



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

### **Burton Agnes Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School**

Rudston Road  
Driffield  
YO25 4NE

**Previous SIAMS grade:** Good

**Current inspection grade:** Outstanding

**Diocese:** York

Local authority: East Riding of Yorkshire

Dates of inspection: 10 June 2016

Date of last inspection: July 2011

School's unique reference number: 117973

Headteacher: Helen Jameson

Inspector's name and number: Judy Jones 797

#### **School context**

Burton Agnes School is smaller than average with 96 pupils from the village of Burton Agnes and from other small settlements nearby. The parish church is situated close to the school. A few pupils come from larger towns further away such as Bridlington. Almost all pupils are of white British heritage. The proportions of pupils with special educational needs and of those who would be eligible for free school meals is broadly average, but accurate comparisons with national figures are not possible with such small numbers. The current headteacher joined the school two years ago.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Burton Agnes School as a Church of England school are outstanding**

- The headteacher's vision for the school ensures that Christian values inform all actions and decisions made by staff and children.
- Children of all abilities, needs and talents thrive and make good progress academically and spiritually.
- Children are confident and unusually mature because they are encouraged to think independently and accept responsibility for their actions from an early age.

#### **Areas to improve**

- Increase children's opportunities to learn about and from other world religions at first hand.

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

The school's Christian values, of trust, care and friendship were chosen in consultation with parents, adults at the school and pupils and form the framework for children's lives in school. Consequently, the ethos is one in which children feel safe and able to do their best, and therefore achieve better results than might be expected from their starting points by the end of Key Stage 2. Support for children with exceptional needs or talents is highly effective and includes help for children experiencing emotional difficulties, whether temporary or over a long period. Attendance is broadly average and behaviour is excellent. Exclusions are almost unknown. Children's personal and spiritual development is exceptional and relationships, based on friendship and trust, are excellent at all levels in the school. Their reliance on the value of trust throughout the school gives them confidence and enables them to use initiative, for example in looking after visitors without being asked. Children say they are encouraged to express their ideas and feelings and never have to hide what they think. As a result, they discuss complex ideas with great maturity explaining, for example, that it is good to know and respect your friends' ideas and faith even if you yourself do not share them. This respect applies also to attitudes to peoples of other faiths. Children learn about other cultures and there is a useful link with a French school. Children recently enjoyed a visit from a member of the Hindu faith, but otherwise they have little first-hand experience of world religions or places of worship beyond their own. The school's values are closely linked to the Bible stories children learn in religious education (RE), and children make the connection between the stories and their own lives for themselves. For example, they explain that they decided not have a 'buddy bench' in the playground because they care for each other all the time and if a child is upset someone will come and help "even if you don't like them, like the Good Samaritan." The local church plays an important part in school life and children visit frequently and are clearly very at home there. They know the purposes of the different parts of the church and the significance of, for example ecclesiastical colours. They appreciate the church as a place for reflection as well as services, just as the reflection areas in their own classrooms are places children can go to and just think. These areas are individual to each classroom and designed to be interesting and children use them routinely. For example, one is based on the idea of Jesus as a fisherman and contains a net to which children can attach paper fish on which they have written a personal prayer. Children's knowledge, mainly gained through RE lessons, of the life of Jesus is good, and they are keen to share it and describe the important stages, such as the miracles and the significance of ascension.

### **The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding**

Collective worship is at the heart of the school day and seen as very important by all children. Excellent planning takes account of the church calendar, the content of the RE syllabus and the school's Christian values. Children are justly proud of paper chains fixed to displays in the school hall illustrating 'care' and 'friendship' values illustrated by the story of the sick man whose friends let him down on chains through the roof to be healed by Jesus. Children's understanding is enhanced by the frequent use of symbols, such as the regular lighting of three candles to illustrate the Trinity, and consequently children have a good grasp of the concept. Worship is highly interactive and children are confident and absorbed when taking part. A 'worship group' was formed to lead and present worship, and so many applied to take part that they were split into two groups. Children take the responsibility for worship very seriously and strive to make worship meaningful for their friends. Children are enthusiastic about their weekly class worship which is often used to reflect more deeply on ideas from the Bible presented to children in a way appropriate to their ages. Older children particularly enjoy this challenge and benefit from learning to express their ideas about the 'big questions' and considering, for example, the different explanations of the creation story. All worship is fundamentally Christian and often includes visitors from the church or other organisations. Whatever the theme, prayer is

fundamental, and children say both informal prayers and The Lord's Prayer which they know well. Music, including enthusiastic singing and instrumental playing, is an important feature. The school's values of caring and trust are seen in the way children encourage each other and applaud each others' skills spontaneously.

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

The headteacher has an excellent understanding of the nature of a church school. Her vision for this school is clearly expressed in actions and in documentation and is understood by all involved in the school. The vision is realised through rigorous planning, thorough evaluation and a style of leadership that values everybody. As a result, the school's distinctiveness as a church school is a continuously developing process. A church working group that includes the vicar, parents and staff evaluates the school's progress effectively and identifies appropriate areas for improvement or development. Currently the leadership recognises the need, identified in this report, to increase opportunities for learning about diverse communities. Worship is thoroughly monitored by staff and through surveys of pupils who therefore feel included in decision making. Evaluation is reinforced by governors' observational visits and governors ensure the school meets statutory requirements for RE and collective worship. The school has dealt well with issues from the SIAMS report in 2011, particularly with the focus on embedding understanding of the school's Christian character. This is now an outstanding aspect of the school. Governors have had training on distinctiveness and become more evaluative as a result. Partnerships with the local church, the deanery and the diocese are strong and support the work of the school well. Links with the community, including those with Burton Agnes Hall, are also strong. For example, children have the unique experience of singing carols round the Christmas tree at the Hall. Excellent leadership has established systems that secure the distinctiveness of the school for the future.

SIAMS report June 2016 Burton Agnes CE VC Primary School YO25 4NE