



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Yealand Church of England Primary School

Footeran Lane,
Yealand Redmayne,
Carnforth,
Lancashire.
LA5 9SU

Diocese: Blackburn

Local authority: Lancashire

Date of inspection: Thursday 3rd July 2014

Date of last inspection: 23rd June 2009

School's unique reference number: 119546

Headteacher: Mrs. Joy Ingram

Inspector's name and number: Mrs. Anne B. Woodcock 445

School context

Yealand School is a very small school in north Lancashire. It serves the rural village of Yealand and the surrounding area. The vast majority of the 34 pupils are of white British heritage and they come from mixed socio-economic backgrounds. Children are taught in two mixed-age classes. The school operates in collaboration with Arkholme Church of England Primary School. The headteacher, who has been in post since September 2012, works two days in Yealand and three days in Arkholme school. The RE (religious education) leader works for one day each week in the school.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Yealand Church of England Primary School as a Church of England school are good.

- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are very good. They are clearly based on their understanding of the school's core Christian values.
- The school has a strong 'Christian family' ethos. Everyone is valued as a child of God and enabled to achieve their personal potential.
- Very positive, supportive relationships with the church and local community have a significant impact on the school's Christian character and on pupils' personal development.
- The explicit Christian vision and leadership provided by the headteacher and governors is strongly supported by all members of the school family.
- Effective use of the school's natural environment enhances learning experiences which promote pupils' spiritual development.

Areas to improve

- Establish a formal system for recording and evaluating collective worship to lead to ongoing improvement.

- Provide more opportunities for children to plan, lead and evaluate acts of worship.

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

Christian values are firmly established and clearly understood by all members of the school community. "Our Christian values are important because they help you in everything you do," explained one pupil. Children behave extremely well, treating each other with respect and love. They explain, "We all get along and collaborate because we are friendly and caring." Pupils respect and trust their teachers, saying that they are firm but fair, always listen and make learning fun. Children are eager to learn and they strive to achieve the targets set for them. They are confident, reflective learners who particularly enjoy creative and experiential learning. All pupils, including those with additional needs, make good progress and achieve well. Good teaching, based on a thorough knowledge of each child, ensures that individual pupil needs are met within the mixed-age class groups, providing challenge and support in a calm and purposeful working atmosphere. Displays of pupils' work reflect the quality of learning, standards achieved and pride in individual and group work. Effective use is made of the school's outdoor learning environment. Children enthuse about their forest school and other outdoor learning experiences which ably support their spiritual development. They show an appreciation of the natural world and have well-developed ideas about their responsibilities to conserve it. They say, "We have to do something about pollution, look after God's world and improve our planet." Through the eco-council they have sponsored wildlife and rainforest conservation. Considerable efforts are made to support children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Well-planned residential visits to cities such as Liverpool, together with extensive enrichment activities using the arts and sport, provide pupils with experience of cultures very different from their own.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good.

Collective worship is an important and much valued feature of school life. Pupils enjoy worship saying, "We believe in God and it is good to come together to talk about and praise God." Children particularly enjoy worship when they take an active part by acting out a story or reading from the Bible. Collective worship is well-planned and delivered. It is firmly based on Christian values and festivals and on gospel teaching. However, there is no systematic procedure for recording and evaluating the impact of worship, and this is an area for development. Pupils have a clear understanding of how worship impacts on their lives. One child explained, "Worship helps us to be more understanding of others and how they relate to us." The extremely strong links with the church have a very powerful impact on pupils' spiritual growth. The vicar supports planning and leads worship each week. The school worships in church regularly, often participating in Sunday services and leading worship at festival times. The church and school also worship regularly in the village community hall, which is next to the school. Parents and members of the local church and village community attend these services, which are highly valued. Prayer is a key feature of the daily life of the school. Children write and use their own prayers and they know traditional prayers and graces. Time is given for reflection during worship and prayer corners are well-used. Pupils have a clear understanding of the importance of Jesus and a growing awareness of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. For example, one young child explained that the focus candle used in worship had three candles to represent the Trinity. Although children are fully engaged in worship, they would welcome the opportunity to take responsibility for planning and leading acts of worship more regularly. This is an area for development.

The effectiveness of the religious education (RE) is good.

Pupils enjoy RE saying, "It is always fun and you get to use your brain to think about hard questions, interpretation and what we believe." Lessons are well-planned, meeting the needs of learners within the mixed-age classes. Art, drama and story-telling are used effectively,

encouraging children to express and share their ideas. Displays of pupils' work and class scrapbooks reflect the range of approaches used. Pupils make good progress and the standards achieved are in line with those achieved in other core subjects. Children are reflective and thoughtful learners. One pupil explained that they sometimes have to talk about difficult subjects in RE, such as loss, death and Christian hope, but that they do so with respect and honesty. Children have a good knowledge of the Bible and the life of Jesus. The youngest children talk confidently about parables and Jesus' life. For example, one girl explained, "Jesus washed his friends' feet because that is what servants did." RE makes a significant contribution to children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Through the study of Judaism and Islam children develop a growing awareness and understanding of other cultures and faiths. RE is well-managed and it has a high profile within school. Themes are regularly extended across the curriculum. For example, in the Africa topic, children discussed fairness and justice in relation to the slave trade. Assessment procedures are well-established and used to inform future planning and check on progression and standards. Governors monitor the subject effectively.

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

The headteacher and governors ensure that well-understood Christian values provide the foundation for all that is achieved in school. All members of the school community have been involved in the selection of the school's nine core values. One governor explained, "Christian values are so much at the heart of our school that they just happen." Governors have a clear understanding of their role. They challenge the work of the school, ensuring that church school issues are prioritised within school improvement planning. Governors support the school through regular visits, monitoring of RE and collective worship effectively. Issues from the previous inspection have been fully addressed. The excellent links with the church and local community make a very significant contribution to pupils' spiritual and personal growth. Governors explain, "The church and school are aligned." Joint services and events, such as the Easter story enactment, are very much valued and provide the opportunity for school, church and village to worship and celebrate together. The pupil voice is strong. Children are confident that their opinions are valued and acted upon. They accept responsibility for projects such as raising funds for the Water Aid charity eagerly. Parents are highly supportive of the school. They recognise that their children are very well-supported within a distinctly Christian environment saying, "It is a caring and sharing school and we are lucky to have it." They value the many opportunities provided for them to share in their children's work and worship, such as the showcase and activity days. The collaboration with Arkholme school supports teaching and learning effectively. Good use is made of partnerships with the diocese and other cluster schools for curricular and continuing professional development.

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