

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Wykeham Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Main Road
Wykeham
Scarborough
YO13 9QB

Previous SIAMS grade: Good

Current inspection grade: Good

Diocese: York

Local authority: North Yorkshire

Date of inspection: 1 July 2016

Date of last inspection: July 2011

School's unique reference number: 121526

Executive Headteacher: Christine Wilkinson

Inspector's name and number: Lizzie McWhirter 244

School context

Wykeham is a small rural primary school in North Yorkshire. The majority of its 37 pupils are from a White British background. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs is below average. There have been significant staffing changes. In April 2016 the school formally partnered with Hackness Church of England Primary School. The schools share one Executive headteacher who has been in post since April 2016.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Wykeham as a Church of England school are good

- The inclusive Christian family in this small village school thrives on its Christian values and the partnership with the church and the village. This ensures everyone in the community feels accepted.
- Pupils positively enjoy their learning and value their friendships within this supportive Christian community. As a result, they become confident individuals and achieve well.
- The emphasis on creativity and shared projects with other local schools makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural [SMSC] development.
- Strong leadership in pro-active governors who have maintained the Christian ethos of this school through a period of transition.

Areas to improve

- For the governors to embed the systematic monitoring of collective worship and religious education [RE] in order to be better informed about these key aspects of Christian distinctiveness. This includes training and support for the RE subject leader.
- Embed the programme of visits and visitors to enable pupils to meet people of faiths other than Christianity more frequently to enhance their learning and support their spiritual and cultural development.
- Deepen pupils' knowledge of key Christian beliefs to extend their understanding of the school's

Anglican heritage and Christianity as a worldwide faith.

- Ensure that spirituality is developed through all areas of the curriculum so that the school's Christian character permeates all school life.

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

This small rural primary school values all the children and families it serves. The school's Christian values are linked to the school's vision and mission statement, where SMSC is one of four curriculum drivers. This is truly at the heart of its learning journey and provides a positive learning environment where pupils are proud to belong. This is because the school is an inclusive, happy and family community, rooted in the Christian faith and the school's Anglican heritage. The school community understands the importance of, and lives out, its chosen core Christian values, such as friendship, trust, respect and responsibility. Attendance is good because children enjoy coming to school and value the care their teachers and friends show to them. Achievement is very much part of the journey too within a Christian ethos where second chances are given to pupils. In addition, building relationships has a strong focus and a huge pride in pupils' work is fostered. Instilling responsibility in pupils as well as concentrating on care for the little things in life is making a real difference to pupil progress across all age groups. Consequently, children are also taking on their own responsibility for learning and becoming independent. Support for vulnerable children is resulting in good progress. Children are given confidence and are very respectful of each other. Whilst the system of peer mediators is in its infancy, pupils know the importance of listening to both sides of a story. RE makes a good contribution to the school's Christian character and to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Some pupils say that RE is their favourite subject and they regularly read The Children's Bible. The school has worked closely with the diocesan RE adviser in developing RE as a thinking subject. Pupils enjoy their RE and are encouraged to ask important questions. A good example is 'What does heaven look like?' In this non-ethnically diverse part of North Yorkshire, pupils consider what it means to be accepted by another group of people. They 'respect other people that are different to us. Everyone is different and that's ok'. Whilst pupils do visit local places of pilgrimage, pupils are keen to meet more people of faith and their places of worship. The school correctly identifies this as an area for development. Whilst pupils can relate the Christmas and Easter narrative well, they are less secure in their knowledge of Ascension and Pentecost. The school acknowledges that deepening pupils' knowledge of key Christian beliefs will support their religious literacy as well as their understanding of Christianity's international dimension. A new and developing link with Kenya is enriching pupil's global awareness.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Since April 2016, collective worship has taken a more prominent place at the start of the school day, providing a calm, reflective commencement to the day's work. The substantive headteacher, newly in post, ensures that collective worship makes a good contribution to the spiritual development of both pupils and adults. This is supported by the links with the parish church which the school community enjoys, enriching their experience of worship. They enjoy it when their 'vicar comes around and leads worship'. Younger pupils made a prayer blanket with a member of the parish community who is also the chair of governors. This is well used in class worship. Pupils are now much more involved and are developing their roles in leading worship. Good examples include such experiences every Monday in school and also at the end of term services in the parish church. In addition, children lead prayers which they have written themselves in daily worship. Indeed, prayer has an important focus, with the prayer tree encouraging pupils to write their own prayers. They say they 'like speaking to God'. One of the features of Wykeham's worship is the singing, which is age-appropriate and has a focus on the meaning of the words. This supports pupils' spiritual development well. Pupils know the importance of listening to God's words. Consequently, they say they really enjoy the Bible readings such as 'the story of Jesus on the cross'. Staff note that worship 'allows me to see how the children respond to different Biblical stories'. Pupils not only grow in their knowledge of God and Jesus, but speak of how they are growing together as a team. They say, 'Jesus' team is special and we all make mistakes like Peter did. We need to work as a team'. Pupils go on to say, that 'worship makes me feel quite peaceful as we listen about God and Jesus'. Staff say, 'worship enables me to reflect on practice and

also gives me time to think about my beliefs'. Pupils are growing in their understanding of The Holy Trinity. They speak of 'God making everybody in his image. Jesus is always loving even if people make mistakes'. They are less certain about The Holy Spirit. Their fundraising for Fairtrade, often reflected in pupils' prayers, also helps their understanding of the worldwide community of faith. They are becoming familiar with traditional Anglican greetings in worship, with one pupil using the words. 'Thanks be to God'. Some pupils also met the Archbishop of York on his recent pilgrimage, experiencing being part of a wider diocesan family. Children reported, 'the Archbishop joined Wykeham for their collective worship and answered children's questions about his childhood, adulthood and his job'.

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

Growing links with Hackness Primary and St Martin's School as well as Brompton County Primary School are a strength, which have resulted in creative projects together. This is because the highly respected headteacher has worked very hard in a relatively short space of time to ensure this happens. Governors have been very pro-active in maintaining this school's Christian ethos through a period of transition. This has made a vast difference to the school's Christian character and to the school's leadership team. Wellbeing for all adults and children is of the utmost importance for the governors. This is because Christian values are at the heart of the school's learning journey, ensuring the wellbeing of everybody. This results in children enjoying their learning and achieving well. Moreover, all governors ensure that Christian values are interwoven throughout the curriculum and that RE and worship meet statutory requirements. However, the governors have correctly identified the importance of training and support for the new RE subject leader as well as the regular and robust monitoring of collective worship and RE as important aspects of Christian distinctiveness. In addition, they acknowledge the importance of ensuring that spirituality is embedded through all curriculum areas. The school benefits from the excellent training and support from the diocese, working closely with them. Governors and staff, including those new to school, and to leadership roles, therefore feel supported by the diocese and their fellow governors. Staff say that the school's values 'enable pupils to have more understanding of life, respect and behaviour'. Parents praise the school highly and can articulate the school's Christian values in their own words. They value the teachers who 'couldn't be more supportive and the support staff are phenomenal'. They go on to say they like the prayer on the weekly newsletter. As a result, they are partners in their children's education and feel well supported by the school. Community links are good, with carol singing at the farmer's market and for the local hospice and all the village gathering together to celebrate HM The Queens' 90th birthday. Above all, parents say they too feel part of the family here.

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