



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

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

### Sand Hutton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Sand Hutton  
York  
YO41 1LB

**Previous SIAMS grade: Outstanding**

**Current inspection grade: Outstanding**

**Diocese: York**

Local authority: North Yorkshire

Dates of inspection: 6th November 2015

Date of last inspection: 16<sup>th</sup> November 2010

School's unique reference number: 121513

Headteacher: Mrs. Janet Wardell

Inspector's name and number: Linda Dixon - Quality Assurance Rosemary Privett 321

#### School context

Sand Hutton is a smaller than average primary school serving a large catchment area comprising eight nearby villages. The 81 children come from a range of white British backgrounds and are arranged in three mixed age classes. 11% of the children receive additional provision to succeed in their learning. The school has been federated with Warthill VC Primary School since April 2013. There is now one headteacher and one governing body across both of the schools. A new Vicar took up his post in 2013.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Sand Hutton as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The Christian values which are deeply embedded into school life and across all its work.
- Inspirational leadership from the headteacher, supported by committed staff and governors who secure excellent outcomes for all children including the most vulnerable.
- Excellent relationships in this Christian community built on love, care, respect and responsibility.
- Strong and supportive links between the school, the church and the community which enable the school's distinctive character to grow.

#### Areas to improve

- Enable children to have greater ownership of the planning and leading of collective worship to gain additional interest and to assist their understanding of the current themes.
- Develop evaluation of collective worship so that parents, governors and children have more occasions to contribute to its ongoing development.

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

Distinctive Christian values are made explicit and are deeply embedded in this fully inclusive school. A Biblical passage from 1 Corinthians 13 is now an integral part of the mission statement and its message permeates all aspects of the life of the school. As a result, the values of love, care, respect and responsibility are at the heart of the positive relationships. These are a tremendous strength of the school. Consequently, all children feel loved, respected and valued in this safe, secure Christian school community. This creates an extremely positive climate for learning so that all children achieve at least their expected levels of attainment and many beyond. School life is enjoyed by the children and as a consequence attendance is excellent. The progress of vulnerable children in terms of academic achievement and behaviour is a testimony to the high quality teaching, pastoral care and Christian nurture given to all. Children make the links between the school's values and their biblical roots. A Key Stage 2 child explained how the message of the parable of the two houses was like their values. 'The school values give us firm foundations for life and learning'. Older children pride themselves on being good role models for younger children by showing patience and perseverance. They say that any disputes are resolved. This is achieved through a clear behaviour code fostering forgiveness, apology and reconciliation. One child commented that, 'we treat others as we wish to be treated ourselves'. Parents are particularly moved by the issues, questions and prayers that children bring home. One parent recalled her child retelling the Good Samaritan and explaining its Biblical meaning. A rich and diverse curriculum throughout the school strongly supports spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and greatly enhances the school's distinctive character. It is deeply rooted in Christian values. An example of this is a creative arts day which allows children and parents to explore the values of the school in a practical way. Christian signs and symbols made on the day now greatly enhance the school environment. The school also makes very effective use of its external environment. The outdoor classroom and wildlife areas are sometimes used for worship. They also provide children with a backdrop against which they regularly explore and reflect on God's world. These wide ranging experiences support and develop children's spirituality across the curriculum. Initiatives such as a whole school global project, challenge and increase children's understanding and respect for diverse communities. Children in upper Key Stage 2 have joined with children from Warthill to attend 'religious education in action days'. Here Bible stories, drama, dance, art, music and creative crafts enable children to reflect deeply upon global issues and how they can help. This has led to fundraising for Water Aid, UNICEF and Arlight for the Homeless. Through these activities children experience the values of service and compassion. A well-planned programme of visits to places of worship inspires children and enriches RE teaching. As a result, they are further developing an understanding of diversity and difference. Children recognise the importance of RE and collective worship and the place they have in a church school.

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

Collective worship is central to the school day and impacts positively on school life. Staff and children value it and see it as supporting the school's mission, 'to be the best we can be'. Prayer, Bible stories, liturgical actions, symbolism, and the cycle of the church year are planned into individual acts of worship. They develop in children an understanding of the Anglican faith and practice. These distinctly Christian acts of worship are led by staff and clergy with some pupil involvement in drama and readings. The result of this is that children are developing a good understanding of the life of Jesus, His parables and miracles and the relevance of these in their everyday life. They are also developing an understanding of the Trinity, recognising that it is like a triangular structure in building. They feel that the Holy Trinity provides strength supporting everyone on a daily basis. Children say that quiet music at the beginning of worship, 'gives us time to prepare and reflect'. In this way it supports their spiritual development. Through worship, children understand the importance of prayer and readily engage in

opportunities to do so. They value the prayer jar and use it to offer personal prayers of thanks. Large tree displays in the hall also enable children to share wishes and prayers for the world. Prayers extend beyond the daily act of worship through to daily prayers at the start of the day and at lunchtime. These are seen as part of their own spiritual journey. Parents regularly attend sharing assemblies which celebrate achievements, good behaviour and the spiritual and moral development of children. They recognise and celebrate how Christian values have influenced the children's daily lives. These celebrations are also attended by the parish priest and an Anglican Sister, both of whom regularly lead worship in the school. Church festivals such as Harvest, Christmas and Easter, are held in a variety of settings and churches in the benefice. They are well attended and valued by children, staff, parents and the local community. Children lead some of the special services in the churches. Through these events children have a good understanding of the cycle of the church year and the meaning behind Christian festivals. They also assist in acts of worship in school linked to fundraising like the Candlelighters Cancer Care. However, there are only limited opportunities for children to plan and lead acts of worship.

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

The strong and insightful leadership of the headteacher ensures that this school promotes a distinctive vision rooted in Christian values. Expectations for the best possible education and wellbeing for all within a Christian environment are passionately expressed. Through its nurturing ethos, leaders ensure that this is a highly effective school, which promotes children's spiritual development and high academic achievement. Staff, children, governors and parents share this view. Governors, undertake regular visits as part of their strategic role and are well informed about the school. They provide both challenge and support to the headteacher. In response to the area for development from the last inspection, evaluation of the school as a church school has been invigorated since the federation with Warthill. Senior leaders, including the governing body have reviewed their strategic role supported by the diocesan advisor. They now undertake learning walks around school. As a result of this, the visual environment has been enhanced to better reflect its distinctive character. Regular reports on monitoring are shared with the full governing body, ensuring that all governors are informed about new initiatives. However, governors require a more integrated approach to monitoring collective worship. Foundation governors offer pastoral care which greatly benefits the whole school community. RE and collective worship meet statutory requirements. This strong leadership ensures that collective worship, RE, and the curriculum are underpinned by distinctive Christian values. These have an impact on behaviour, attitudes and the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the children. The headteacher is committed to the professional development of all staff as part of planning for the future leadership of the school as a church school. An example of this is seen in the support the RE leader has given to a newly qualified teacher. The school's Christian character is evident in the interview process requiring staff to uphold the school's values by acting as good role models. Parents hold the head and staff in high regard and see them as excellent role models for their children. Further strengths of the school are its partnership with the parish and its community links. Older children attend services at the war memorial and in St Mary's Church to remember soldiers in both world wars. English Heritage and members of the local community are also present. These shared activities support the schools' distinctive Christian character and enable its vision to be shared and widely understood.

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