



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

### St James' Church Primary School

Chelwood Drive, Allerton,  
Bradford, West Yorkshire.  
BD15 7YD

**Previous SIAS grade:** Good

**Current inspection grade:** Satisfactory

**Diocese:**

Local authority: Bradford

Dates of inspection: 6<sup>th</sup> July 2016

Date of last inspection: 6<sup>th</sup> December 2010

School's unique reference number: 107304

Interim Headteacher: Eileen Bleasdale

Inspector's name and number: Angela Knowles 497

### School context

St James' Church School is a larger than average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is much higher than the national average. The proportion of children with special educational needs is above the national average. The school serves an ethnically and religiously diverse community with the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups increasing since the last inspection. Around a quarter of these children speak English as an additional language. An Ofsted inspection was carried out on 13<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> April 2016 where school was judged as inadequate with the Early Years provision being judged as Good. An interim headteacher and deputy headteacher began working in the school two days before this Ofsted inspection.

### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St James' Church Primary School as a Church of England school are satisfactory

- **The interim headteacher's clear focus on Christian values which underpin all school improvement decisions shared by the leadership team and governors**
- **The staff team who have embraced and share the direction and priorities of the leadership team demonstrated by their dedication and resolve to improve**
- **The well-ordered and resourced learning environment which consistently reinforces the school's Christian values**

### Areas to improve

- **The long term plan for worship to be revised, to reflect not only Christian values but the Christian traditions and practices and the impact of worship on the whole school community to be evaluated**
- **The further development of the school as a learning community by involving more parents and the wider community in school activities and for them to contribute to the development of the schools' Christian ethos and vision**

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

The Christian foundation of St James' Church School is evident as soon as you enter the school. The reception area ensures this by informative displays focusing on Christian values of the school including the school's regular charitable giving. This focus is then reflected throughout school. In the main hall, where school meets together for worship, a large display reinforces the Christian values and many pupils have made contributions by writing reflective thoughts and prayers. The leadership of the school and its staff have a clear Christian vision which has been reflected in the rewritten school mission statement and statement of aims which were reviewed and re-affirmed in May 2016. The values of tolerance, care, concern and self-respect are highlighted as priorities to be developed within a happy, safe and secure environment. The head teacher's commitment to these values has begun to have positive effects around school. The management of the behaviour of pupils is recognised by all stakeholders, including the children, and is recognised as improving significantly. There have been exclusions in the last few months but the decisions around these actions have not been taken lightly and demonstrate Christian love and concern for the best outcomes for all. The children spoken to said that although quite a few children still find it hard to follow the expectations they feel much safer and can learn. During the inspection no disruptive behaviour was observed although a number of children were struggling to engage with the learning. This was managed effectively by the staff and had no impact on the other children. Attendance and lateness are showing signs of improvement, two classes having achieved 98% attendance last week, and these remain a priority. Along with improved attendance and behaviour the recently introduced creative curriculum, PSHCE and RE are now key to raising aspirations and achievement of all in school. This terms tracking of progress and SATs results show movement towards, and sometimes exceeding, aspirational targets set to raise attainment. The work scrutiny clearly showed the heightening of expectations in the last few months resulting in the children producing work of a higher quality. Children were proud of their recent achievements. The whole school is excited about the forthcoming production of Joseph and his Technicolour Dreamcoat. The whole school is involved and it is hoped not only to inspire and encourage the children to work together but also to build upon the developing links between parents, the wider community and the school. A recent sponsored event was very well supported and raised £2,500, as are the preparations for the Summer Fair for which a number of parents were busy making items in school during the inspection. The parents spoken to felt valued and increasingly involved in the school but said they wanted to reach out to more parents. School has begun a rapid period of improvement, with a refocused curriculum based upon Christian values and enhanced by a wide range of exciting extra-curricular activities, which school intends to sustain and develop further.

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

Worship plays a central role in school life, whether it takes place in the hall for whole school worship or in the more intimate context of the classroom. The school has placed the emphasis on worship recently rather than assemblies. The school would like to use the church building more for worship and as a resource but the physical distance makes it a complicated and costly venture. Children do recognise St James' as 'their' church and school are holding a summer fair to raise money so that the whole school can be transported by bus to the Christmas tree festival in December. Everyone spoke about a recent act of worship which was held in the school grounds on Ascension day. Prayers and helium balloons from each class were dispatched to heaven creating a very thought provoking and emotional time. The children spoke of its significance and of the Holy Spirit and the link to God the Father and God the Son. Whilst recognising the different religious backgrounds represented in school, the Bible and the teachings of Jesus Christ underpin the worship in school. The inspection took place on Eid al-fitr and so most children from the Muslim faith were absent. These children would normally be part of the worship time. Children said how much they missed them and knew about what and how they were celebrating. The existing long term plan followed for worship has been based on

Christian values but the headteacher and worship lead have developed this to include the church's year and to give more emphasis to celebration, reflection and prayer. The school has formed a worship committee with membership drawn from any interested person. The group are enthusiastic, dedicated and play a developing role in the planning, preparation and delivery of acts of worship. Their next step is to be involved in the evaluation of worship. During the act of worship observed the children had written prayers. They also supported the time for reflection by using and encouraging others to link prayers together using stones which were then placed together as a focus for all. Children came into worship quietly and respectfully and quickly engaged in the singing. As a result of the many and varied elements to the act of worship, the children remained focused throughout and responded well to the vicar's questions and the shared liturgy and prayers. There are areas in each class where children can focus and reflect. The school also has plans to create and make available areas outside the classroom where children can have the opportunity to be quiet, to think and pray. Everyone recognises that worship is helping to bring the school together and build relationships with each other as well as with God.

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

The interim headteacher has a clear Christian vision for St James'. Her vision is the backbone which supports the many things that need to be done to improve the school. All stakeholders say this shared vision is effectively moving the school forward. In a short period of time she has refocused the school around its Christian values, PSHCE and the importance of a wide, exciting creative curriculum. Early signs indicate that this is raising achievement and attainment alongside raising aspirations for the whole school community. The Christian leadership of the interim headteacher of the school is supported effectively by an interim deputy headteacher. They have achieved much in a relatively short period of time. The staff valued individual interviews with them which have, they feel, contributed to the team capturing and moving the vision forward together. All seemed challenged but excited about the future. Staff members commented that "Behaviour is managed consistently" and "School is a happier place." Governors are actively involved in the life of the school; they are well informed and access relevant training. The chair of governors has recently completed the "Christian Governor" training programme at Liverpool Hope University as well as other diocesan training. They have developed their role to review and challenge. The Worship and RE leaders have clear plans for reflecting the changes in the style and content of worship within the long term planning of the school and the evaluation of its impact. Links with the church are developing supported by the incumbent and the school's accessibility to parents and the wider community is seen as a priority. The children have real opportunities for leadership responsibilities through school council and the worship committee which they value. The school meets statutory requirements for RE and collective worship.

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