



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Bickerstaffe Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Hall Lane Bickerstaffe L39 0EH

Diocese: Liverpool

Local authority: Lancashire

Dates of inspection: 13 November 2014

Date of last inspection: 24 April 2009

School's unique reference number: 119381

Headteacher: Jeanne Hall

Inspector's name and number: Paul Adnitt (590)

School context

Bickerstaffe Church of England school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school. There are currently 75 pupils on roll. The large majority of these pupils are of White British heritage with the majority coming from an average social and economic background. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is higher than both local and national averages. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil-premium funding is lower than average.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Bickerstaffe Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The outstanding and distinctive Christian ethos permeates all aspects of school life and has an important impact on pupils' personal and spiritual development
- The quality of the school environment enhances pupils' spiritual and moral development.
- Relationships are excellent and based on Christian love and care for each individual and contribute to the pupils' outstanding behaviour.
- The partnership with the church and community is excellent. The vicar is a frequent, important and valuable member of the wider school team.
- Daily worship is excellent and vibrant and is central to the life of the school. This quality worship makes a significant impact on pupils' spiritual development.

Areas to improve

- Develop outdoor areas for reflection and prayer. This will ensure that the school's excellent spiritual growth will be enhanced and extended into the outside environment.

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

The school's distinctively Christian ethos nourishes, encourages and challenges the spiritual and cultural development of the whole community. Distinctively Christian values, such as hope, love, peace and forgiveness, are made explicit and are deeply embedded in the daily life

of the school. The staff and governors expound these core gospel values by example, evidenced by the excellent quality of relationships between all members of the school community. This, together with the emphasis on caring for others, makes an exceptional contribution to the pupils' social and moral development. All pupils feel safe and special and have positive attitudes to their learning and they know they are valued and loved by staff. The pupils are proud of their school and speak confidently about why it is special to them. One pupil commented, 'We are members of a loving school family. We all care for each other. It means a lot to me.' The distinctive Christian character of the school has a significant impact on the good academic standards and progress achieved by the end of Key Stage 2 and on the pupils' excellent personal development. Pupils are highly motivated and exhibit a love for learning. Older pupils are positive role models for their younger peers. From an early age pupils learn how to value each other and their surroundings. Parents are very positive about the Christian ethos of the school. One parent remarked, 'The school's Christian values support us in bringing up our children. It's a very inclusive school which welcomes all children.' These Christian values clearly contribute to pupils' behaviour which is outstanding. Interactive worship and religious education (RE) displays both in classrooms and central areas engage pupils and promote prayer, reflection and spirituality. They are a constant reminder that the school is a place where the Christian faith is alive and nurtured. The outside environment has not yet been developed as a place of reflection and prayer. The school's links with Compassion UK and Water Aid ensure pupils have a growing understanding and awareness of Christianity as a relevant and vibrant living faith that can have a positive effect in the world beyond the locality. Excellent and imaginative teaching in RE, which is of the highest standard, contributes well to the pupils' spiritual development. It is well planned, monitored and evaluated by the subject leader. Pupils enjoy RE and say it is important to them and the life of the school.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Outstanding collective worship is at the heart of school life and all staff and pupils participate with enthusiasm. It is inspirational, inclusive and of the highest standard. The daily act of worship enhances the pupils' knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith and Anglican tradition. Pupils show a keen awareness of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. They are confident when discussing their faith and demonstrate significant levels of spiritual maturity. 'I know when to listen to God and know that when God is looking down he knows we believe in him,' remarked one pupil. Opportunities for reflection and prayer enhance pupils' spiritual awareness. Worship is a valuable experience for everyone in the school family and makes an exceptional impact on their spiritual development. Christian values are strongly promoted in worship and are clearly understood by the pupils. They enjoy worship and speak enthusiastically about the value of worship in their lives. Pupils show respect and enjoy helping to lead elements of worship, often through the work of the school Worship Wonders team. They value these opportunities and speak with pride about their contributions. Older pupils take an increasing role in the delivery of acts of worship. They say that they would like to be more involved in planning, leading and evaluating worship regularly. Worship enables pupils to recognise their responsibilities towards others and to reflect on community and personal values. Collective worship is led by the senior leadership team and the vicar leads whole school worship with great enthusiasm on a weekly basis. He is well liked by the pupils who greatly value his contribution to the life of the school. One pupil commented, 'He is important. He teaches us new things about the Bible. He's a special person to the school.' Pupils come into the presence of God respectfully. A large cross on the wall and a worship table, candle and Bible provide a clear and positive focus. Monitoring, planning and evaluating are outstanding and include contributions from pupils, staff and governors. This has contributed significantly to the maintenance of outstanding, child centred worship.

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

The headteacher leads by example and her personal Christian values permeate the life of the

school. This is reflected in the outstanding worship and Christian distinctiveness of the school. The headteacher has a strong and clear Christian vision for the school. She is well supported in this by the senior leadership team and the governing body, who are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities. They have a total commitment to the school's Christian foundation and consistently live out the message of the Gospel. Continuing professional development of all staff and governors is a high priority within the school. This ensures that leadership of both RE and worship continues to be a strength of the school. All members of the school family make a positive and highly effective contribution to church school self-evaluation. It is used very clearly to clarify the present position of Bickerstaffe Primary School as a distinctive, ambitious and caring Anglican church school. The document clearly demonstrates further development points to enable the school to continue to grow as a vibrant Christian community. The development of the school's distinctive Christian character is a key component in the school's improvement planning. The successful school council plays an important role in involving all pupils in the growing life of the school. The Club With No Name (a Bible and worship club), open to all pupils, is an example of pupils being involved in their own spiritual development. Parents and pupils speak highly of the school. They feel that the school listens to their views and that problems are dealt with quickly and sensitively. They know that their opinions are valued. The partnerships that exist between the school, the church and the local community are excellent. This contributes fully to school life and helps pupils understand the involvement of the church in the local and wider community. It is a fully inclusive school where all are welcomed. As a result pastoral care, family values and community spirit are highly effective and celebrated. This is an outstanding Christian school with a strong tradition of working with and for the community. A parent summed the school up in these words, 'The school is an outstanding community. It is consistently living out its Christian values'.

SIAMS report November 2014 Bickerstaffe C of E Primary Bickerstaffe L39 0EH