

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

West Burton Church of England Controlled Primary School

West Burton, Leyburn, North Yorkshire, DL8 4JY

Current SIAMS inspection grade

Outstanding

Diocese

Leeds

Previous SIAMS inspection grade

Outstanding

Local authority

North Yorkshire

Name of federation

Bainbridge, Askrigg and West Burton

Date/s of inspection

6 October 2017

Date of last inspection

20 November 2012

Type of school and unique reference number

Primary 121482

Executive Headteacher

Charlotte Harper

Inspector's name and number

Pauline Hilling-Smith 641

School context

West Burton school is a much smaller than average primary school. It is in a formal federation with Askrigg and Bainbridge Primary Schools. There are currently 23 pupils on roll. Children in the village walk to school, and other children from the surrounding villages and hamlets come by bus. Major alterations to the school building in recent years means that the school now has 2 classrooms, a library, a break-out room and a school hall. Currently no children attract the Pupil Premium Grant. Almost all pupils are white and British. The headteacher was not in post at the time of the last inspection. The church is a 10 minute bus ride away though occasionally the children walk through the fields.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of West Burton Church of England Controlled Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The leadership of the school guides its Christian vision very strongly and this makes a major contribution to the distinctiveness and effectiveness of the school.
- The close links between the federated schools and the local church communities enhance its distinctiveness.
- Pupils make good progress from their starting points.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding.

Areas to improve

- Develop middle leadership with a sharp focus on the development of leading the Church Schools of the future across the federation.
- Monitor the pupil's use of reflective spaces.

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

West Burton Church of England Primary School is a school at the centre of the community and is highly valued by all for its Christian character. The school's values of hope, creation, forgiveness, thankfulness, justice, peace, koinonia, reverence, friendship, endurance and humility underpin all of its work. In particular, Christian fellowship and trust guides the exemplary attitudes and behaviour demonstrated by the pupils. For example pupils say that they can forgive because this is the example set by Jesus. Christian values are embedded into learning opportunities across the whole school. This ensures that pupils become reflective and resilient learners and is apparent in the high standards shown by the school's current attainment data. The two successive areas identified and set up as reflective areas following the last inspection had to be disbanded due to health and safety reasons. As the pupils were disappointed with this the school decided to make completely different arrangements. Now, pupils confidently explain that they can use the items in a basket anywhere and at any time to set up a space for themselves to reflect and this will be respected by peers and staff. Monitoring the use of this relatively new arrangement to ensure a reflective space is easily available has not yet been undertaken. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is delivered through a broad, creative curriculum which makes clear cross curricular links but successfully ties everything together through strong Christian values. Pupils clearly understand the concept of communities and the importance of belonging to one. The link with Wigton Moor Primary School which is a larger and more diverse community school in Leeds has added considerably to this understanding. Relationships throughout the school are very strong and demonstrate the values in action. Pupils' behaviour towards each other and around the school reflects the Christian values and the staff have high expectations and aspirations for the pupils. Attendance at school is well above the national average and pupils say they enjoy coming to school because they enjoy school and it is fun. They describe the school as being at the centre of their life. The school's distinctive character ensures that all are included and standards of learning are high. This is demonstrated through pupils' good progress from their different starting points. Classrooms are attractive and celebrate the pupil's work. Displays show clearly the school's work towards and commitment to eco standards and the principle of Fairtrade. The 'Respect Code' which pupils follow very closely is given prominence in classrooms as well as the hall. Pupils apply this code in their everyday life and draw attention to it to others if they feel it is being broken. There is a prayer tree in the hall where all pupils can leave their prayers. Religious Education (RE) contributes very significantly to the development of the school's Christian character Pupils are given time in RE lessons to consider the big questions such as 'Who invented God?' and 'Where does love come from?' There is a clear respect for diverse communities because they talk about how they give consideration to the beliefs of peers of a different faith. The pupils also understand how many others in different communities are less fortunate than themselves. The vicars from St Andrew's and St Oswald's churches are regular visitors and they play an important part in the life of the school supporting in many different ways. The joint schools and churches Harvest service was exceptionally well supported by pupils and their families. All the areas for improvement from the previous inspection have been addressed successfully.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Worship is at the heart of the school day. Everyone participates enthusiastically and as a result collective worship is often inspirational. Pupils identify the value they place on the reflective beads one of which each pupil takes on entry to collective worship and then drops on the altar table as they pass. They show they understand the significance of the items on the altar table including the candle they say represents Jesus as the light of the world. The liturgical year is reflected through items placed on the altar table. Prayer and reflection are an integral part of daily life as well as within worship. The parents and pupils say that they can bring painful and sad things to God and this comforts them. Pupils are supported to relate Bible stories to the school's Christian values and their own behaviour. Pupils are confident to share their views and reflections. One act of collective worship each week is led weekly by the vicar of St Andrew's who is supported by helpers from the church as well as pupils. The central focus of worship for the week often includes acting out a Bible story. The Bible stories are carefully chosen and made relevant for all the pupils, enabling them to contribute and engage with the learning. Music, composed by the pupils is an integral part of worship and contributes to creating the special atmosphere. During the weekly celebration collective worship 'Respect Ambassadors' select the new ambassador and explain how the pupil chosen has lived out

the Christian values that week. Pupils are enthusiastic and clearly worship is a highlight of the school day. Prayer and reflection form regular parts of the day and this enables pupils to develop their thoughtfulness and care towards others. The impact of this development has been to promote pupil's deep thought because there is always an opportunity to reflect at just the right moment no matter where the pupil is. The development of deep thought has been one of the school's priorities. The school has very close links with St Andrew's Church which is the school's parish church, St Oswald's Church which is the parish church of one of the other schools in the federation and the Methodist chapels in West Burton and Bainbridge. These partnerships make a significant contribution to the development of the school as a church school because they help the pupils to understand the distinctive features of the Anglican and Methodist traditions. Collective worship is regularly evaluated and in depth and detail by governors and pupils alike. There is good support given to pupils to fine tune their evaluations. This means that modifications are made to worship which maintain and continue to improve effectiveness.

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

The headteacher is highly effective. She was already the highly respected executive headteacher of two neighbouring schools when the headship of West Burton became vacant three years ago. The West Burton governors made the wise decision to invite her to become their executive headteacher as well and to enter into a formal partnership comprising of three schools. This complexity has been led exceptionally well by the executive headteacher and has been a strength in the development of West Burton as a church school. In particular the understanding of the strengths and layers of different communities has been capitalised on very well. Everyone associated with the school is acutely aware of the smallness of the school's community but at the same time they highly value being part of the larger, wider local community as well as the big community of Christians. All leaders lead through example and have a very clear vision of Christian education based upon 'Guiding Us to a Brighter Future' which is rooted in distinctively Christian values. This is articulated by all leaders and is evident throughout the school. Self-evaluation is very robust because care is taken to involve everyone associated with the school. Strategic leadership, initiatives are monitored and their impact evaluated carefully and collaboratively. A strong emphasis on professional development for all staff stems from the headteacher's very supportive style of leadership which promotes strong teamwork and empowers all staff. Strong partnerships exist with other agencies including the Methodist chapels which makes a significant contribution to the wide range of extra-curricular activities available for the pupils. Links with the local Diocese, where school leaders regularly attend training makes a significant contribution to school development. The school is aware that here is a particular challenge for the development of future leaders within small school rural and more remote locations such as West Burton. Strong and mutually supportive relationship exists between the churches, chapels vicars and ministers which contributes very effectively to the work of the school. The vicar of St Andrew's the school's parish church has a very clear understanding of her role and because of this her contribution to the school is highly appreciated and effective. Governors are very supportive of school make wise decisions and challenge effectively. Leadership of collective worship and RE has a very high priority and leads to highly effective practice in these areas. Parents speak very highly of the school and say it promotes their own faith and they appreciate its distinctly Christian nature. The school meets the statutory requirements for collective worship.

SIAMS report October 2017 West Burton Church of England VC Primary School, DL8 4JY