

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Gargrave Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Neville Road
Gargrave
Skipton
BD23 3RE

Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese	Leeds
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Date/s of inspection	17 October 2017
Date of last inspection	10 July 2013
Type of school and unique reference number	VC Primary 121599
Headteacher	Sarah Peel
Inspector's name and number	Geraldine Cooper 696

School context

Gargrave CE VC Primary School is a growing school of 135 pupils serving the village of Gargrave and the surrounding rural area. The school serves a predominantly white British community which is socio-economically very diverse. There is a growing proportion of pupils in receipt of pupil premium and also a growing proportion of pupils with special educational needs. The school has recently entered into a collaboration with a nearby school and the headteacher has taken on the role of executive headteacher. Since the last inspection there has been a significant change in staff and the governing body has been reconstituted.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Gargrave CE VC Primary School as a Church of England school are good.

- The school's clearly defined vision and values are understood by the school community and create a learning environment in which pupils flourish.
- School leaders have an understanding and appreciation of the impact of the school's distinctively Christian character which they effectively share with all members of the school community.
- The Christian values of the school inform the way in which vulnerable pupils are supported and encouraged to achieve.

Areas to improve

- Develop and embed across all areas of the curriculum a shared understanding of spirituality and spiritual development.
- Further develop the curriculum to provide opportunities for pupils to develop an awareness of Christianity as a diverse world religion.
- Develop a greater understanding of the aims of collective worship in order to increase the effectiveness of evaluation.

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

The recent review and revision of the school values and vision statement has refocussed the school community on the school's distinctiveness as a church school. Hope, peace and love are easily understood by pupils and applied within the daily life of the school where they are encouraged to, 'love God, love learning, love themselves'. This has led to an improvement in both behaviour and in achievement. All staff work together to create an environment in which every child is nurtured as an individual and encouraged to aspire to higher levels of attainment. As a consequence of this pupil attainment is now in line with or above national averages with more pupils achieving greater depth in their learning than in the past. The attainment of vulnerable pupils is generally in line with their peers and focussed monitoring ensures that their targeted support is effective.

All staff work collaboratively and are seen to exemplify the school's values. This creates a Christian family atmosphere in which pupils demonstrate positive learning behaviours. Pupils consistently feel that the school's values help them to make the right choices. They recognise that when things go wrong they are helped, forgiven and able to make a new start. This approach has been effective in supporting vulnerable pupils and enabling them to engage fully in all aspects of school life.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and provides many opportunities for moral, social and cultural development. The introduction of philosophy for children in lower Key Stage 2 is clearly having a positive impact on their capacity to engage in discussion and rationalise thoughts and feelings. This has had a positive impact on wider learning and their engagement with RE particularly. The school environment has been explicitly developed to create opportunities for reflection and spiritual development but this is at an early stage. A stronger and consistent understanding of spirituality and spiritual development amongst staff is needed in order that they have a deeper impact on pupils' education and wellbeing.

A new RE subject leader has introduced a much more dynamic style of teaching and learning in the subject. Pupils are now more fully engaged in the subject and speak about it with enthusiasm. RE working walls in each classroom have added to pupils' appreciation of RE. They can explain why it is important to learn about people with different faiths and beliefs and are confident in expressing their ideas. Careful evaluation has led to a review of the way the curriculum can support pupils' appreciation of Christianity as a diverse world faith. New initiatives are being developed and are yet to be embedded. However, it is evident that older pupils can articulate thoughtful and considered ideas about how, and why, Jesus might be pictured differently across the world.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good.

Collective worship is well planned and introduces pupils to the values of the school in the context of Christian story and festivals. Pupils are, therefore, able to make links between Bible stories, school life and their own behaviour and talk confidently about the influence of collective worship on 'making the right choices'. However, pupils would benefit from a more structured and varied use of Bible stories to support collective worship themes.

Music is used effectively in worship to create a quiet and reflective atmosphere as well as encouraging lively and enthusiastic participation in hymn singing. A 'collective worship crew' of pupils plans and leads worship on a regular basis and their imaginative approach adds to the engagement of all pupils in worship. They have a clear understanding of the elements of Anglican worship but would benefit from a greater understanding of the aims of worship so that the evaluation of the impact of collective worship is more effective.

The school also makes effective use of collective worship as a way of developing pupils' awareness of, and response to, the needs of others. The harvest festival has prompted pupils to think more deeply about what they take for granted and to raise money for water aid.

The incumbent leads worship on a regular basis and through this, and regular visits to the church, pupils are developing an understanding of Christian teachings, festivals and beliefs. Church visits have a clear impact on pupils' understanding of the sacred as they talk about the 'special and calm' atmosphere that

they experience there. They are also able to engage in conversations about God and Jesus and have a growing understanding of the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Reflective areas in each classroom provide a focal point for the promotion of the school values and for prayer. The provision of prayer bags provides pupils with a range of stimulus for prayer with which younger pupils particularly engage. Active involvement in collective worship and a more engaging RE curriculum are having a gradual impact on the way in which older pupils are able to talk about and engage in personal prayer and reflection.

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

The headteacher, along with a newly constituted governing body, has established a strong and well-informed leadership for the school which has the significance of the school's distinctively Christian character at its core. Recent appointments have brought valuable new expertise into the school and together teachers and leaders have quickly created a new impetus to the school's identity as a church school. All members of the school community were engaged in the revision of the school's values and vision statement. Previously existing values of respect, forgiveness and equality have now been sensitively developed to also include hope, love and peace. All are explicitly displayed around the building and have quickly become embedded in the way that pupils and adults describe the school. Pupil voice is valued by the school and pupils feel that their opinions are listened to. Older pupils appreciate the responsibilities that they are given. They provide effective role models and are looked up to by younger pupils who aspire to take on responsibilities as they move up the school.

Church and school are complementary in their engagement with families which encourages high levels of attendance by families for school services and significant festivals. Foundation governors play an active role within the school and are frequent visitors. They are engaged with the headteacher in the regular review of the school's distinctiveness as a church school and report regularly to meetings of the full governing body.

The headteacher and governing body have a very clear awareness of the progress of all pupils as individuals and effectively apply the values of the school to the promotion of very high expectations of teaching and learning. The collegiate way in which information and responsibility is shared means that all members of staff feel valued and have a clear desire to do their utmost to support pupils on their learning journey. Opportunities are promoted for pupils, and staff, to aspire to achieve beyond their expectations whilst ensuring that they have the resilience to overcome disappointment.

The school has a very strong engagement with the Diocese and responds positively and efficiently to the recommendations that are made. This, coupled with the enthusiasm of the new RE leader, has taken the school on a new trajectory toward distinctiveness as a church school. There have been many new developments in collective worship and RE as well as the wider curriculum, for example philosophy for children, which are having a positive impact on pupils' capacity for critical thinking and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. However, these are yet to be embedded and there is a need for a greater shared understanding of spirituality and spiritual development across the whole school community.