



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

St Chad's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Northholme Avenue

West Park

Leeds

LS16 5QR

Diocese: Ripon and Leeds

Local authority: Leeds

Dates of inspection: 24th June 2013

Date of last inspection: 24th June 2008

School's unique reference number: 108006

Headteacher: Mrs Helen Pratten

Inspector's name and number: Lin Paisley 655

School context

St Chad's Church of England Primary is an averaged size primary school situated in an advantaged area of Leeds but serving a diverse community. There has been significant mobility since the last inspection and the percentage of children from black and minority ethnic families has increased to 40%. 15% of these pupils do not have English as their first language. The school has identified 19% children who have special educational needs and 13% of learners are eligible for pupil premium. There has been major development of the building in recent years to further improve the accommodation.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Chad's as a Church of England school are outstanding

St Chad's mission statement "In the light of God, we care, we share, we laugh, we learn" is truly lived out in the daily life and work of all who work and learn there. Inspirational leadership and a shared vision secure a culture of respect and trust where each individual is encouraged to be the best they can be and where the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of learners is at the heart of the curriculum and at the heart of strategic development planning. Learners are encouraged to take risks, to think for themselves and to support each other. St Chad's is a place where a rich and diverse curriculum and creative teaching and learning allows time and space for the spirit to grow and flourish.

Established strengths

- Strong Christian values which secure inclusion, guide behaviour and attitudes and nurture each individual
- Exemplary care, guidance and support for children and families and a culture of trust and respect which celebrates diversity
- Inspirational leadership from the headteacher, supported by a strong and committed staff and a highly effective governing body, which secures excellent outcomes for all pupils, including the most vulnerable
- Strong and mutually beneficial relationships with parents, the church and the community

Focus for development

- To further extend opportunities for learners to plan and deliver acts of worship
- To strengthen links with local faith communities and leaders to further aid children's understanding of community cohesion

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

Christian values are made explicit and deeply embedded in the daily life of this school. All members of the school community talk confidently about the distinctive nature of the school and how it impacts significantly on the lives of all who work and learn there. Parents speak of "the special joy and warmth here that comes from the staff and the children" and how the ethos statements are truly lived out. Learners have regular opportunities to engage in high quality experiences that develop personal spirituality, supported by a rich and diverse curriculum, imaginative approaches to teaching and learning and thoughtfully planned acts of collective worship and religious education. The Christian character of the school has a significant impact on the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of learners, including the most vulnerable. High quality teaching and learning and creative experiences builds skills of enquiry, analysis and reflection and provides time and space for these skills to be practiced. Learners say "we always have time to think and reflect" and a pupil spoke about a "hot-seating" experience where he had shared information about his faith and culture with the class and how proud and empowered that had made him feel. Behaviour and relationships are exemplary. Learners have a high degree of respect and understanding of each other and of diversity and difference both within the church and other faith communities. Strong links with local churches, visitors in and visits out and well planned religious education secure this. Learners are excited and challenged by religious education and it makes a significant contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

All members of the school community place great value on collective worship and talk about its place in school life and what it means to them personally. Learners say "it is important to join together and share ideas" and that talking to God "helps you to make the right decision". Parents say collective worship is the highlight of their week and that it is often a very moving experience where all feel affirmed and valued. They say their children talk about worship themes and ethos statements and that they can see the impact of this on relationships, attitudes and behaviour. They talk about how stories from the Bible relate to the school's core values and affect the decisions that they make and how they behave to each other. Learners understand the central position that Jesus has in the Christian faith and have a growing understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, commensurate with their age. A range of church leaders contribute to worship and children enjoy their experiences of "Open the Book" and "What's the Story" which they say brings the stories to life. Collective worship is inspirational and inclusive and themes raise aspirations and inspire spiritual and moral reflection. Learners say that collective worship challenges them to think and inspires action. They talk of fair trade and eco themes and how that inspired them to support other children through sponsorship and to look at how they could make a difference at home and at school. A range of members of the school community, including local clergy, thoughtfully plan and deliver quality worship which is rooted in Christian belief. Learners develop a secure understanding of the seasons of the church year and Christian festivals. Parents and children talked about the impact of the Easter and Christmas stories delivered through "What's the Story" in stations of the church and how it challenged thought and provoked reflection. Monitoring and evaluation have a clear purpose and are managed effectively. Feedback gathered from a range of stakeholders leads directly to significant improvement. Learners are confident in contributing to worship and take responsibility for setting the scene and leading prayer. The Eco and Fair Trade Councils and class groups plan and deliver acts of worship and learners are keen to extend these opportunities. Learners understand the value of personal prayer and reflection as part of their own spiritual journey and they contribute sensitively to prayer in worship and offer their own personal prayers through reflection areas in both key stages.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

Standards of achievement in religious education are at least in line with national expectations and often higher. The school tracks vulnerable learners and seeks to bridge the gap, resulting in good progress given their starting points. Learners are inspired by the subject and learn exceptionally well and they demonstrate a good understanding of Christianity and a broad range of religions. In lessons observed learners demonstrated a wide range of higher level skills and were able to ask questions, analyse, interpret, to evaluate and reflect. Learners were able to unpick what it meant to be inspirational, to identify someone who inspired them and discuss their impact on society. They were able to relate this to the life of Jesus and talk about how he inspires us today. The majority of teaching observed was outstanding with evidence of appropriate challenge and sensitive differentiation both of task and methods of recording what children knew and understood. Highly effective use of assessment informs teaching and learning and exemplar evidence demonstrates progress by all learners. RE has a very high profile and has strong links with the school's Christian values and with spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The curriculum is rich and varied and learners demonstrated their knowledge and understanding of Christianity and were able to make links between the beliefs, practices and value systems of a range of faiths. Learners said, "the core things of love and forgiveness are there in the Muslim religion and in Buddhism as well as Christianity" and talked of how that helped everyone, regardless of their religion, to make good choices. Subject leadership is strong and rigorous monitoring and evaluation by all staff and by governors results in well focused action planning that leads to improvement.

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

Leaders and managers confidently articulate, live out and promote a vision rooted in core Christian values and they understand the impact of those values on the lives of learners and on the life of the school. Leaders and managers demonstrate a clear understanding of the school's performance and distinctiveness based on effective and insightful self evaluation which involves all groups of the school community, including parents, and maintains a strong focus on meeting the needs of all learners and securing improvement. Governance and leadership of the school is driven by a distinctive Christian vision which drives policy and practice and this directly impacts on pupil behaviour and attitudes and to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The leadership of collective worship and religious education is given high priority with a commitment to quality resourcing and targeted training and development. This leads to highly effective practice in both areas. Governors are proactive in visiting classrooms, supporting teaching and learning and subject leaders through their role as link governors and engaging with parents and the local community. Excellent relationships with parents, the local churches, the Diocese and the wider community, and strong links with other church schools, are mutually beneficial and mean that learners have a good understanding of their local, national and global communities. The recently convened Cultural Support Group is proactive and the school plans to extend further its links with other faith communities. The development of all staff and governors as leaders in church schools is planned strategically with focused training and development and highly effective induction and support for staff new to the school.

SIAMS report June 2013 St Chad's Church of England VA Primary School, Leeds, LS16 5QR