



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Rothwell Church of England Primary Academy

Queensway
Rothwell
Leeds LS26 0NB

Previous SIAS grade: not applicable

Current inspection grade: Good

Diocese: West Yorkshire and the Dales

Local authority: Leeds

Dates of inspection: 20 June 2016

Date of last inspection: not applicable

School's unique reference number: 140399

Headteacher: Darren Foulke

Inspector's name and number: Nigel Castledine (652)

School context

Rothwell Church of England Primary Academy is the successor to the former Church of England school. It serves a mixed suburb of Leeds which includes some areas of deprivation. Over a quarter of pupils are considered to be disadvantaged. A high proportion of the children are from White British families. Smaller than average in size, the academy opened in April 2014. Since then many staffing changes have occurred, including a new leadership team and principal. There is also a new governing board. Pupil progress is good, and the academy is driving forward the raising of children's levels of attainment to meet national expectations.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Rothwell CofE Primary Academy as a Church of England school are good

- Strong and pervasive Christian values underpin all aspects of school life and development
- Effective leadership has ensured that the determined drive for the best academic standards for every child is raising levels of attainment throughout the academy
- The committed work of the pastoral team in removing barriers to learning demonstrates the great value placed on every pupil, as a child of God.
- Positive, caring relationships, demonstrated by the staff and supported by the school's distinctive Christian ethos, ensure that all treat one another with mutual respect and kindness

Areas to improve

- Include suitable occasions within collective worship that will enable more children to take appropriate responsibility for all aspects of its planning and delivery
- Increase the opportunities within both the curriculum and collective worship that will develop and enrich the children's understanding of Christianity as a diverse global faith
- Involve staff, parents and the children in ongoing, regular evaluation of worship to ensure the views and suggestions of all stakeholders enrich its planning and development

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

The academy has strong Christian values at its heart. Its key aims are presented as the academy's core Christian values: to serve, to learn, to challenge and to love. A wider range of gospel values are also focused on. The children explain that understanding these values helps them to develop and show Christian attitudes in their own lives. The Biblical context of each Christian value is clearly established so children know they are following Jesus' teaching in their daily lives. Christian values also help children to develop self-esteem and a strong sense of right and wrong. This influences the ways in which all are respected and supported. As a result, relationships between children and staff are mutually respectful and positive. Thoughtful behaviour from the children and aspiring attitudes to learning are the norm. A parent commented on Christian values used at home. 'After a disagreement with a friend I was so proud that my child sorted things out. He explained to his friend that he knew that forgiveness would help this to happen.' Because the children enjoy engaging educational experiences and enrichment activities, they want to be in class. This is reflected in the above-average attendance levels. Learning mentors support those families who find regular attendance difficult. The few incidents of bullying are swiftly and effectively dealt with by a strong, helpful stance from staff. The academy's caring nurture combines the Christian values of service and challenge to enable good academic progress. A Year 5 girl commented 'Teachers don't just help me learn, they help me with any problems I have'. End of Key Stage 2 attainment is below national expectations, due to underachievement in past years. However, good pupil progress has accelerated because of the quality of teaching. The children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural (SMSC) development is well supported by religious education (RE), collective worship and Christian values. Children's awareness of other cultures and world faiths has been extended by participation in Leeds Citizens, which highlights social concern and injustice. However the children's understanding of Christianity as a major multi-cultural global faith is limited. Christian values encourage children to show Christian service to others, and to fund-raise for local, national and international charities such as Race for Life.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship is an inspirational part of every academy day. The themes of worship are strongly influenced by the academy's chosen Christian values and enriched by high-quality RE teaching. The worship themes develop the children's understanding of gospel values through use of Biblical accounts of Jesus' teachings and their relevance to daily life. These inform the consideration of Christian responses to spiritual and moral issues. Great importance is placed on prayer and reflection. Children are remarkably confident in their use of prayer, and many feel able to share personal spontaneous prayers as part of worship. Those children not ready to pray independently show great respect to those that are. Other opportunities for prayer are available in the quiet areas around the academy, and each classroom has a spiritual reflection area. Worship planning ensures that the children experience Anglican traditional liturgy and the observance of the festivals and seasons of the Christian year. A focal point of academy worship is the worship table. This is covered with an appropriate cloth to represent the particular liturgical colour of each church season. Children have an age-appropriate understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. They are reminded of this doctrine when the cross, Bible and candles are placed on the worship table and they sing enthusiastically their special Trinity song. The children who form the academy's church council help to lead and develop daily worship. This group has grown in confidence to now being able to plan and deliver worship without adult assistance. However the majority of children, whilst regularly involved, do not plan and lead worship independently. Although worship is evaluated by the governors, the views of other stakeholders are not considered as part of the worship planning process. The parish clergy of Holy Trinity church support the life and worship of the school. The children regularly worship in the parish church at festivals and the start and end of each term. This enables the children and a growing number of families to be an integral part of the church's worshipping community.

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

Inspired by the insistent dedication of the principal, senior leaders and governors have reinvigorated and harnessed the academy's Christian ethos. Through the application of the academy's over-arching Christian value of loving care, children's attitudes and learning behaviours have become aspirational and enthusiastic. The academy's pastoral care and nurture for every child ensures that all are enabled to strive for their optimum educational attainment. This Christian vision underpins the academy's determined drive to raise academic standards to the highest levels. The governing board and senior leaders carry out regular comprehensive reviews of pupil progress and attainment data. They also use external consultants to ensure their focus on improvement is providing the right challenge that progresses all pupils towards attaining national expectations. A strong partnership with Holy Trinity church ensures that the Christian vision and ethos of the academy is strongly linked to shared worship and prayer. Involvement with the diocese has resulted in support and advice from the education team whilst the Year 6 pupils take part in the annual leavers' service in Ripon Cathedral. The academy has also benefitted from pastoral visits by the diocesan bishops. Because the academy recognises the importance of the children's learning in RE, it has become an integral part of the wider extended curriculum. This is augmented by discrete RE lessons that ensure children are well-informed about Christianity and a range of other global faiths. Children speak of their enjoyment of RE. This learning is enriched in many practical ways such as visits to contrasting places of worship of other faiths as well as the local Christian churches. Parents strongly support the positive changes that the academy's reinvigorated Christian ethos and values have brought about. One parent, commenting on the academy's open-door policy, said 'Someone always has time for you and will help'. The loving Christian nurture that their children receive and the ongoing emphasis on the highest educational standards are much praised by parents.

SIAMS report June 2016 Rothwell CofE Primary Academy LS26 0NB