



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

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

### Clayton-le-Woods Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Back Lane  
Clayton-le-Woods  
Chorley  
PR7 7EU

**Previous SIAMS grade: Satisfactory**

**Current inspection grade: Good**

**Diocese: Blackburn**

Local authority: Lancashire  
Dates of inspection: 28 January 2016  
Date of last inspection: February 2012  
School's unique reference number: 119468  
Headteacher: Sue Pennington  
Inspector's name and number: Ruth Wall 548

#### School context

Clayton-le-Woods is a smaller than average primary school with 185 children on roll. The proportion of disadvantaged children supported by the pupil premium funding is below the national average as is the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic heritages. The number of disabled children and those with special educational needs is low. Since the previous inspection a new deputy headteacher has been appointed. There has also been a substantial turnover of teaching staff and governors.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Clayton-le-Woods as a Church of England school are good

- The commitment of senior leaders and governors to provide an inclusive education, based on Christian values, underpins the very good relationships between all members of the school community.
- The school provides broad and creative learning experiences which deepen children's spiritual understanding across the curriculum.
- The very effective partnership with the parish church and other local churches enriches collective worship.

#### Areas to improve

- Develop, with the whole-school community, the mission statement/aims and the website to promote and celebrate the distinctive Christian character of the school.
- Provide opportunities for learners to understand and make links between the beliefs and practices of faiths, other than Christianity, through visits to their places of worship and visits by members/leaders from other faith groups.
- Develop the governors' approach to self-evaluation and monitoring of the school's distinctiveness and effectiveness as a church school, including RE and collective worship, in order to embed a structured approach.

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

Firmly established Christian values influence all aspects of school life. A teacher commented, 'The Christian ethos runs through the veins of our school'. Behaviour management is consistently linked to the school's core Christian values. Parents affirm that this helps to influence children's attitudes at home. Children's efforts and achievements are celebrated regularly. They have very positive attitudes to attendance and learning. In consequence, they are making good levels of academic attainment and progress. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good as a result of the focused Christian perspective given to planning across the curriculum. Children appreciate God's creation and demonstrate their responsibility in caring for it. Through a range of exciting activities during 'Exciting Easter' week and 'Christmas Joy' week, children develop their understanding of these important festivals. Christian signs and symbols, together with high quality interactive displays, emphasise the school's distinctiveness. Reflection areas are a focal point in classrooms and include children's own prayers and thoughts. A Year 3 child explained, 'It's a safe place to go...if we feel too sad to talk it's ok to pray to God'. Children show concern for world issues and, as an expression of their Christian service, often take the initiative in organising fund-raising events. Children are particularly proud of their relationship with Jorge in Mexico. Through the charity Compassion they develop their relationship with him in letters, raise money for his particular needs and regularly pray for him. RE schemes of work enable learners to explore Christianity and other cultures, beliefs and practices effectively. Children are made aware that Christianity is a global world faith through the units of work, including how Christians across the world celebrate Advent. Each Friday, prayer times before school for staff, and at lunch time for children, are well attended. They are sensitively and creatively led by the worship coordinator. A member of staff reflects, 'They bring peace to my week and the chance to be with colleagues in prayer'.

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

The sign 'Welcome to Worship Time' greets the school community as they enter the hall. Worship has a strong impact on children's spiritual and moral development. The school community benefits from a varied experience of worship led by a range of people. Worship is well planned and covers Christian themes with a strong emphasis on Christian values and festivals. Staff agree that worship gives them a positive message to explore further in class and is a time to share fun, calm and uplifting moments. Silence and moments for reflection play an important part in the school's approach to prayer. Anglican responses, traditional prayers and children's own spontaneous prayers contribute to the development of their prayer life. Children say they enjoy singing and this enhances the worship experience. Worship enables children to develop an understanding of the qualities of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit through the themes, songs and stories included in the planning cycle. Children are involved in planning and leading worship, either with their class or as a member of the worship council. This demonstrates the progress made since the since previous inspection. These experiences have increased their confidence. A Year 6 boy said, 'Younger children understand and learn from us'. Children are given opportunities to contribute their thoughts about worship. Guided by the coordinator they are developing the confidence to make challenging, evaluative comments that lead to school improvement. The views of parents are sought informally. One request led to the candle-light service being open to the whole school community in the church. One parent said she had loved the atmosphere in the church and, another parent said that all children being involved in the service was very special. There is ongoing informal dialogue with staff and governors which leads to continuous improvements to the school family's experiences in worship.

### **The effectiveness of the religious education is satisfactory**

The subject leader is enthusiastically driving forward improvements in RE, although these developments are at an early stage. New teachers are developing their confidence and skills

with the subject leader's support. There is a well-considered action plan, which includes the embedding of her newly devised procedures for assessment. Where response marking is being used well it not only affirms children's efforts but gives targets for development. This is not yet consistent in each class. Standards are monitored through book scrutiny, learning walks and talking to children about their learning. Attainment, for the majority of children, is in line with other subjects, as is evidenced in portfolios, written work and in their oral responses. The subject leader has benefitted from diocesan training and from liaising with another local school. She has identified the need to moderate steps in learning with all teachers to ensure continuity and progression across the year groups and to inform planning. Children speak positively about their enjoyment of RE. A variety of effective teaching and learning strategies are used, including role play, art and craft and multi-media resources. The Year 2 teacher demonstrated an open and affirming teaching style. Children asked the curate their pre-prepared questions about the Bible. They listened attentively and the more able children made appropriate notes that showed their understanding. Children have a good knowledge of Christianity and the life and work of Jesus. They make links between the beliefs and practices of faiths, other than Christianity, through well-structured units of work. In the Year 6 lesson, children took part in a re-enactment of a Jewish Passover meal. The teacher's preparation and organisation was excellent. Children's understanding developed as they participated in tasting, reading sections of the story, asking big questions and reflecting on aspects of the meal as it progressed. The Anglican church has been used as a resource for learning but children have not visited places where people of other faiths worship, or had visits from people of other faiths to broaden their knowledge and understanding.

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

The headteacher is committed to developing the staff team in working hard to ensure that distinctive Christian values permeate all areas of school life. She has faced a number of challenges in her role and, with the support the deputy headteacher, is leading the staff in making significant improvements in standards of teaching and learning. Leaders and governors recognise the importance of the school's Christian character in creating an ethos which supports effective learning. Issues raised at the previous inspection have been addressed through school improvement action. Governors are committed to the development of a Christian ethos within school. They are actively involved in the life of the school and use their various skills to good effect. However, they have not developed formal procedures for self-evaluation and strategic planning of the school as a church school. An ethos committee has recently been formed to address this issue and to involve the school community in a review of the mission, aims and the website. Provision is made for senior staff to attend training in order to support the Christian character of the school and to help build leadership skills for the future. Leadership of RE and worship are both very well led by an inspiring leader who is clearly passionate about her role. She says, 'Jesus is all about action', a perspective she follows with energy and enthusiasm. Children are proud of their role in decision-making through the school council and know that their views are valued. They take their responsibilities seriously, including acting as 'guardian angels' to promote friendship during break times. Input from the vicar and curate, together with that of other church leaders and the Christian schools' worker, makes a valuable contribution to children's spiritual development. Parents speak highly of the compassion with which they and their children are treated. One parent summed up the thoughts of many by saying, 'In our school we see the Christian values in action'.

SIAMS report, January 2016, Clayton-le-Woods CofE Primary School, Chorley PR6 7EU

