



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

### **Killinghall Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School**

Otley Road  
Killinghall  
Harrogate HG3 2DW

**Previous SIAMS grade: Good**

**Current inspection grade: Outstanding**

**Diocese:** West Yorkshire and the Dales

Local authority: North Yorkshire

Dates of inspection: 19 May 2016

Date of last inspection: 11 January 2011

School's unique reference number: 121569

Headteacher: Sarah Bassitt

Inspector's name and number: Antoinette Drinkhill 691

#### **School context**

Killinghall Church of England School is a smaller than average rural primary and mainly serves the local village. There are 106 children on roll in 4 classes and 21 pupils in EYFS. The school is part of a collaborative cluster - HARTS (Harrogate & Rural Teaching Schools Alliance.) Attendance is above the national average. The majority of pupils are white British. The number of children in receipt of free school meals or with special educational needs is below the national average. The headteacher has been in post since 2011.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Killinghall Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding**

- The very effective and committed leadership of the headteacher and governors ensures that the school's vision is underpinned by Christian values which directly and positively impact on the daily lives and achievements of the whole school community.
- Worship is a key aspect of the school life, raising aspirations, inspiring a high level of spiritual and moral reflection and challenging learners to be accountable for their own actions and take social responsibility at a wider level.
- The Christian character and values of the school contribute well to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of learners, particularly in relation to tolerance and respect.
- The school has developed very strong partnerships with parents, other schools and the wider locality which results in clear benefits for learners, who make excellent progress and achieve well.

#### **Areas to improve**

- Provide further opportunities for the whole school community to develop a deeper understanding of the explicit Christian nature of the school's core values and enhance the children's capacity to articulate and explain their significance.
- Through collective worship, religious education [RE] and the wider curriculum, develop pupil's understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- Consolidate and embed evolving links with St. Thomas Church and its community so that children benefit more fully from the partnership and develop a deeper understanding of Anglican tradition.

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

The Christian character of Killinghall has evolved significantly over the last four years. It now underpins the ethos of the school and permeates every aspect of its life from documentation and displays through to classroom practice and learning. The school has worked hard to raise the visible profile of its Christian distinctiveness with many examples of thought provoking displays and quiet areas such as the interactive worship board, the learning lounge and reflection areas in all classrooms. When asked, children eagerly describe their school as 'special' because it is a church school. According to one foundation governor, 'children are put at the heart of all the school does'. High expectations and aspirations, supported by the school's Christian values, core drivers and a 'lively curriculum', enable the needs of all children to be met. Attendance is high and excellent academic progress is made, with all groups achieving at or above national expectations, taking into account their starting points. The school's key Christian values of respect, friendship, teamwork, compassion, passion and self-belief, honesty and truth, humility, determination and courage are particularly demonstrated in the impressive spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) of pupils. This is then translated to exemplary attitudes, behaviour and relationships. Children feel empowered and 'pupil voice' is given a high priority. They are provided with many opportunities to develop independence and resilience including the school council, the worship group, house captains, Eco and Fairtrade Committees, Safety Officers and playtime 'buddies'. Older children are very positive about the benefits of working towards the Archbishop of York's Young Leader Award. Children are described by parents as 'happy, well-motivated and engaged'. Parents agree that their children develop confidence, a strong desire to learn and a deep, sustained sense of pride in the school, which they believe is due to the Christian ethos and the unstinting care and support they are given by all staff working at the school. This was also noted during a recent visit from a retired head teacher who wrote a letter to the children describing how impressed he was by their 'impeccable behaviour and purposeful activity'. Children are able to empathise with the needs of others and are keen to help, such as raising money for a number of charities including Martin House Hospice, Sports Relief and the Nepal Earthquake Relief Fund. Global learning is well planned and the school is part of the Global Learning Partnership. This is evidenced by the school's application for the British Council International School Award. Taking into account its geographical location and community background, the school has actively sought out opportunities for children to develop their awareness of and respect for other faiths and cultures. This is particularly strengthened through links with a school in Ethiopia. Pupils understand and identify with the shared values of the Christian faith and others and diversity is embraced and discussed with children in a clear, open and sensitive way. Thoughtful and effective RE teaching also ensures that children understand and respect the beliefs of others, as well as developing understanding of their own faith. Pupil engagement, participation and enjoyment of RE and collective worship was clearly seen in the school's displays for example the 'shields of peace', Year 1/2 'Moses display' and the EYFS 'Noah display' and in the lively pupil discussion and thoughtful response to the Christian Aid collective worship.

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

Collective worship is an important part of the school day and informs the life of the school. It is rooted in Christianity, planned across weekly themes and led by staff and pupils. It follows the church's liturgical year as well as linking to other faiths and special days. Christian values are clearly represented in the weekly themes for collective worship, as are Biblical links which are reflected by the worship table and interactive worship board. Pupils agree that collective worship has a positive effect on the life of the school and confirm the results of the school's recent questionnaire that indicated pupils felt, 'happy, safe, excited, warm, sometimes sad, inspired, peaceful, calm, reflective and proud' during collective worship. Worship is varied, inspirational and inclusive, with themes that raise pupil aspirations, spiritually, intellectually and morally. Worship at Killinghall challenges all members of the school community to be responsible citizens who are accountable for their own actions. Following worship children often express a united wish to help others an example of which was on World Food Day which resulted in children asking if they could donate their tuck shop takings to Christian Aid. Motivating worship was also demonstrated on the day of inspection by pupils' lively response to the collective worship delivered on Christian Aid, which was a well-planned blend of teacher and pupil led sections, thoughtful use of a video clip and a 'pot of worms'. This demonstrated a clear impact on pupil beliefs, values and spiritual development, which children referred to later in day. Collective worship is also

supported by links with the local church and a variety of regular visitors including the Vicar, Methodist minister, Mowbray Church Youth Team and Church Army officers who lead worship in school, supporting children's understanding of Christianity. The 'Open the book' team and other visitors such as Samaritans Purse and 'Reach Beyond' also lead collective worship. The whole school attends church on a half termly basis for collective worship led by the vicar, in addition to the key times such as Christmas and Easter. Children and parents appreciate these links, which enhance the distinctiveness of the school and its role in the local community. This was particularly evident in the considerable support and high attendance of families at the 'Big Brekkie' fund raiser for Christian Aid and the number of children who take part in the choir at particular Sunday Services. Children have a comprehensive role in planning, leading, delivering and evaluating collective worship. This is considerably enhanced by the interactive worship board and key questions for the week. Prayer and reflection are integral to daily life and spiritual development of children. Prayer is seen as an important part of the school day, not only in collective worship but also in the dining room and at the end of the school day, when an individual pupil written class prayer is used. Families and friends are welcomed to well-attended 'Friday's special sharing assembly' and other theme based assemblies such as anti-bully and grandparent's day. Regular governor monitoring and pupil appraisal supports the school's evaluation of collective worship as outstanding.

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

The resilient and dedicated headteacher, in partnership with two senior teachers, has worked with insight and commitment to provide effective leadership which empowers and develops others. This leadership is supported by an effective governing body and has enabled the establishment of a culture in which everyone shares the same aim and determination to develop the Christian distinctiveness of the school to become a place where, 'everyone does the best for pupils'. The headteacher articulates and promotes a vision that is based on Christian values. This scaffolds a culture that impacts positively on pupil's personal and academic development. This is clearly shown by pupil pupils' behaviour, caring relationships and attitudes to learning. The school's Christian ethos is also noted by parents, one of whom said that they had sent their child to Killinghall because of its Christian values and was 'drawn to the school's caring, family feel'. Since the last inspection, the leadership has securely established a culture of critical self-evaluation of the school as a church school. Governors are actively involved in the school's self-evaluation to promote continuous improvement and regularly visit the school to monitor and evaluate its distinctiveness as a church school. Findings are reported back to the full Governing Body, which enables governors to hold leaders to account for the school's effectiveness as a church school. This is ably enhanced by the effective Chair of Governors. The governing body is fully committed and determined to continue to build upon the strong links between the church and the school, in order to ensure that a shared vision is cultivated. The school gives leadership development a high priority, evidenced by the senior teacher who was coached to take up a leadership role of a 'working group' set up to develop outstanding distinctiveness. The school also encourages pupil leaders, demonstrated by involvement in the Archbishop of York Youth Leaders Scheme, which enables younger children in Key Stage 2 to develop leadership qualities. The school is developing partnership links to the local church community through the use of the church for school worship, RE, attendance at special times of the year and pupil contributions to church worship. Parents speak very warmly of the impact of the school's Christian nature which is made tangible in the care and support children and families receive from all staff at the school. Parents describe the school as very inclusive, supportive and going beyond the expected. This is particularly highlighted by one parent's description of support provided by the headteacher and staff during a period of family distress. Collective worship, RE, SMSC and prayer are acknowledged as important aspects of school life and there is an emphasis on Christian values to support this. Taking into account its size, the school provides professional development for staff and governors and understands the importance of this in developing strong leadership skills and the need to develop future leaders.

The school meets the statutory requirements for collective worship.