



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

St Peter's Brafferton Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Brafferton
York
YO61 2PA

Diocese: York

Local authority: North Yorkshire
Dates of inspection: 19 March 2014
Date of last inspection: June 2009
School's unique reference number: 121606
Headteacher: Kate McEvoy
Inspector's name and number: Linda Hodson 314

School context

St Peter's Brafferton is a small, rural primary school of 67 pupils in North Yorkshire. Admission is normally open to all within the villages of Brafferton, Helperby and surrounding area. The majority of pupils come from families of White British heritage. The proportion that have special educational needs or who are eligible for pupil premium funding is below the national average. The school provides on-site before and after school care at the popular BASE club. Its grounds are currently being redeveloped following the acquisition of the school house garden.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Peter's Brafferton as a Church of England school are good.

- Pupils' behaviour is excellent and relationships between all members of the community reflect Christian values.
- The school treats each child as a unique individual and provides high quality care and support to ensure that all reach their full potential.
- Pupils are engaged by lively and engaging teaching in religious education (RE) and so make good progress in their learning.
- The local church community effectively supports the leadership of collective worship.

Areas to improve

- Undertake a review of the school's vision and values statement to ensure that the Christian vision for the school is understood and shared by all.
- Extend the opportunities for pupils to contribute their own prayers within collective worship and provide a wider range of activities to support personal prayer and reflection across the school day.
- Build on the best practice within the school to increase the proportion of outstanding teaching in RE.

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

The school has a very strong caring Christian character and is highly effective in nurturing the development of its pupils as unique individuals. Pupils thrive in the knowledge that their thoughts, ideas and beliefs are respected by everyone. Christian values permeate every aspect of school life providing a firm foundation for pupils' moral and social development. The impact is very evident in the excellent relationships that exist between all members of the school community and in the pupils' outstanding behaviour. All pupils are clear that they enjoy learning, recognising that teachers work hard to make lessons interesting and fun. They apply themselves well, both as individuals or as part of a team. However, they readily acknowledge that some things are harder to do and so they may need to show perseverance and resilience if they are to succeed. In such a climate, pupils develop a real love of learning and this results in excellent attendance. Lessons are tailored to individual needs so that virtually all make the progress needed to reach their academic targets. Standards of attainment have risen over time and are now well above the national average. Pupils' wider achievements are also highly valued and are regularly celebrated. For example, the school choir was congratulated and asked to sing for everyone, following a recent success at the Harrogate Music Festival. The level of pride shown by all present was tangible. The rich and varied curriculum, and particularly the provision for RE, reinforces understanding of the school's distinctive Christian character. A particularly good example of this is the recent creative writing project linked to Coxwold and St Peter's churches and subsequent performance of the work of Laurence Sterne, an Anglican priest and writer, at York Minster. The opportunities provided by the school to engage in high quality creative activities such as music, dance and art make an outstanding contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development. Pupils' understanding of diverse cultures is enhanced through experiential learning, well-established global links and support for charitable projects. The school has correctly identified that a natural extension of this work would be to develop pupils' awareness of the diversity of Christian practices and traditions across the world.

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

Worship is seen as an important part of the day when the school can come together and is valued for the sense of community this fosters. Individual acts of worship are well planned and executed with leaders taking particular care to create a reflective atmosphere. Pupils show thoughtfulness and respect during times of prayer or reflection and respond enthusiastically through their singing, which is of a high standard. The worship programme is firmly centred on Christian values, which are explored within the context of Bible teaching. Increasingly, pupils make connections between the stories they hear and their own words and actions. One commented "We all get on well together because we respect each other and are good at sharing. If we do something wrong we always apologise and are forgiven." Some themes inspire pupils to show their care and concern in practical ways, for example through organising a lollipop sale at break time to raise funds in support of a particular cause. The incumbent and members of the wider church community regularly contribute to the school's provision, through the use of 'Open the Book'. This provides a lively introduction to the Bible. Pupils say that they like this approach because they are often asked to take an active part in the storytelling. The celebration of major Christian festivals helps to develop an understanding of the Church year and of some Anglican traditions and practices, although there is scope to develop this further. Pupils therefore develop an understanding of the importance of Jesus Christ within the Christian faith and some awareness of the Trinity. The introduction of more formal systems for monitoring and evaluation, since the last inspection, has given pupils a greater voice. Their suggestion for more key stage worship has been acted upon and they now plan and lead some acts of worship. However, opportunities for pupils to contribute their own prayers in worship are limited. Provision for independent prayer and reflection would also be improved through a more varied approach.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good.

At St Peter's Brafferton, RE is a lively and engaging subject. Pupils are therefore able to recall their learning with enthusiasm and take pride in the work they produce. Lessons are well planned and support the development and application of key skills, within varied and interesting contexts. Knowledge and understanding is often consolidated in practical and creative ways. In the case of the youngest children this may be through role play activities, whilst older children write plays, give presentations or create dances to express an idea or belief. Opportunities for spiritual development are routinely capitalised upon. For example, following a visit to York Minster one pupil spoke of the awe he had felt when looking up at the Five Sisters window whilst another recalled his response to sitting in the crypt in candlelight. Teachers make good use of questioning to extend pupils' thinking, whilst the use of Godly Play materials encourages pupils to wonder and reflect. This ensures a good balance between learning about religion and learning from religion. Good and sometimes outstanding teaching, together with regular assessment, has a positive impact on pupils' progress. School data confirms that standards of attainment are at least in line with expectations and often higher. The school now needs to increase the proportion of outstanding teaching to raise standards still further. The RE leader has a good level of expertise, having attended training and network meetings. She monitors the subject effectively and has a clear overview of standards across the school. Following the publication of the new diocesan syllabus for RE she has updated the school's long term planning and is supporting colleagues with its implementation. Governors ensure that the RE curriculum fully complies with diocesan guidance, in terms of time allocation and content. Pupils therefore develop a secure understanding of the key aspects of Christianity and the Bible and the main practices and beliefs of other faiths and cultures studied. Their understanding of Christian values and their ability to apply them to their own lives is further strengthened through this provision.

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

The headteacher, staff and governors have ensured that St Peter's Brafferton is an inclusive learning community, with Christian values at its heart. The school, therefore, provides high levels of care for all its pupils and offers learning experiences, which help pupils to discover and foster their individual talents. The same ethos extends to the BASE club, where pupils participate in fun learning experiences such as baking or watching a falconry demonstration, within a nurturing environment. The development of this service highlights the school's strong commitment to its Christian values and to addressing a particular need within its local community. The school's distinctive Christian provision impacts positively on pupils' academic achievement and on their personal development. Well-planned support for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development ensure that pupils develop as confident, well-rounded learners who demonstrate care and concern for others and the world they live in. Parents speak highly of the school and feel that they are genuine partners in their children's education. The school enjoys good links with the local parish and the regular involvement of the worship team makes a very effective contribution to the development of the school's distinctive Christian character. Recent project work and visits to York Minster have helped to develop pupils' awareness of the diocese and of the role of the Church nationally. Governors ensure that statutory obligations are fulfilled and are proactive in seeking advice about school governance structures to ensure future sustainability. Systems for monitoring and evaluation have been improved since the last inspection. As a result, leaders have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and have appropriate plans to address identified areas for development. However, recent changes in the composition in the governing body mean that some governor training is now necessary, particularly for foundation governors. Revisiting and updating the school's vision and values statement, as part of the training, will ensure a shared understanding of the Christian vision for the school.