



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Scorton Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Snow Hill Lane
Lancashire
PR3 1AY

Previous SIAMS grade: Good

Current inspection grade: Outstanding

Diocese: Blackburn

Local authority: Lancashire

Date of inspection: 11 February 2016

Date of last inspection: May 2011

School's unique reference number: 119533

Headteacher: Helen Hesketh

Inspector's name and number: Kathryn Pym 726

School context

Scorton Primary School is situated in the heart of the village of Scorton and currently has 50 pupils on roll. The children are all White British and come from Scorton and surrounding villages. The number of children entitled to pupil premium funding is well below average, as is the number of children who have special educational needs. The school is collaborated with Calder Vale St John's. The headteacher has been appointed since the last inspection. A new incumbent was recently appointed to St Peter's Church. The school's recent Ofsted inspection (January 2016) judged the school to be good.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Scorton Church of England School are outstanding

- The Christian core values are embedded in all aspects of school life, in particular the foundations of all relationships, collective worship and religious education [RE].
- The inspirational Christian leadership and distinctively Christian vision for the school ensures a unique programme of school improvement, founded upon the Christian values and the school's mission statement.
- This school has a unique relationship with St Peter's Church and a pivotal role in the ecumenical life of the village.

Areas to improve

- Establish a system to evaluate the impact of worship, which regularly involves the children and informs future worship plans.
- Deepen the children's knowledge and understanding of the distinctiveness of the school through teaching about St. Peter and the parish which the school serves.

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

Distinctive Christian values, such as hope, forgiveness and trust, are woven through all aspects of school life, impacting significantly on relationships and behaviour. Children are confidently able to articulate these unique values, such as courage, justice and humility and the difference that these make to their lives. The values empower them to stand up for what they believe in, treat each other respectfully and have the confidence to achieve their very best both inside and outside the classroom. They also inspire the children to respond to local, national and international need. Recent projects have included the 'Bottle Stop' campaign, following the tragic death of a parent. The school works in partnership with the Mother's Union to sponsor a child's education in Uganda as well as supporting Children in Need. One child explained that 'we help charities because God wants us to help other people.' All stakeholders speak confidently of the tangible difference that the Christian values, such as friendship and compassion have made to the whole school community and the improvements that have been made in the school since the last inspection. The learning environment is creatively used to ensure that the Christian distinctiveness of the school is celebrated and enhanced at every opportunity. The entrance hall and reflection areas in the classrooms and grounds are valued areas and regularly used by the children to reflect upon 'big questions' and develop spiritually. Children enjoy school and therefore attendance rates are high. They explain, 'we are one big family. This is my second home!' The spiritual life of the school is tangible. The mission statement 'love one another as I have loved you' is evident through all aspects of school life. The youngest children in the Reception class are able to talk about the significance of the statement and who said it. They explain, 'Jesus told us to love one another, so that is what we do.' The children also value the opportunity to worship in church every day. However, their knowledge about their parish church is limited. The school has rightly identified that studying St Peter, enriches their understanding of the unique Christian foundation of their school and parish. The children achieve their best and make good progress with their learning. This is because of the encouragement, support and Christian nurture that they receive throughout their time at the school. Learning is tailored to meet individual needs, both in terms of differentiation, but also learning styles. As a consequence of this, good levels of teaching, resulting in high levels of self-esteem, confidence, encouragement and support. The children make good progress across the curriculum and particularly in RE where progress and learning outcomes are outstanding. The children have an in-depth knowledge and understanding of world faiths, which is a significant improvement since the last inspection. They value both visits and visitors and talk about what they learn from these experiences. In spite of the small and insular community in which they live, the children are given many occasions to learn about diversity, including Christianity around the world and are able to express their knowledge very well. The children talk passionately about RE. They work hard in lessons and are rightly proud of what they achieve. The links between RE and worship, through the Christian values are transparent.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

The quality of collective worship is outstanding, well led and inspirational and makes a significant impact to the daily life of the school. It is highly valued by the children, staff and the wider community. Planning is varied, creative, inclusive and diverse. It impacts positively on the thought of the day and the Christian values at the heart of the school. Worship provides the children with the unique opportunity to worship daily in church. According to one parent, 'worshipping in church daily ensures that the children find it a comfortable place where the children have a sense of ownership'. The children are very familiar with Anglican traditions and worship planning is often structured around the liturgical year and includes a significant number of Sunday services. The school worship band is exceptional and provides the whole worshipping congregation with a time to reflect and prepare for worship. Children respond eagerly to challenges, such as 'the smarties challenge' to make a daily difference during Lent. The children demonstrate a clear understanding of the Trinity and are reminded of this with the special candle during services. The children are given many opportunities to pray. This includes private prayer in specific focal areas in school, formal and informal prayers during worship and prayers during the school day. They also respond to local national and international need in both a prayerful and practical way. One child explained that this is a way of learning to be better people and it is what God wants us to do in helping and loving each other. Jesus is central to worship and the children are able to explain how his teachings help them daily through stories in the Bible. The children demonstrate an in-depth knowledge of the Bible and can eloquently articulate how these have made an impact on their actions and faith. For example, one child said that Jonah and the whale taught him 'if you ever betray God, he will still be there to protect you.' The children are enthusiastically involved with planning, leading and evaluating worship.

They say they would welcome even more experiences. They feel that all their opinions are very much valued in the school and any suggestions for change are taken on board. As well as worship being regularly led by the incumbent, worship is further enhanced by the wide range of visitors and extracurricular activities. 'Open the Book' worship, the Faith Mission, Messy Pilgrims and Jesus and Me [JAM] club are all valued by the children. They can articulate how each of these activities provide ways of building a closer relationship with God. The school acknowledges that as collective worship is so versatile, a more comprehensive approach to evaluation would be beneficial, so that changes can occur when appropriate.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

The progress and outcomes that children make in RE are outstanding. This is fundamentally as a consequence of the passionate, outstanding and faithful way in which it is taught throughout the school. Children are provided with creative experiences that challenge and engage them as well as strengthen their spiritual understanding. Highly motivating and inspiring lessons consistently engage children in their learning. As a result, they are motivated and inspired. The children produce work of a very high standard and are proud of their achievements. Work in RE has been significantly enriched and improved since the last inspection. This is because of the introduction of a systematic approach to learning about world religions which has included visits and visitors. The children are able to articulate differences and similarities and it has provided them with a deep understanding and appreciation of the diverse world in which we live. Assessment procedures are robust. Scorton Primary School, together with the school that it is collaborated with, has benefitted from recent bespoke training from the Diocese on assessment in RE. A portfolio of evidence is an ongoing process, linking to the new units of work in the revised syllabus. RE is led and managed exceptionally well. Through links with the diocese and other church schools, the school embraces current thinking and has benefitted from recent RE professional development for all staff.

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

The headteacher has an inspiring Christian vision centred on the school at the heart of the church's mission in the community. The review of the mission statement encapsulates the Christian foundations of the school and embraces the local community which it serves. The school provides the children with a very good education and firm Christian foundations on which to build throughout their lives. The introduction of the Christian values has been significant in the development of the school as a church school. One child explained that these are the things that God wants us to do. They are integral to all aspects of school life, in particular standards of achievement, wellbeing of all, relationships, the curriculum and behaviour. Staff and governors have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and since the last inspection, have instigated a clear programme of school improvement, this includes a focus on the Christian distinctiveness of the school. Governors and other stakeholders now make a significant contribution to the self-evaluation process, which was an area identified in the last inspection. Links with the church and local community are very strong. The school has accurately identified that further focus on their patronal saint would enrich the children's understanding of the distinctiveness of the school. The school is central to village life and ecumenical activities. Activities are varied and valued greatly by the children and their families. Succession planning is clear and all staff benefit from regular professional development. Governors and staff ensure that RE and worship meet all statutory requirements. Links with the diocese are firm. The distinctiveness of the school has also been enhanced by the regular collaboration days which focus on Christian values with Calder Vale St John's Church of England Primary School. Parental partnership is exceptionally strong and parents value all that the school does. One parent said; 'this is a wonderful Christian school where my child is thriving spiritually as well as academically.'

SIAMS report February 2016 Scorton CE VA Primary School Lancashire PR3 IAY