



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Baildon Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Coverdale Way
Baildon
Shipley
BD17 6TE

Diocese: West Yorkshire and the Dales

Local authority: Bradford
Dates of inspection: 20 October 2014
Date of last inspection: June 2010
School's unique reference number: 107337
Headteacher: Mrs Mary Connor
Inspector's name and number: Mrs Ruth Packwood 524

School context

Baildon Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, is a popular school, which is highly regarded in the local community, and has 456 children on roll. The school was once able to admit pupils from a wide area, but, as it is now over-subscribed, priority is given to children from the immediate neighbourhood of the school in line with the school's admissions policy. Few children are eligible for free school meals. The majority of children have English as their first language. The school has a good reputation for inclusion, and whilst a low percentage of children have special educational needs, some of those children require wide-ranging additional support to enable them to access learning. Since the previous inspection the Head teacher has retired and the current Head teacher took up her post in September 2013. The Deputy Head teacher moved to a promoted post in September 2014. The vicar of St John's retired in May 2014 and a new incumbent has yet to be appointed.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Baildon as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The mission statement and clear Christian values which are made explicit to all, underpin everything that happens at Baildon Church School.
- The effective provision that is put in place to meet the needs of each child as an individual ensures that all children make at least good progress and reach high standards.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of each child is nurtured through collective worship and the innovative approach to the teaching of Religious Education [RE]
- The outstanding leadership of the Head teacher and governors and the strong supportive relationships within school which drive forward continuous improvement.

Areas to improve

- In view of the changing profile of the school community, strengthen the delivery of the teaching on major world faiths and incorporate more visits and visitors so that children are not just learning about, but learning from people of other faiths.

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

Everyone in school is focused on providing the best possible outcomes for the children in a context where Christian values are deeply embedded in the daily life of the school. The mission statement, which was recently revised by the governors and the Head teacher, is prominently displayed in the school entrance and in classrooms. It is referred to regularly during collective worship. This is evident in the excellent relationships in school and in the high standard of behaviour. These values motivate staff and governors and their effect is noticed by parents and the children. Parents speak of the school being like no other they have been in. They value the welcoming and inclusive nature of the school and the genuine care shown to children and their families by all staff. Parents are impressed that their children love coming to school, settle in well and make good progress. Children feel safe and happy, and in this secure environment where expectations are high, they flourish. They are enthusiastic about school. They like their teachers and know that their teachers work hard to make their learning interesting and fun. They think that people treat each other well because of the school's Christian values. One child explained, 'It makes us think, which is different from other schools.' High quality display throughout the school values the contributions that children make and RE displays are vibrant and stimulate children's interest. The way in which the RE curriculum is delivered and the use of skills learned from Philosophy for Children [P4C] is having a major impact on the spiritual development of the children. There is an expectation that everyone will contribute to discussions and many now have the confidence to express their ideas and beliefs. They have a developing understanding of how they can justify their views and are learning that, given similar evidence, people may arrive at different conclusions. Their moral, social and cultural development is fostered through a range of visits, visitors, thought provoking questions, teaching and discussion. Children show respect for others who are from different faith communities and can discuss differences and similarities in their perspectives on faith issues.

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

Collective worship is central to the life of the school. The overall plan for the term's worship is outlined by the Head teacher, who leads this area. The theme that is introduced on Monday is followed up on Friday and is usually based on the liturgical year. Other themes in the week link are linked to the Christian value or cover world themes or festivals. The Head teacher has worked closely with staff to ensure that worship is inspirational and inclusive. Each half term focuses on a different Christian value. Following Harvest Thanksgiving, which was celebrated just before I visited the school, children talked confidently about how it was linked to the Christian value of 'Generosity'. Donated items of food were distributed through the church to asylum seekers. Collective worship is linked to the seasons of the Church's year and to Christian festivals. Cloths in liturgical colours cover a table at the front of the hall, and a candle is lit as a focus. The worship has a clear structure. Children enter the hall quietly and respectfully, listening to live or recorded music. They respond to a 'gathering' prayer. They sing well and listen attentively to the story or reading which regularly includes Biblical material and Christian teaching. Reflection times and prayers offer the opportunity for personal response. There is a formal 'sending' which, on Mondays includes something to be taken back to the classroom, to be reflected on during the week. The collective worship planned and delivered by Year 6 on Black History Month celebrated the achievements of some high profile black people. Children acted out a story about pleasing God by the way we act towards others and each class was sent away with a reflection, 'Think about treating other people how you would like to be treated, no matter how different they are.' Prayer Corners in each classroom are attractive spaces which offer opportunities for children to write prayers, request prayer, be thankful or to reflect quietly. Stones and other artefacts give children the opportunity to hold something while they pray. These areas appear to be valued and well used. Governors are very well informed about what happens in collective worship in School and join in with it from time to time. Collective worship is monitored and evaluated at regular

intervals and the outcomes are discussed with staff and governors. A recent development in school is the establishment of an RE Council. This group of children, who meet regularly with the Head teacher, are enthusiastic about their role in developing collective worship in school. The well-structured worship based on clear themes, with suggestions for stories or other resources has had a positive effect on all members of staff who now readily take turns to lead worship in school. Visitors in school from different Christian traditions also lead worship, and worship takes place in church during the school year. These gatherings are well attended by parents. Preparation for children who would like to participate in the Eucharist take place in school led by parishioners.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

The enthusiasm of the children and staff when talking about RE is exceptional. Learners are inspired by the subject and talk about it freely with one another. A number of parents also commented how children readily discuss issues of faith, religion and spirituality at home. The retirement of the two specialist RE teachers encouraged the staff to rethink the school's approach to RE, a subject many of them had never taught. The radical change was planned and introduced in a systematic way. Elements were tried by some teachers and the outcomes were evaluated and amended where necessary. All teachers were involved in reviewing the planning, based on the agreed syllabus and tailored to the specific needs of the school. Training, support and resources were readily available. Teachers are encouraged to feedback on a half-termly basis, and the evidence is that they are growing ever more confident in this area of their teaching. All delivery of RE is now based on exploring well thought-out questions in a structured way. The most significant change is in the recording of RE. Each class uses a Big Book to which everyone contributes. The impact of this new approach is significant. This is evidenced by the eagerness of staff to teach and of children to learn in RE lessons. The recording of children's responses and their use in the Big Books is a good source of evidence for the level of children's understanding of RE and the extent to which they are responding to it. There is clear evidence that skills of enquiry, analysis and reflection are being developed. Children say that they like the fact that RE is much more about discussion than about writing. Assessment is still being refined but data clearly shows that children make good progress in RE and this is not dissimilar to progress in other core subjects. Teaching observed was good with children engaged and responsive and obviously thinking about what they were discussing. The Big Books are regularly referred to by children and are a useful resource. The new subject leader is accessing the training she feels she needs. Her priority is to strengthen to delivery of the teaching on major world faiths and to incorporate more visits and visitors so that children are not just learning about, but learning from people of other faiths.

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

In accordance with the Mission Statement, the Head teacher and governors are constantly looking at ways in which they can improve the outcomes for learners within a distinctive Christian school. They are not complacent about their outstanding achievement in the past. Governors spend time together focussing on the needs of the school and access training to support their own development. Recent training on monitoring and evaluation has given them the practical skills to be very effective in their role. They are fully involved in the school's self-evaluation, know the school well and are committed to its further development. The clear focus of the leadership and management since the appointment of the new Head teacher has been on the further development of the school as a church school. This is embedded in development planning and in appraisal. The priority given to both collective worship and RE has had a significant impact on the school as a church school. Staff, parents and children all talk about the Christian values in the school and the positive impact that these have on everyone. This distinctive Christian vision has informed the development of the new curriculum within school. Links with the parish church and the local community are strong and mutually beneficial.