



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Shankhill Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Hethersgill, Carlisle, Cumbria CA6 6JA

Previous inspection grade: Satisfactory

Diocese: Carlisle

Local authority: Cumbria

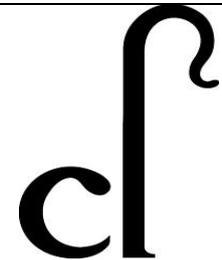
Date of inspection: 13 March 2015

Date of last inspection: 24 February 2010

School's unique reference number: 112259

Headteacher: Lynnsey Batey

Inspector's name and number: Ruth Wall NS 548



Diocese of Carlisle
Growing Disciples

School context

The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school with 43 children on roll. The large majority of pupils come from surrounding rural communities. The school population is diverse with a mix of professional and farming families. The proportion of pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities is above the national average. The proportion eligible for pupil premium is below the national average. There have been significant changes in leadership and governance, since the previous inspection. The headteacher was appointed in January 2014.

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

- The headteacher, governors and staff are committed to providing an inclusive education, based on Christian values, which underpin the excellent relationships between all members of the school community.
- Children's broad learning experiences contribute very effectively to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The strong links with the parish church and the Northern Inter-school's Christian Union (NISCU) impact positively on pupils and promote the Christian character of the school.

Areas to improve

- To develop, with the whole-school community, the mission statement/ aims and the website to further promote and celebrate the distinctive Christian character of the school.
- To ensure that effective use is made of training opportunities for the development of all governors to support the leadership of the school as a church school.

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

Children speak with clarity and conviction of the Christian values they have learnt about and that are important for their lives. Commenting on these values one child said, 'They are all around us because we are like a family who look after each other'. Parents appreciate the focus on Christian values and say they have a positive effect on behaviour at home. Teachers regularly acknowledge and celebrate children's efforts and achievements. In consequence, their behaviour and attitude to learning are excellent. The school's Christian character results in a secure and caring environment where children progress well and achievement is good. The broad and rich curriculum contributes effectively to the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school demonstrates that it is both distinctive in its Christian character and inclusive in its approach to diversity. All members of the school community know that they are valued and the ethos of trust and respect is clearly evident. One parent spoke of the 'outstanding care and thoughtfulness' given by teachers and the vicar, which had enabled her child to settle into school so well. Children are encouraged to show concern for others as part of the school's Christian service and they often initiate fundraising events. Children are made aware that Christianity is a global world faith through a range of activities. These include a focus on 'Christianity around the world' in the highly successful religious education (RE) week of activities in collaboration with other church schools. Schemes of work enable learners to explore Christianity and other cultures, beliefs and practices very effectively. Children speak articulately about the similarities and differences between world faiths. Displays and areas for reflection in classrooms and around the school emphasise the school's Christian distinctiveness very well.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Children and their teachers enjoy collective worship. It makes a good contribution to children's spiritual and moral development through the opportunities it provides for them to reflect on Christian values. Children welcome the use of drama and role play and say, 'It helps us remember and is better than just being told'. They are enthusiastic about regular opportunities they have to plan and lead worship. 'Two stars and a wish' ensure that the evaluations children give to each other are positive but highlight the next step needed for improvement. The close partnership with the parish church enriches worship. Children say of the vicar, 'He takes it slowly so we can understand'. The associate vicar they say is, 'Fun and energetic'. The NISCU representative is a regular and welcome visitor to the school, supporting the RE programme and leading worship. She says that 'children at Shankhill always engage well and show real inquisitiveness and interest'. Special services, on occasions such as harvest and Christmas, take place in the church and are well attended by parents. They appreciate that all children play an active part. Monitoring and evaluation procedures have led to effective school improvement. For example, whole-school worship has been moved to an earlier time. Because of this younger children have time to explore the current theme with their class teacher at an age appropriate level. Worship enables children to develop an understanding of the qualities of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit through the themes and stories included in the planning cycle. The quality of the singing is very good and, together with time for prayer and reflection, provides a rich experience of worship. Recent developments in many aspects of collective worship now need time to become embedded. Children know formal prayers and respond enthusiastically by contributing their own personal prayers. One child explained, 'we can pray anywhere, anytime'.

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

The headteacher's Christian vision is supported by the school community and lived out in action. Her colleagues say that she gives clear direction whilst promoting a strong team spirit.

She has inspired changes which are recognised by all members of the school community and reflected in the school's good self-evaluation process. Church school issues are clearly identified and prioritised in whole-school planning. The headteacher has benefitted from support from the diocese and links with other church schools leaders. Training has been arranged for teachers in church school leadership which demonstrates a commitment to investing in future development. Governors provide practical support and use their various skills to very good effect. They are involved in monitoring collective worship and RE through observations and discussions with teachers and children. They have not taken up diocesan training to keep them informed of new guidelines and procedures. The whole school community have recently been involved in a review of the mission statement and aims. Although the collaboration was beneficial in starting the process of bringing together various view points, the result does not reflect, or make explicit, the outstanding Christian ethos evident in the school and in newly revised policies. Children take their responsibilities seriously and are proud of the contribution they make to decision making through the school council. Links with the Anglican Church and NISCU are highly effective in enhancing the spiritual dimension within school. Leaders and governors are successful in ensuring that the academic needs of the children are met. They recognise the importance of the school's Christian character in creating an ethos which supports effective learning. There is a high level of pastoral care for both children and their families in this close knit community. In the words of one child, 'You'll like it here, it's like a family'.

SIAMS report, March 2015, Shankhill Primary School, Hethersgill, Carlisle CA6 6JA