

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Burton Agnes Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Rudston Road
Burton Agnes
Driffield
YO25 4 NE

Diocese: York

Local authority: East Riding
Dates of inspection: 4 July 2011
Date of last inspection: 23 November 2007
School's unique reference number: 117973
Headteacher: Jamie Church.
Inspector's name and number: Gillian Dorman-Smith/Lyn Field 151

School context

The school situated between Driffield and Bridlington is a smaller than average primary school. There are 91 pupils on roll organised into four mixed age classes. It serves a wide rural area with pupils drawn from Burton Agnes and surrounding villages. Most pupils are of British white heritage. The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs and disabilities is above the national average. The headteacher has been in post since September 2010.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Burton Agnes as a Church of England school are good.

A positive ethos based on Christian values helps children understand what it means to belong to a Church of England school. Pupils develop into caring and responsible individuals and are at ease in sharing their faith with others. Following a period of instability the leadership of the school is now secured and provides a renewed sense of energy to the development of this church school. This is an effective school which impacts positively on outcomes for pupils across a wide range of curriculum areas.

Established strengths

- The headteacher provides clear Christian leadership and is committed to strengthening the ethos of the church school.
- Collective worship is valued by the whole school community and impacts on pupils' spiritual development.
- Pupils demonstrate exceptional and genuine concern and care for each other as a result of the Christian ethos of the school.

Focus for development

- Governors to establish a systematic method by which to monitor and evaluate the impact of the school's Christian character in order to inform their strategic role in planning for the future.
- Establish strategies for embedding a Christian understanding of the school's core values.

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

Pupils are well motivated to live out the Christian values in the way they conduct themselves and show care for each other. Their ability to relate these values to bible stories is less well developed. They explicitly value diversity of faith and individual differences. In classrooms and outside, they work and play collaboratively. There are a number of classroom led opportunities for pupils to reflect and they respond positively when asked, for example, to think about how a piece of organ music makes them feel. Interactive displays throughout school and reflection areas in each classroom effectively encourage pupils' moral and spiritual development through thoughtful responses to curriculum topics and items that have

been in the news such as a tsunami. Reflective areas are not, however, consistent throughout the school environment. Pupils are confident to talk openly about their faith respecting each other's right to express belief in different ways. They appreciate visits to other places of worship and enjoy learning at first hand from followers of other faiths such as a Hindu visitor. Pupils' good collective understanding of prayer and appreciation of the value of silent prayer supports their developing spirituality. Pupils value the Prayer Net where they are confident to pause and offer up a personal silent prayer. They talk enthusiastically about writing and reading prayers in collective worship and comment on the focus there has been in school on the Lord's Prayer. They also discuss times when they pray at home and what this means to them.

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

Collective worship is consistently and systematically well planned so that pupils are engaged and enthusiastic about worship. The head teacher has brought a sharper focus to the role of Christian values in collective worship and pupils comment on the way that Christian artefacts are prominently and permanently displayed providing a special focus as they come together to worship. Collective worship is characterised by a variety of approaches with visits from members of other Christian denominations as well as regular opportunities for pupils to participate, for example, by their musical contributions. Pupils experience Anglican traditions and the pattern of the church year through attendance at the parish church for key Christian festivals. These services are valued by parents who speak of a strong sense of a community worshipping together. Parents and pupils hold the weekly Special Mention assemblies in high regard because they acknowledge and affirm the uniqueness of all pupils. Achievements covering a wide range of talents and abilities are celebrated and parents particularly welcome the way in which success in activities outside of school can be recognised. Evaluation of collective worship by all stakeholders is not yet fully developed. Although there are some occasions when feedback is requested these are not part of systematic self evaluation to inform next steps in planning for the future. A similar issue for improvement was a focus at the time of the previous inspection, but the school's capacity to address the issue is now stronger following the arrival of the new head teacher.

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

Leadership and management presents as a varied picture. The headteacher provides strong direction to all stakeholders in making explicit the Christian ethos. He is well supported by the governors but they do not fully engage in systematic monitoring and evaluation. There are a number of examples where governors have visited the school and recorded observations of aspects of the school but these are insufficiently evaluative. This limits the strategic planning of a church school. The focus of a caring supportive Christian school has been well maintained over recent years during several changes of head teacher and emphasises the commitment of senior staff to live out and model Christian values in the way they carefully consider the needs of all pupils. A period of time is now required to embed and strengthen the refocusing of the school's vision and values following the significant impact of the leadership of the headteacher during his first year in the school. There are good partnerships with the church and the local community; in particular with Burton Agnes Hall which is a frequent focus for curriculum enrichment. Links through the Rotary Lions Club with a school in India are prominent in the school. Pupils engage in fundraising for a number of charities and demonstrate a developing understanding of reasons for charitable giving. Parents value the Christian ethos of the school and the many ways in which they can work in partnership with the school for the benefit of their children. They are confident that the school provides a strong foundation for the development of the Christian faith for their children.

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