

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Tockwith Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Southfield Lane Tockwith York YO26 7RP	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	York
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Local authority	North Yorkshire County Council
Date of inspection	3 February 2017
Date of last inspection	May 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	VC Primary 121595
Headteacher	Justin Reeve
Inspector's name and number	Judy Jones 797

School context

Tockwith is a relatively small primary school in rural North Yorkshire with 186 pupils aged 4 to 11. Most come from the village of Tockwith and surrounding hamlets. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of children with special educational needs or disabilities varies from year to year but overall is below average, as is the proportion of children attracting pupil premium funding. The headteacher was appointed in September 2013.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Tockwith as a Church of England school are outstanding

- Standards are rising steadily because innovative and inspiring leadership by the school's headteacher is based on robust evaluation of all aspects of the children's education.
- The school's ethos, based on the clearly stated Christian values of perseverance, creativity and friendship, enables children to develop excellent personal skills and to make good progress in their studies.
- Excellent partnership with the church through the local incumbent, the diocese and lay members of the local community enriches children's education both academically and more widely.

Areas to improve

- Increase the number of occasions when children can plan and lead collective worship.
- Provide children with more first-hand knowledge of cultures other than their own.

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

Christian values of perseverance, creativity and friendship are at the heart of everything the school does and are lived out by children and adults alike. The values were chosen by the children after discussions with the whole school community and are linked closely to Bible stories and the life of Jesus. For example, children see their own creativity as part of God's wonderful creation and link this to their role as eco-warriors in helping to conserve their beautiful environment. Their deep commitment to perseverance is a factor in improving standards in work. Test results have risen steadily over the last three years. Test results show pupils achieving expected levels and above based on their starting points. Children enjoy coming to school and contributing to school life and this is evident in their above average attendance. Behaviour is exceptionally good and exclusions are virtually unknown. Excellent relationships and friendship are promoted from the earliest age through a buddy system whereby youngest children have older buddies to befriend them and help them in the playground or on visits. Linking their values to everyday life is second nature to the children who interpret the values with a maturity beyond their years. Children are clear that friendship extends to respect for individuals and cultures and is fundamental to the smooth working of the school and to national and global societies. Consequently, they are exceptionally tolerant and feel secure expressing their ideas, even when different from their friends'. Religious education (RE) makes a big contribution to the ethos of the school. Lessons are popular because, as the children say, they allow them to be creative and "it makes us think about difficult questions." Children understand the idea of spirituality and describe it as a journey. Their spiritual and moral growth thrive in the open atmosphere where ideas are valued and creativity flourishes. Children have a wide knowledge of Bible stories and understand how they inform their own behaviour and relationships. They can cite examples of how the Bible teaches them to behave well. For example, they rightly see that the story of how Jesus healed ten lepers but only one came back to thank him is an example of ungrateful behaviour. They disapprove of this strongly. The immediate community has few members from other cultures or faiths and the leadership tries hard to widen children's experience, for example, through visits to a Buddhist centre and to a highly multicultural city nearby. There is also a fruitful link with an orphanage in Kenya. Nevertheless, the leadership and the governors recognise the need to provide children with more first-hand contact with people of other faiths and cultures.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship is an important part of the school day because it reinforces the school values in many different contexts. Children understand the idea of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The three coloured candles used to illustrate the trinity also represent the school values. Worship is well planned and follows a cycle of different formats throughout the week. Prayer, both personal and shared, is an important part of worship because children write their own prayers in addition to saying the school prayer and The Lord's Prayer. Collective worship makes a substantial contribution to children's knowledge and understanding of the Bible and of the life of Jesus. Children look forward to regular fortnightly visits from the incumbent. In addition, a group of volunteers from the church introduce 'Open the Book' worship each month. Children enjoy the dramatic presentations in these sessions and say they make them remember the sessions. The school promotes active learning and children are actively involved in all forms of worship. Consequently, children are confident and self-possessed when talking to the whole school or playing music to introduce worship. They are particularly enthusiastic when they plan and lead worship by themselves. This is a recent initiative and happens several times a term. The children are very keen to do more. The school makes good use of the local church for worship on special occasions such as Easter and Harvest Festival. This contributes to their knowledge of Anglican traditions and the church calendar. Parents and friends were invited to a recent very successful service in church designed and led by the children on a Sunday afternoon. Approximately 180 children, family and friends attended and, as a result, the service is to become a regular event.

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

Leadership of the school as a church school is excellent at all levels. The issues from the previous inspection have been tackled effectively and the clear vision of the headteacher has led to the enhancement of the school's distinctively Christian character. The vision is stated explicitly in the aim of the school and is often achieved through innovative ideas. For example, professionally produced posters round the school illustrating the core values in action show the children themselves in activities or lessons demonstrating friendship, creativity or perseverance. Excellent relationships amongst adults in school and with the wider community enrich children's learning and provide them with excellent role models. Leadership of RE is outstanding in its planning and organisation and in the way it is taught. Children make good progress because they are encouraged to apply the values of perseverance and creativity in all areas of the curriculum, not just RE. Evaluation of all aspects of the school is thorough and takes account of the views of children, staff, governors and parents. As a result, decisions based on such consultations are

respected because all feel their views are heard. Partnership with the diocese is strong and acts two ways: the school makes good use of training and advice and also shares its own best practice with other schools. In this way the school makes an effective contribution to the future leadership of church schools. Links with the local church and community are strong and the incumbent plays an important part in school life, so that children benefit from an additional and wide range of expertise and support. Parents of all faiths and none fully support the school and the way it promotes its values, because they are consulted and welcomed, and because they see how well these values contribute to their children's wellbeing. Governors are deeply involved in the school's development as a distinctively Christian community at the heart of the village. They play a full part in monitoring the work of the school as well as ensuring RE and collective worship meet statutory requirements. Foundation governors are well-informed and committed and form an effective bridge between the school and the diocese.

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