and wonder in ways that are irrespective of personal faith or none.

Worship themes are predominantly Christian, emphasising Christian values and biblical teaching. The themes also

assist pupils in recognising the seasons and festivals of the Christian year with growing understanding of their significance. Whilst predominantly Christian, due mention is given in worship to the contrasting beliefs and teachings of other world faiths. Worship also focuses on local and national events, special occasions and charitable needs and how the school's gospel values might influence each person's individual response to these.

The lighting of three candles marks the start of the worship, signifying the Christian teaching of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Pupils are able to further consider these three aspects of God in their RE and also in the worship that takes place at appropriate Christian festivals, such as Pentecost. Parents enthusiastically take up invitations to join in the school's worship life in the parish church at these major Christian festivals, as well as for the end of school year service. Worship songs, enthusiastically sung, underline the message of the worship, with music used to enrich times of quiet spiritual reflection and devotion. Times of prayer include the use of the traditional Lord's Prayer, as well as prayers written and read by pupils. The use of prayer extends into the school day with Grace said as a thanksgiving for food at lunchtime. Pupils appreciate the provision of the quiet reflective areas around school which contain appealing artefacts and aids to personal devotion. A younger child explained, 'I like to be in the school garden because I think about the plants and the animals that God made when I'm there.'

The planning of worship is shared between the vicar, the ecumenical team of worship leaders and the acting headteacher and discussed with the staff. Pupils benefit from the range and variety of worship leadership, which includes the local churches' ecumenical team led by the vicar, as well as the teaching staff and occasional visitors.

Pupils enjoy their active participation in the worship, with the volunteers of the pupils' worship team contributing readings, prayers, drama and role play, as well as practical assistance with music and worship preparation. This involvement has been enhanced by meetings between similar groups of pupils in neighbouring Church of England schools. However, currently pupils do not regularly plan, deliver and evaluate school worship with age-appropriate independence.

Varied styles of worship include classes worshipping in ways most appropriate to their pupils' ages, as well as regular whole school worship. Each week, pupils also experience worship in the traditional Anglican setting of the nearby local parish church.

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

Since the last inspection, there has been a re-invigoration of the Christian ethos and culture of the school. With clear and sustained guidance from the diocese, the leadership team, led by the committed acting headteacher, has modelled and set high expectations for all to emulate. This has inspired a positive culture of respect and tolerance for all, supported by the influential and inclusive Christian values of the school. Training for governors and staff has successfully strengthened the impact of Christian belief in inclusive ways. Christian values and biblical teaching now form strong foundations from which all aspects of school life develop.

The governing board has moved forward successfully towards federation with Hawsker CofE Primary School, with a shared headteacher and governing board leading both schools. Although governors monitor school life and pupil outcomes, currently there is no formal evaluation of the impact of Christian distinctiveness on standards of education or on care and nurture of both pupils and staff.

Links with the local Esk Valley Teaching School Alliance have facilitated staff development through the exchange of good practice between the local schools. Professional development links with Fylingdales CofE Primary School have provided helpful middle leadership opportunities for staff from both schools. Governors have undertaken appropriate training with both the diocese and the local authority. This has enabled them to hold senior staff to account for all aspects of school life, and to move forward with confidence.

Mutually supportive links between All Saints' Church and the school have enabled the church building to be regularly used by the school for worship, as well as for other school activities. The school's links with the wider local community are seen in its support for activities and projects such as local beach clean-ups.

Guidance from the diocese has also supported positive developments in collective worship and RE teaching. The RE lead teacher attends the local RE hub meetings which enable her to support teachers with new approaches and guidance. This ensures that RE remains a vibrant, exciting aspect of the school curriculum. Both RE and worship meet statutory requirements.

Parents and carers appreciate the open-door partnership between home and school that keeps parents well informed about their child's education. Many consider the school to be an exceptional place, one commenting, 'The Christian ethos makes our school a happy place. It has helped to develop a loving, forgiving nature in my child that is very special.'