

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

### Market Rasen Church of England Primary School

Mill Road  
Market Rasen  
Lincolnshire  
LN8 3BL

<b>Current SIAMS inspection grade</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Lincoln</b>
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Name of federation	The North Wolds Federation
Date	17 March 2017
Date of last inspection	13 March 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Primary 120577
Executive Headteacher Head of School	Andrew Smith Nichola Allerston
Inspector's name and number	Yvonne Shaw 245

#### School context

The school is a larger than average primary school with 303 children on roll. A below average proportion of children are from minority ethnic backgrounds and/or have English as an additional language. The proportion of children identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is above national average as is the proportion eligible for the Pupil Premium payment. The school federated with Nettleton Community Primary School, which is not a Church of England primary school, in January 2013.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Market Rasen Church of England Primary School as a Church of England school are good.

- The Christian character of the school is evident in the way children behave and in their love of learning, reflecting the school's Christian values.
- Collective worship is important in the life of the school where its messages impact positively on the behaviour, attitudes and relationships of the school community although they are not always clearly linked to Bible stories.
- The consistent use of prayer in worship and other aspects of the school day enable children to develop their spirituality.
- Some monitoring and evaluation of the school as a church school has been undertaken but this has not led to the strategic development of the school and has not included the views of parents.

#### Areas to improve

- Involve the school community more widely in monitoring and evaluating the Christian distinctiveness of the school in a systematic, planned and focussed way, ensuring strategic plans precisely reflect outcomes from monitoring.
- Embed children's leadership of the school's distinctive Christian character through increasing their opportunities to plan, prepare, present and evaluate regular acts of worship.
- Improve collective worship plans to include Bible references, ensuring continuity, progression and clear links to themes whose impact is more effectively evaluated.

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

The executive headteacher, supported by the head of school, senior leaders, clergy and governors are dedicated to achieving the best possible outcomes for children both academically and spiritually. This commitment is celebrated in the school motto 'Learning Together for Life' and underpinned by the six Christian values of caring, honesty, commitment to achieve, respect, co-operation and fairness. Leaders are ensuring that new staff know this commitment and are able to contribute to it. As a result, the whole staff team work within a vision which is ensuring high quality relationships with children, parents and the wider community. However, what is less developed is the extent to which some sections of the school community articulate the school's distinctive vision and link it to the Christian ethos of this school.

The school's Christian values are modelled across the curriculum and therefore reinforced with children. Bright, focused displays and Christian signs and symbols around the school emphasise the school's distinctiveness and support the children's spiritual awareness and development well. Work undertaken during religious education weeks (RE) are displayed around the school and these too make a growing contribution towards the distinctively Christian character of the school. This includes some stunning examples of children's art work centred on faith and Christian values. Children value the reflection areas in their classrooms and say that these help them to think and pray although the quality of these areas is inconsistent.

Parents confirm that children are cared for and, if they are experiencing difficulties, are very well supported. As a result, behaviour is exemplary. Staff report that children use the values and refer to them when resolving conflict which arises from time to time on the playground. Exclusion is a last resort and there have been none in the past five years. The caring Christian environment creates a culture in which all children feel secure and supported. As a result, they are keen to attend school as shown in attendance figures which are at least in line with national averages. This commitment to the Christian values and ethos which the school holds dear is not yet explicit in policy documents such as attendance and exclusion.

The school is meeting the needs of the vast majority of children very well because both attainment and progress at the end of Y6 is in line with national averages for most and above for many. The school compares favourably with national outcomes although there are some in-school gender differences in learning. Not all children who are in receipt of the Pupil Premium Grant achieve as well as similar groups of children do nationally.

The school delivers effective teaching in RE. For example in Reception, children enjoy learning about Zacchaeus, knowing that it is a story Jesus told. In key stage one, children demonstrate their learning about The Lost Sheep knowing that it is a parable and parables are 'stories Jesus told so that people can understand how to be good'. Older children recount their learning about faiths other than Christianity. As a result of such opportunities, children are growing in their understanding of and respect for cultural and religious differences. Although children have understanding of, and empathy for faiths other than Christianity, they have yet to develop their understanding of Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith. Religious education is making an increasing contribution to children's spiritual development because they are in the process of acquiring a richer vocabulary, to think more deeply, understand differences and contemplate some of life's 'big questions'.

The school has a strong commitment to Christian stewardship, supporting a range of charities, for example, Children in Need and The Salvation Army. Children speak of the importance of showing generosity towards and compassion for those in need locally and in a world-wide context. When talking about charitable giving, children said, 'we don't give to get back,' 'giving to others helps us to understand respect and caring' and 'we start to realise that some are less fortunate than us and it makes us happy to give.' This illustrates how the school's values are being enacted and the impact they are having on children's spiritual well-being.

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

Worship is central to the life of the school, giving children and adults opportunities to share Christian values and the distinctive ethos of the school. These are then reinforced within daily school life. Children articulate that, through worship 'we talk about the values which you can see in school'. Themes are planned using the school's PSHE (personal, social, health and emotional) scheme 'Jig Saw'. There is insufficient evidence to show that there is regular, focused emphasis on the Christian dimension of these themes. Planning does not yet incorporate links to relevant Bible stories. Consequently, opportunities to strengthen the children's understanding of Jesus Christ and to use these links to guide and support leaders of acts of worship are missed. Children are developing an age appropriate understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. However, it is not clear from planning or records the extent to which worship contributes to this understanding. There are opportunities to worship in church and the incumbent leads worship in school on a weekly basis. Leaders of other local churches, including the Methodist church, also support the school in leading acts of worship thus beginning to develop in children a sense of the

ecumenical nature of Christianity.

There is a variety of approaches for acts of worship, including worship through song. The school sings well, with enthusiasm and feeling for the messages within the hymn or prayer being sung. It is a commonly held view within the community that hearing children sing during school during worship is a moving experience. These times create opportunities for children to experience awe and wonder and develop spiritually.

Children are being introduced to the rich traditions of the Anglican faith through a variety of prayer and responses. Close links with the clergy and the local church further supports this aspect of children's development. Children, staff and parents speak with enthusiasm about acts of worship held in the church and these are generally well attended. Limited space in school makes it difficult to invite parents to share worship with their children. Leaders are aware of this and are seeking ways in which to extend the opportunities for parents to attend school worship.

At the start of this academic year, a Collective Worship Council was established. This group of children, ably supported by adults, is keen to undertake leadership of collective worship. They have made a start and are beginning to evaluate some acts of worship. Children say that they would welcome greater involvement in planning, preparing, presenting and evaluating regular acts of worship. The Council have accepted responsibility for The Prayer Space. Here, any child or adult is encouraged to place their prayers and some of these are chosen for daily worship either in school or in church. Consequently the Collective Worship Council is beginning to support all children in deepening their understanding of the relevance of prayer in their own and others' lives.

Children and members of staff are comfortable in their participation in worship. Children display a strong spiritual awareness, valuing opportunities for prayer, silence and reflection time provided throughout the day. Children agreed that worship is a time to think about people who need our help. It also helps children and staff to consider the significance of Christian beliefs for themselves.

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

Leaders are committed to the development of the school's Christian distinctiveness however this is not yet explicit in key policy documents nor the website. Governors are supportive of the school's Christian character and are now working to revise the shared vision to enrich the school's development as a church school. The leadership and management are not outstanding because procedures to regularly gather robust evidence against which accurate self-evaluation can be made is not embedded in the school's overall self-evaluation cycle. Consequently this has not led to significant improvements that have challenged the school to meet the current expectations for an outstanding church school. Evaluation does not involve all members of the community, neither does it have a clear emphasis on developing strategic plans through such focussed evaluation. Parents feel that they are not asked their views on this aspect of the school's life and work. Governors have carried out monitoring and evaluation of some aspects of church school distinctiveness, for example, collective worship. This helps them understand its impact on children, its contribution to the school's Christian character and how best to support it. They recognise that this now needs to have sharper focus to enable improvement to continue across all aspects of church school distinctiveness.

All areas for development from the previous inspection have been addressed. This includes creating an area for reflection in the hall which includes a recently dedicated stained glass window which sensitively blends the red poppy of commemoration with a white daisy in memory of a pupil. The creation of this window has supported the whole school community as it comes to terms with loss.

Partnerships with parents, the church and the local community are good. The school's relationship with the nearby parish church forms a strong bond that makes a considerable impact on the life of the school. This meets a key focus for improvement from the previous inspection. Effective use of diocesan training is helping staff develop their understanding of the teaching of Christianity. However, the school is not making significant use of the opportunities available through the Diocese to equip staff for the development and future leadership of church schools.

Statutory requirements for RE and collective worship are met. The enthusiastic RE leader, who is new to the role, is working alongside the experienced collective worship leader and is well supported by the senior leadership. The school's Christian ethos is making an increasing contribution to children's understanding of how Christian values impact on their individual lives and spirituality.

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