



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Flockton Church of England First School

Barnsley Road
Flockton
Wakefield
WF4 4DH

Diocese: West Yorkshire and the Dales

Previous SIAMS grade: Good

Current SIAMS grade: Outstanding

Local authority: Kirklees

Date of inspection: 7 March 2016

Date of last inspection: 3 February 2011

School's unique reference number: 107714

Headteacher: Neil Cappleman

Inspector's name and number: Malcolm Price (627)

School context

This school serves the small village community of Flockton. There are currently 82 children on roll. They are mainly of white British origin and from a mixed socio-economic background. Children transfer at the end of Year 5 to local middle schools. St James' Church is situated adjacent to the school. The current headteacher was in post at the time of the previous inspection.

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

- The strong Christian character and caring ethos of the school are demonstrated through excellent relationships and a clear focus on distinctive Christian values
- Collective worship supports this distinctiveness through its strong spiritual focus and its highly inclusive format
- Leadership at all levels is clearly centred on providing a nurturing environment based on Christian values within which children thrive, make good progress and achieve well

Areas to improve

- Through the forthcoming key appointment of a new assistant headteacher, seek to consolidate children's awareness of the school's distinctive values and to embed their impact
- Create opportunities for children to experience and learn from people of other Christian traditions

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

A hallmark of this school is children's understanding of its vision statement. For them 'learning together within a Christian environment' is second nature and they demonstrate this through their excellent attitudes and behaviour. When asked what difference it makes being in this school, they explain that 'it gives you an understanding of God and Jesus'. The impact of this understanding is revealed in their relationships. For example, they say that 'I forgive others because whenever I do anything wrong, I know God will forgive me.' In the same way, they know that the miner's lamp symbol that they wear not only shows that they are 'rooted in the community' but that 'it's to show the light of God and that His light is in our hearts too.' Christian values are central to school life. Members of the school community, including children, have worked together at developing a common understanding of such values as thankfulness and compassion and of how these are exhibited. The distinctive Christian character shines through in many other ways – for example, through prayer at key times of the day, through prayer spaces and reflective areas in classrooms, and in the newly established Creation Garden that children have helped to design. It is strengthened by mutually supportive links with the local church, which has a group specifically praying for the school. Children say that 'the church is part of our community'. Parents strongly support the school's ethos and believe that the bond with the church 'reinforces the message' that the school gives. Religious education (RE) lessons have a clear connection with the school's values. Children confidently debate the attributes of God and relate this to their own characters. They can discuss maturely the issues raised by the story of Jesus clearing the Temple, commenting that 'you would not be able to feel the Spirit', and they can also relate this to respect shown when visiting a church or mosque. In this way, RE contributes significantly to children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural (SMSC) development. In lessons, children collaborate well and compliment others on their achievements. The ethos enables all children, including the more vulnerable, to make good progress personally and academically and the majority of children achieve in line with or above national expectations.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship is a defining feature not only of the day but of the school community. On each occasion, children, staff, governors and representatives from the church and community create a cairn by placing a stone on a table to symbolise their shared purpose and values. Children confidently plan and lead worship. When acting out a scene where Jesus is being interviewed for the job of helping the world, they can suggest that 'I try to make everyone feel that they matter', which is in itself a comment on relationships in the school. They are able to involve other children by asking questions and listen carefully to their answers, which include 'Jesus is a peacemaker' and 'He is the king of kings'. Worship songs are greeted with a gasp of enthusiasm and children sing with great sensitivity suggesting that the words carry a meaning for them. The children's ethos and worship group meet with a local Anglican priest, who is also a Foundation Governor, to help plan and evaluate collective worship. They discuss what they like about worship and how it can be made better. Their suggestions are acted upon. For example, children now have more opportunities to say prayers from the front during worship. This local priest regularly leads worship in school and children visit the church and its new community centre to celebrate festivals and special events. Children can explain that worship includes Bible stories and also how they are involved with adults in looking at the school's shared values. The collective worship programme focuses strongly on developing the spiritual life of the school and reflects the school's Christian values. It includes the major Christian festivals and those of other faiths. Worship is routinely monitored and children contribute to reports. Parents are encouraged to attend worship when possible and feel welcomed and included.

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

The headteacher, senior leaders and governors set a strong example through their shared commitment to promoting the distinctive Christian character and purpose of the school. They articulate strongly the Christian values framework, for example when stating that 'everyone is valued in the sight of God and this is expressed throughout the school'. Along with parents and church representatives, they are fully involved in the strategic development of the school as a community based on Christian values. Children take on leadership roles, through the school council and the ethos and worship group, and their voice is encouraged through their involvement in meetings. They are also given responsibilities as play leaders. The partnership between the school and St James' Church is strong and church members help in school. Governors believe that the 'church is like an extension to school and the other way round'. Through the children and families committee they monitor the effectiveness of the school's distinctive character and discuss how to promote it. Leaders develop children's spiritual awareness through the input of organisations such as Hand to Mouth. Through visits, they enable children to learn about a range of cultures and faiths, for example through a visit to a Gurdwara and through the partnership with a predominantly Moslem school in Batley. Through this partnership, children are able to visit each other's school and take what they think is distinctive about their own school. Children from Flockton take their symbolic stones and a picture of Jesus. Each school also has a friendship tree displayed created jointly by the children. In these ways, leaders help children not only to understand Christianity as a world faith but also to respect faiths that are different. School leaders and governors are encouraged to attend diocesan training and the headteacher is proactive in the local church schools pyramid. Strong leadership of SMSC helps children to develop independent thinking, an example of which is the response instigated by the children to the Syrian crisis. This is an illustration of children's wider understanding of their own and other communities. In all these respects, the focus areas from the previous SIAMS report have been clearly addressed. School leaders are aware of the priorities that will enable the school to continue to succeed, notably the forthcoming appointment of a new assistant headteacher. Like the children, they are constantly aware of how the school's values support them in their vision of 'branching into the future'.

SIAMS report March 2016 Flockton C of E First School WF4 4DH