

## Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

### Warter Church of England Foundation Primary School

Addleked Warter York YO42 1XR	
<b>Current SIAMS inspection grade</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
<b>Diocese</b>	York
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Local authority	East Riding of Yorkshire
Date/s of inspection	15 March 2018
Date of last inspection	1 July 2013
Type of school and unique reference number	Foundation Primary 117996
Headteacher	Alison Metcalfe
Inspector's name and number	Geraldine Cooper 696

#### School context

Warter CE VC Primary school is a smaller than average primary school serving Warter and two neighbouring villages. The majority of pupils come from outside the catchment area. There are 136 pupils on roll. Levels of deprivation are low and the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is significantly below national average. Although the percentage of pupils with special educational needs is below the national average the school has a significant proportion of pupils with EHC plans. A small percentage of pupils have English as an additional language. Since the previous inspection the deputy headteacher has been appointed to the post of headteacher and the senior leadership team has been restructured.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Warter CE Foundation School as a Church of England school are outstanding.

- Christian values are clearly and consistently shared across the school community so that pupils readily apply them in the positive choices that they make about their behaviour and work.
- The school's values underpin a Christian vision which creates an aspirational environment in which all pupils make excellent progress and attainment is higher than the national average.
- Religious education (RE) and collective worship are central to school life and are carefully planned so that pupils have a strong understanding of the Christian teachings which underpin the school's values.
- School leaders consistently monitor the schools distinctiveness as a church school and ensure that professional development of staff equips them for future leadership roles in Church schools.

#### Areas to improve

- Continue to develop the RE curriculum to strengthen pupils' capacity to talk in greater depth about Christian teachings and beliefs.
- Increase the frequency with which pupils engage in meaningful evaluation of collective worship to further deepen the impact of worship on pupils' personal spirituality.
- Extend opportunities for pupils to engage with a greater diversity of Christian tradition and worship through collective worship and RE.

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

The school's core Christian values of friendship, respect and hope are accessible to all members of the school community and children of all ages and abilities actively apply them in their daily lives. This is evident in the extremely high standard of behaviour exhibited by pupils and the way in which they clearly care for one another. Adults consistently model the school's Christian values through the positive relationships which are fostered across the whole school community and which establishes a model of Christian family life. This creates a secure environment in which pupils quickly develop very positive attitudes and demonstrate high levels of both independent and collaborative learning. Consequently, all pupils make good progress and attainment is above national expectation. All members of the school community ascribe pupils' attainment to the school's nurturing Christian ethos and families choose the school because of the excellent provision that is made, particularly for pupils with additional needs. The school has a higher than average proportion of pupils with education, health and care (EHC) plans. Resources are deployed effectively to ensure that vulnerable pupils receive targeted support which enables them to perform in line with, or beyond, their peers.

The 'golden rule' of treating others as you would wish to be treated is central to the way that the school manages behaviour. Pupils apply this in their day to day relationships and support one another in overcoming academic or social challenges. It is also evident in the sensitive way in which challenging behaviour is managed and vulnerable pupils are given the support that they need to remain in school.

Pupils exhibit an intrinsic enjoyment of learning, happily sharing ideas and proud of their mastery of new ideas and skills that they develop through a challenging and exciting curriculum. The curriculum is enhanced by a wide range of enrichment activities which add to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Older pupils share their investigative skills and their excitement for learning with younger ones through themed curriculum time. A spontaneous discussion about scientific and religious explanations of creation demonstrated pupils' confidence in sharing ideas and appreciating different points of, stating that 'it wouldn't be as interesting if we all agreed'.

It is evident from carefully annotated photographic evidence that pupils enjoy the imaginatively planned RE curriculum which provides for a systematic study of major world faiths alongside Christianity. This has included visiting different places of worship and meeting with people of different faiths. Because of this, they talk about the importance of learning about different faiths and can describe similarities and differences between Christianity and other faiths, particularly Islam. The teaching of Christian belief and practice has been enhanced through the introduction of 'Understanding Christianity'. Pupils are confident in sharing their ideas about the nature of God and Jesus but are not yet always able to articulate more complex aspects of Christian theology.

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

Collective worship is systematically and effectively planned to ensure that the school community shares their understanding of the school's Christian values and appreciation of major Christian celebrations and festivals. Because the school's values are explicitly explained through Bible stories and teachings pupils understand their distinctively Christian roots. This is complemented by a systematic and detailed study of Bible stories in class which enhances pupils' appreciation and application of school values so that they readily explain the significance of these values to the choices that they make. Each week pupils nominate peers whom they consider to most effectively demonstrate the school's Christian values and their achievement is celebrated. This helps all members of the school community to recognise the way in which the values contribute to harmony within the school and they talk about being proud of their own contribution to school life.

The headteacher ensures that worship leaders share a consistency of structure so that pupils can appreciate the features of Christian worship. A simple system of evaluation is based on this structure but is not extensively used by pupils. Through initiatives such as the school's 'Wolds Pilgrimage Way' she has exemplified models for prayer and worship which are emulated by school staff. This also provides an opportunity for pupils to engage in worship in a variety of settings which further enhances their spiritual development.

The school attends the local church on a termly basis. Although the church is deconsecrated and is now used as a local heritage centre it provides pupils with the experience of worshipping in a symbolically Christian place. The pupils contribute creative work which adds to the Christian ambience and heritage of the building. A high profile is given to pupil led worship both for seasonal services and in school. A foundation governor supports pupils in leading 'Open the Book' on a regular basis. The 'Warter Worship Group' plans and leads worship each week. This provides pupils of all ages with the opportunity to develop an understanding of how Christians worship. They are encouraged and supported by their peers who appreciate the way that they make simple links between Bible stories and the school's values. This would be enhanced by a deeper engagement of pupils in the evaluation of the impact of

collective worship on a more regular basis.

All staff are seen to actively play a role in developing pupils' opportunity for prayer. The school's Christian family ethos is enhanced through the way in which the school cook takes responsibility for leading prayer before lunch. Teachers link interactive reflection areas in each classroom to the current Bible theme in order that pupils develop an appreciation of the deeper meaning of each parable that they study. Teachers are conscious of the opportunities that the curriculum offers to promote pupils' SMSC development. A music lesson through which pupils utilised their keyboard and language skills were used to develop prayers. The outcome of this work demonstrated an appreciation of, and compassion toward, contemporary humanitarian issues including homelessness and conflict.

The headteacher has ensured that the school receives pastoral support, from a retired member of the clergy, so that pupils experience Christian worship and teaching. However, pupils' appreciation of diversity within Christianity would be enhanced if they experienced worship from a wider range of Christian traditions.

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

The headteacher's insightful and informed understanding of Church school distinctiveness has enabled her to work with a dedicated governing body to establish the school as a beacon of good practice. School leaders ensure that all staff and governors understand, and can contribute to, the school's Christian vision and ethos. The headteacher is committed to promoting the highest levels of educational opportunity for the school and has developed very strong links with the local authority and the diocese. She ensures that developments are rooted in effective educational practice and are consistent with the school's Christian vision and values. Therefore, pupils and staff benefit from a wide range of educational expertise which enhances academic, physical and SMSC development. The school has proactively joined the Pathfinder Teaching School in conjunction with other schools within the Diocese. Through this, and wider opportunities for staff professional development, the school is engaged in the training of future teachers and leaders who have a detailed knowledge of church school distinctiveness.

The governing body is well informed and are effective in the role of critical friend. They ensure that all aspects of school life, including church school distinctiveness, are regularly and robustly monitored. They support the headteacher's commitment to maintain and develop the school through consistently setting challenging targets. Because relationships within the school are rooted in Christian values the staff are highly motivated. The headteacher exemplifies good practice through her own teaching in the early years and foundation stage in which she sows the seeds of future learning. Staff are confident to share and develop new ideas in the knowledge that they will be encouraged and supported by school leaders. Consequently, all pupils, particularly the most vulnerable, achieve in line with or above national expectations.

Senior leaders ensure that all pupils receive their entitlement to religious education and collective worship. The school is sensitive to the needs of pupils whose parents withdraw them from the collective worship and some RE lessons on the grounds of faith. Teachers ensure that all pupils feel included and valued as part of the school's loving family. Expectations of pupil progress and attainment are as high in RE as in any other curriculum area. Assessment for learning takes place on a regular basis and pupils are aware when they have achieved the expected outcomes. The significance of RE and collective worship is demonstrated to the whole school community through the active engagement of foundation governors. Pupils have a sense of pride in the fact that a foundation governor regularly undertakes a scrutiny of their RE books and reports to the governing body.

The commitment of the school to the holistic education and experience is recognised by, and fosters very positive relationships, with families who consistently describe the school as being supportive and nurturing, particularly in times of difficulty. Families support the school's fundraising through a very active 'Friends' group. They are also generous in their backing of charitable fundraising initiated by pupils. It is evident from the range of charities selected that pupils are aware of, and sensitive to, the needs of those around them and are keen to put their Christian values into action.

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