



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Bishop Monkton Voluntary Controlled Church of England Primary School

St John's Road
Bishop Monkton
Harrogate
HG3 3QW

Diocese: West Yorkshire and The Dales

Local authority: North Yorkshire

Dates of inspection: 17th June 2014

Date of last inspection: March 2009

School's unique reference number: 121551

Headteacher: Mrs Sally Cowling

Inspector's name and number: Doug Masterton 483

School context

Bishop Monkton School has 101 children on roll and serves a village near Ripon. All pupils are White British and the proportion eligible for the pupil premium or having special educational needs or disabilities is below average. The school is situated a short distance from the parish church. At the time of the inspection there was an interregnum but a new priest is shortly to begin work in the parish.

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

- Bishop Monkton is a vibrant and inclusive church school truly inspired by Christian values and driven by the highly dedicated and professional commitment of its staff.
- Children achieve well and their conduct strongly exemplifies the Christian values they have learned.
- Inspired activities ensure that school collective worship is memorable and thought provoking. It contributes directly to the high spiritual maturity of the children and their respectful attitudes to belief.
- There is strong and resilient church school leadership at every level in the school.

Areas to improve

- Grow the creative contribution of children to their collective worship including planning, leading and taking charge.
- Extend the role of members of the church community, especially the newly appointed priest, in planning and contributing to collective worship and give children the opportunity to see services of Baptism and Holy Communion.

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

Bishop Monkton School has a tangible and vibrant Christian character. It is fully inclusive and its work ensures that all children and staff will grow and succeed. Explicit Christian values underpin its purpose and provision. Children's achievement was graded 'good' in a 2013 OFSTED inspection. Standards since then have continued to rise and children's progress is very secure. The curriculum is rich and permeated with the teaching of Christian values. A different value is the focus of work each month and is planned into collective worship and teaching through appropriate subjects. For example the virtue 'courage' was used when children recently looked at the history of D Day and took part in an act of remembrance. Children understand and can explain such Christian values as respect, compassion and resilience and recount the way they have met these ideas in school. There are many and varied enrichment activities including residential experience and foreign trips that actively promote children's personal development. School leaders take careful steps to help children to look beyond the rural White British milieu of their school. A well-established link has led to joint learning activities undertaken with children from a multi-ethnic inner-Leeds school, for example when the children from both School Councils worked together on how to prevent bullying and promote friendship. Contact with their peers from Leeds informs children's learning of the other faiths they meet in their religious education (RE) and through visits to faith centres of worship. School relationships at every level are characterised by respect, hard work, friendship, trust, excellent behaviour, openness to ideas and respect for different views. This leads to an excellent climate for learning and character building. At Bishop Monkton children grow to become extremely polite and patient, they help and encourage each other, are confident to express views and embrace new ideas. Indeed they are very willing to confront big questions and older children are able to debate them with each other often without the need for adult intervention and always showing respect for each other's views and beliefs. Children develop very high standards of spiritual maturity. Parents notice especially the way that their children of different ages work together and care for each other. RE makes a powerful contribution to their school experience. It is taught by specialist teachers in lessons and also across aspects of the curriculum by class teachers using the diocesan and local approved syllabus. All teachers are also confidently able to support the RE programme.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Daily collective worship is a key feature of the school. It is central to the life and work of all children and adults. It profoundly engages everyone, including parents and builds many connections to the local churches, (both Anglican and Methodist) and to a local Pentecostal Church community. Collective worship is led by the head teacher and members of staff with considerable practical and expressive input from children acting as worship leaders. Planning is strategic with considerable Christian content and theological depth. It is steered by the scheduled promotion of each of the school Christian values, and the church calendar with detailed ideas for each day. This is a totally shared responsibility in which all staff members are confident to contribute. Topics have included the forgiveness of sins through the Easter sacrifice, and Ascension and also include topical issues such as prayers linked to the current Middle East conflict in Syria. Governors actively monitor collective worship but currently there is no input from them or personnel from the parish church to planning or provision. To mitigate the effect of the interregnum, school leaders have welcomed the pastor and members of the local Pentecostal Church to contribute to the programme and this input has been greatly enriching. Collective worship incorporates music, singing, prayer, responses, drama and dance. Collective worship linked to Trinity Sunday used the analogy of the three parts of an egg and children's dance representing the freedom and confidence of the Holy Spirit as well as song and prayer to create a highly memorable occasion to which children could relate. Reflection and prayer is used extensively to build spirituality. Children write prayers frequently and spontaneously as a response to circumstances and situations they have met. Their spirituality is evident in their thoughtful response to difficult ideas such as those of poverty, illness and recent grief and also in the way they become motivated to work for charities such as collecting clothing to alleviate poverty in Eastern Europe and to promote Fair Trade. Collective worship also takes place regularly in the local church which is very popular with parents who also come into school each Friday. Very special acts of collective worship are held in Ripon cathedral. Care in

planning, informed by frequent evaluations, not least from children themselves, shows that collective worship at Bishop Monkton is the key embodiment of the Christian nature of the school and highly influential in building children's character. Children have not yet fully developed their role in planning and leading collective worship nor have they yet been to see services of Baptism or Holy Communion in St John's church.

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

Respect, the foundation value of the school, is well presented on the school web site and in the prospectus. In addition the school promotes explicitly the full range of Christian values including those of honesty, generosity, wisdom, forgiveness, resilience, courage and trust, which are systematically planned into school life and work. They drive an ambition for academic achievement and for spiritual development enabling all adults and children to contribute their talents to promote the learning and well-being of each other. School development planning and self-evaluation is very secure. Children's views and opinions are used extensively. Christian distinctiveness is seen as the driver for improvement in learning and underpins strategic planning. Senior leaders expect all members of the school community to flourish (not simply the children) and this is looked for at every level through monitoring of progress and reviews of performance. There is a powerful climate of professional development among all staff. Needs are identified, training offered, findings shared and development underpinned by staff learning from each other. The head teacher uses her peers from other schools to help improve her performance. The net result is a staff team whose members individually all identify with the aims of the school and apply their talents as fully as possible thus achieving excellent provision and outcomes. The highly effective work of the head teacher has created shared leadership and a collegiate responsibility in which the children are an integral part. This effective development of church-school leadership gives the school very strong resilience. Partnership with the parish church and Methodist chapel is strong and the work of all institutions has become interdependent. Children participate regularly in church worship and the choir leader helps with school music. The school readily acts as the focus for community activities, and responds to local need such as offering clubs outside school hours and during the holidays. The Methodist 'Messy Church' takes place in school. This community profile is bringing more people to worship in church especially at Easter. Links to the Pentecostal Church made during the interregnum ensured an input to school collective worship from an active Christian community. A new clergy appointment at St John's Church will give the opportunity for the Anglican community to contribute more to collective worship and further enrich the experience. Parents hold the school in high esteem recognising the individual teaching, support and care that their children receive. Their views are sought on every issue relating to church school effectiveness, being used extensively to shape provision. Religious education and collective worship meet statutory requirements.

SIAMS report June 2014 Bishop Monkton Church of England VA Primary School, Harrogate, HG3 3QW