

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Fylingdales Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Thorpe Lane,
Fylingthorpe,
Whitby,
YO22 4TH

Diocese: York

Local authority: North Yorkshire

Date of inspection: 10 July 2009

Date of last inspection: 2 May 2006

School's unique reference number: 121528

Headteacher: Mrs L. Jones

Inspector's name and number: Mr J.W. Bradley NS129

School context

Fylingdales school has 54 pupils on roll and serves the villages of Fylingthorpe and Robin Hood's Bay on the North Yorkshire coast. Pupil numbers are currently rising as an increasing number of parents from further afield are choosing the school for their children, both as a result of its good reputation and its distinctive Christian ethos. All the pupils are white British. The parish is currently in interregnum.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Fylingdales Primary as a Church of England school are good

The ethos of this school, so clearly based upon the Christian values of love and nurture for all, result in Fylingdales being at the heart of its community. Links with a wide range of churches and involvement in community activities make pupils very aware that they are cared for within a Christian setting. They know that a wide range of people are there to encourage them to give of their best and to want the best for them. Academic standards are high, as are pupils' personal development and behaviour.

Established strengths

- The relationships, based upon Christian principles, so evident in this very happy school.
- The understanding shown by staff, governors and clergy of the benefits of church school distinctiveness for every pupil.
- The amount of clergy assistance in the planning and delivery of collective worship.

Focus for development

- The whole governing body to evaluate their church school distinctiveness and the impact of collective worship.
- Strategies to be formulated for helping pupils understand the place of their church and school within the setting of the national and international church family.

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

The sound Christian ethos in the school has a positive impact upon all pupils. Parents, governors, the local community and a very supportive number of clergy from different Christian churches in the area all work well together in demonstrating to pupils that theirs is a church school and that help is always at hand. Staff, led by a headteacher with a clear vision

for the school, actively support the Christian aspects of the school's work for its pupils. Prayer is an important part of everyday life and pupils' Fylingdales School Prayers', prominently displayed, are evidence of both their appreciation of their school and how their thoughts should be directed towards the needs of others. Pupils are very involved in charitable giving, including recipients and this teaches them in very practical ways to understand how they can help those less fortunate. The school is described as 'a shining example of a church school' by a very supportive member of the clergy who is a regular visitor. This opinion is enthusiastically supported by parents who say 'the school is one big family' and that 'the Christian nurture offered to my child has certainly affected her progress in many positive ways'. This is a happy school where pupils say 'the school helps us to share our feelings' and 'we know to respect others' beliefs'. Outstanding examples can be observed of relationships between pupils, where the older ones take real care of those much younger, including playtime games organisation. Standards of achievement are high, due to good or better teaching and a Christian atmosphere in which pupils feel supported and constantly encouraged.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

The annually reviewed collective worship policy is very clear in describing how fundamental acts of worship are in this school. Planning by the 'Circle of Friends' demonstrates this in practice. This group, consisting of staff, a foundation governor and a large number of clergy from different Christian churches meet regularly to decide upon both a rota for visiting speakers and overall themes. Pupils are beginning to become more involved in the planning process in response to a recommendation made in the previous Section 48 report. As a result of weekly contributions from many clergy pupils are made very well aware of differing styles of worship and aspects of their Anglican heritage. This includes prayers and responses, a close following of the church's year and the regular services held in church demonstrate to pupils how church buildings are used. The atmosphere during worship is that of a large family being together and a sense of enjoyment is very evident, as heard in their enthusiastic singing to the visiting speaker's banjo! Staff attend most acts of worship to ensure a sense of community. The worship table sometimes includes a candle combined with cloths of the appropriate liturgical colour and this adds to pupil awareness of the use of reflection as part of their worship. Monitoring of the content and impact is currently undertaken by the headteacher and a foundation governor and plans are in place to increase the scope of this important function to include pupils and governors in general. Worship is clearly linked to the Christian ethos of the school and has a very beneficial affect upon the spiritual, moral, social and cultural education of the pupils.

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

A collegiate style of leadership and management are the reason for this school's increasing success. A new vision statement formulated by staff and governors, with contributions from pupils and parents, has led to a clear view of how the school should function in catering for both the academic and social needs of every pupil, set within a clear Christian context. Meaningful links with the church and wider parish include consultation with the Parochial Church Council and regular items in the local magazine. Participation in numerous local events provides pupils with the opportunity to feel very much part of a close-knit and supportive community. Pupils are continually urged to look outward and planning is now in progress to teach them how their school and church are part of a national and international church family. Monitoring and evaluation of church school distinctiveness and its impact upon pupils is currently undertaken by a foundation governor and not by the whole governing body. This is recognised as an area for development. The ecumenical nature of the clergy support for this school is extremely beneficial in developing a sense of Christian inclusivity for pupils and is indicative of the regard in which the headteacher is held within the community. Support for this school is willingly given from a variety of sources. The regard in which Fylingdales School is held is clearly due to the Christian atmosphere, combined with the will and determination to build upon what is already a very sound foundation. The school is now very well placed to make further progress.