



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

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

### North Rigton Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School

Hall Green Lane  
North Rigton  
LS17 0DW

**Previous SIAMS grade: Good**

**Current inspection grade: Outstanding**

**Diocese: West Yorkshire and the Dales**

Local authority: North Yorkshire

Dates of inspection: 10 July 2015

Date of last inspection: 16 June 2010

School's unique reference number: 121579

Headteacher: Paul Edwards

Inspector's name and number: Lorraine Hanson 769

#### School context

North Rigton is a small, rural primary school, which serves the village of North Rigton and surrounding areas. The proportion of children with learning difficulties or disabilities is below the national average. Children supported by the pupil premium funding in school is well below average. Most children are of white British heritage. The headteacher was appointed since the last inspection in September, 2011. St John's Church is walking distance from the school, though the larger Church of St Barnabas' in a neighbouring village, is also used for school services, to provide sufficient space for parents to attend.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of North Rigton Primary as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The inspirational vision and leadership of the headteacher, is ably supported by committed staff, governors and clergy to promote a shared Christian vision which permeates all areas of school life
- School life is permeated by the Christian ethos, which impacts extremely positively on children, enabling them to thrive in their personal development, behaviour and attitudes, which are outstanding
- Children progress well and achieve highly, especially in reading and in their personal development
- The Christian character of the school contributes to pupils' exceptional spiritual development
- Extremely positive and supportive relationships, founded on Christian principles, are apparent between all members of the school community

#### Areas to improve

- Deepen children's concept of the Christian understanding of the Holy Trinity through featuring this more regularly in collective worship

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

North Rigton Primary School's Christian character permeates everything and everyone in the school and is founded on distinctively Christian values, which include wisdom, service, compassion, justice and forgiveness. All members of the school community are committed to supporting and developing the distinctive Christian character of the school. Children enjoy coming to school and their attendance is extremely high. Parents remark on the happy atmosphere in school, with children running in each day. Children's behaviour is outstanding. They respond with compassion to other children and aspire to abide by the Bible quote displayed in the reflective garden, 'Do unto others as you would have done to you'. Older children show exceptional care towards younger children and new starters are warmly welcomed and come confidently into school. The Christian ethos provides a fully inclusive, safe, family environment, in which every child and adult is shown the utmost care and respect. There is emphasis in the school on the development of the 'whole' child with attention given to their personal and spiritual development which are exceptional. Awe and wonder of God's creation is prevalent through, for example, the appreciation given to the red kites which circle above the school and the joy of the butterfly garden. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very effectively promoted by the curriculum, collective worship and religious education. There is a wide range of extra-curricular clubs, including a gardening club and eco ambassadors, which promote responsibility, skills and confidence. All groups of children, including those with special needs, progress well academically and children's attainment is well above average in reading and above average in maths and writing. Meeting and talking to the children of North Rigton School is a joy and immediately gives an excellent impression of the children's caring and thoughtful attitudes towards each other. Relationships in the school are founded on the Christian values of service and compassion, and are outstanding between all members of the school community. Areas for reflection, in each classroom, where children can write their thoughts and prayers are well used by children. There is also an outside area, which provides opportunity for stillness and spiritual reflection. Bright, creative displays support the Christian ethos, including a large mosaic focused on the cross, created by children working with an artist. Compassion pervades the school, though particularly apparent through the whole school community coming together to offer support, including prayers, for a bereaved family. Children understand Christianity as a world faith, through links with Christian schools in Japan and Ghana. The school provides quality religious education and children recognise the importance of this in their lives. They can explain how Bible stories can teach them how to live their lives. In a lesson on values and tolerance, for example, children understood tolerance as a Christian value and the need to show respect for the values of others through exploring two of Jesus' parables. Governors are involved in regular monitoring and evaluation of the distinctiveness of the school, which has led to the planning and development of a larger reflective garden.

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

Collective worship makes a profound impact on children and adults and is greatly valued. All children are engaged during worship and are keen to participate. Even the younger children are confident to take part in front of the whole school, acting out the parable of 'The Wise Man'. The other children are very supportive, so all, including the child who played the foolish man, felt safe and confident. Children enjoy collective worship, they say it makes them feel calm, they are able to reflect on their feelings when happy or sad and they pray to God. Collective worship is very well planned and extends Biblical understanding and spiritual development. Themes for collective worship are based on the school's Christian values, with a half-termly focus on each one. The current Christian value is 'wisdom' and is understood by children to be about making the right choices and following what Jesus would want us to do. One child commented, 'Wisdom is about standing up for what you believe in and not being persuaded by peer pressure'. The Anglican tradition is defined through the Christian seasons, values, symbols, liturgical colours and the Lord's Prayer, which are used in worship. The use of the singing bowl signifies the beginning of worship and is a spiritual time of stillness and reflection, which children

say they value. Children sing with great joy and enthusiasm in worship. They enjoy a wide repertoire of modern and traditional worship songs. The champions of worship children display the 'top ten' worship songs in the hall each week, with 'Shine Jesus Shine', making number one during the inspection. A thought for reflection is given at the end of worship, for example to make the right choices. Children understand the value of personal prayer, which is promoted in school. The children's prayer book is treasured and encourages engagement with prayer at home. Each day a different child takes this home to write a prayer. The prayers are read out in collective worship by their authors. A focus for development from the previous inspection was to provide more opportunities for pupils to plan, lead and evaluate collective worship and this has now been achieved. The champions of worship, who with initial guidance, regularly plan and lead worship for their class and key stage 1 children. The champions of worship promote and evaluate collective worship and have developed skills and confidence through this. A rich experience of worship is offered through a range of leaders, which include staff, clergy and representatives from the Methodist tradition. A variety of settings for worship add to this experience and regularly include whole school and class worship in school or in the school grounds. School services are held at key Christian festivals and for the year 6 leavers' service at St John's Church or St Barnabas' Church. These services are appreciated by parents who attend in high numbers. An annual whole school walk to Almscliffe Crag is greatly enhanced by worship at the top of the crag, which was led, most recently, by the rector on the subject of the Beatitudes. Children are aware of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, though the Christian understanding of this is not yet deep rooted.

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

The leadership of the headteacher is inspirational and his vision for the school is ably and whole heartedly supported by staff, governors and clergy. Together they promote a shared Christian vision which permeates all areas of school life. A parent referring to the school leaders and staff said, 'They put the heart and soul into this school'. The Christian values, on which the school ethos is based, were selected by governors, the rector, staff and children. They include compassion, service, wisdom and justice and are displayed in classrooms and regularly referred to. These Christian values impact on the lives of children and the whole life of the school and are evident in the excellent relationship across the school. The school curriculum is informed by the Christian vision with opportunities for spiritual development across the curriculum, enabling children to develop exceptional spirituality. The Christian character of the school contributes to children's outstanding behaviour, attitudes and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Children nominate other children to be included on the 'friendship tree' and a yellow ribbon is awarded weekly for good attitudes. Many opportunities are provided for children to take responsibility, grow in confidence and support the school or wider community. Year 5 children involved in the Archbishop of York's Trust chose a project of tidying up the area around the village cenotaph. Parents, local churches and community contribute fully to school life. There are strong links with the church and parents say the school draws the community together. School leaders have a thorough understanding of the school's performance and distinctiveness, based on effective self-evaluation. The Christian ethos and values are principal drivers for school improvement, with reviews leading directly to effective strategies, which are always focused on meeting the needs of children. As a result children progress well and achieve highly, especially in reading and in their personal development. The links with other schools, Christians in other countries and people from other faiths foster children's understanding of local, national and global communities. School leaders and governors benefit from diocesan and other training and this together with partnerships with other schools, has led to the school's Christian leadership being widened, which successfully addresses a development point from the previous inspection. Parents speak extremely highly of the school. One parent commented, 'It's like sending your children off to be with family for the day'. Leadership of collective worship and religious education are given high priority and are very effective.