



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Snainton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School  
Pickering Road East  
Snainton  
Scarborough  
YO13 9AF

**Previous SIAMS grade: Satisfactory**

**Diocese: YORK**

Local authority: North Yorkshire

Date of inspection: 3 December 2014

Date of last inspection: July 2011

School's unique reference number: 121515

Headteacher: Ruth Wackett

Inspector's name and number: Alan Thornsby 137

### School context

Snainton is a very small school of 39 pupils serving the village of Snainton and surrounding area. The majority of pupils are White British from a mixed social background. Since September 2014 each class in school has had a permanent class teacher. This has reduced the teaching commitment of the headteacher and enabled her and newly appointed governors to give greater emphasis on, and support to, school improvement.

### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Snainton as a Church of England school are good

- The commitment and vision of the headteacher, supported by the staff and governing body to establish a secure Christian ethos that nurtures the progress and attainment of all pupils.
- The impact the Christian ethos has made to the learning environment and academic and personal development of pupils.
- Pupil's understanding and use of spontaneous prayer, especially in Friday achievement assembly that reflects their spiritual development.

### Areas to improve

- Ensure that Biblical links reinforce an understanding of the theological backgrounds to Christian values.
- Extend the spiritual journey of pupils through a greater involvement in planning and delivering specific acts of worship.
- Ensure governors fully understand the impact of the distinctive Christian character of the school through links between strategic documents and church school evaluation to identify development as a distinctive church school.

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

The school has an effective Christian ethos that is reflected in 'learning and growing, following in God's way'. This and the key Christian values of courage, truthfulness and friendship underpin the life of the school. Pupils recognise these as Christian values and relate them to their lives because 'they are what Jesus wanted his disciples to do'. However, the link to Bible references and theological backgrounds are not made obvious. Christian values in action results in good relationships, behaviour and attitudes to work. Pupils are safe, confident and articulate. They have a good awareness of right and wrong. They enjoy the trust, challenge and support of teachers and want to achieve. Teachers reflect Christian values in their behaviour management and relationships, with respect and care for pupils in their teaching. Children know they are safe to learn from making mistakes. As a result, achievement is becoming more consistent and pupils making at least expected progress. Religious education (RE) has a high profile in the life of the school. Currently it is taught through the school by the headteacher to cover staff planning time. However, there are discussions in place to explore the benefits of greater cross-curricular links with staff teaching their own RE. Children enjoy RE and are fully engaged by lively delivery and opportunities for reflection and discussion. For example, key stage two pupils were challenged to examine a series of images of the 'Madonna and Child' painted by artist from different cultures. They listen to each other's contributions with respect, recognising the differences and similarities between each of the portraits, supporting their awareness of global Christianity. They realise the personal vision of each of the artists, that reflects their explanation of RE 'to learn to respect the beliefs of each other and compare their practice of worship. Children have a good understanding that 'it is what is on the inside of a person that is important.' Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. This is because of learning opportunities in the rich school grounds with hens, a vegetable patch and wild garden. This is enriched by a range of outdoor adventure visits, visitors and music and drama experiences, shared with pupils from other local schools. 'Thinking Thursday' questions allow children to develop their thinking and questioning skills by sharing them at home. Pupils are very aware of and respect the diversity within the school. The on-going links with a school in Zambia, with exchanges of gifts and letters as well as staff provide pupils with a good awareness of and respect for global diversity.

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

Collective worship is a key part of the day for 'all to come together in peace'. An informative policy and effective planning underpin worship. Themes are planned over a three-year cycle of Christian values, the church year and seasons, with links to Bible stories and the core Christian values of the school. Pupils readily relate the importance of worship on their lives and their views are used to develop worship. They gain an insight into worldwide Christian celebrations and similarity with other faith celebrations, such as how other faiths celebrate harvest. Pupils experience a range of worship formats and leaders, including the vicar and members of the church community. A member from the Methodist community leads worship for younger pupils. The worship area has displays of Christian values and examples of them in action, a worship table with a candle, cross and a Bible and book of prayers. A display of artefacts and pictures shows the importance of the caring links with the school in Zambia. Worship reflects Anglican practice with a candle 'to invite God into school' and a greeting that is sometimes 'The Gloria'. Pupils are often given a thought for the day as they depart. Pupils recognise worship as a time 'to think about Jesus and be friends with God'. The development point from the previous inspection has been addressed, with greater opportunities for monitoring and pupil involvement. However, it is clear that pupils are sufficiently developed spiritually to have greater ownership and delivery of acts of worship, linked to Bible stories and everyday life. Pupils are aware of the Trinity and can talk about to God the Father and God the Son, 'who is Jesus'. However, their

understanding of God the Holy Spirit is not as well developed. Staff and pupils are engaged during worship, and recognise the benefit of a quiet time for personal reflection. Prayer is a strength of the school community, as 'a special time to talk to God'. Pupils have opportunities to write prayers on the prayer tree, and lead prayers in worship and at lunchtime. They also regularly share prayers, especially as part of Friday celebration assembly. These spontaneous prayers reflect a well-developed understanding of prayer and sharing of spiritual moments, as pupils give thanks for and recognise of the needs of members of the school, wider and global communities. There are a range of monitoring procedures, including observations by foundation governors, as part of the recently formed 'worship group' and comments written by adults and children in the worship book. Although the church is at the other end of the village it is used for festival services. Parents have begun to contribute readings to these services and extend the sense of a worshipping community.

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

The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and its distinctive Christian character. Although progress has been made, changes to staffing and governance have resulted in changes of priorities and pace. The significant teaching commitment of the headteacher has limited the time available to attend to aspects of a distinctive church school and there has been little progress. However, the recent reduction in this commitment has resulted in greater opportunities for monitoring and improving the quality of teaching and learning. The newly reconstituted governing body is aware of the distinctive Christian character of the school and the importance of RE and worship. Their understanding of its impact and implications on the whole life of the school are at an early stage. The worship group has explored links between church school evaluation, school development plan and governors action plan. However, this is currently insufficiently detailed to enable constructive challenge from governors. The headteacher's report to governors refers to the Christian ethos and worship. However, the school has rightly identified many procedures and policies need to be embedded and securely reflect the distinctive Christian character of the school. An action plan relating to the findings of the previous church school inspection has been realised. Foundation governors have a secure understanding of their role, in school, church and community. They are fully aware of the need to monitor and develop the ethos and impact of worship and have begun to do so. These are becoming embedded as part of consistent on-going monitoring. Governors share a commitment to curriculum and personal development to support improving the quality and consistency of achievement across the school. Questions relating to the Christian ethos and values as part of the interview process ensure that newly appointed staff understand and can support the continuing development of the school. The developing cycles of rigorous monitoring and emerging knowledge of governors indicate a secure capacity for development as a church school. Staff recognise the input of Christian values in creating a positive learning atmosphere where everyone respects each other and their feelings. They also recognise the support for their well-being. Parents recognise the strong links between the caring family like atmosphere of the school and the village community. They are more aware of the impact of Christian values on the life of the school and recognise opportunities to share their views and take part in informative days such as the 'Peace Day'. The school has good links with the local pre-school, other local schools and the diocese.

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