

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Jarrow Cross Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Barrow Road, Jarrow, NE32 5UW	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese	Newcastle
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Local authority	South Tyneside
Date/s of inspection	24 November 2016
Date of last inspection	20 September 2011
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Controlled Primary School 133680
Headteacher	Susan McBeth
Inspector's name and number	Richard Goodman 889

School context

Jarrow Cross is a voluntary controlled Church of England primary school for 5-11 years olds. The current headteacher took up post in 2013 and a new deputy headteacher was appointed in January 2014. The school was inspected by Ofsted in January 2016 and was graded as continuing to be good. The number of pupils on roll has steadily increased over the past 4 years and is currently at 291. The school serves a community where the level of social and economic deprivation is higher than the national average. The percentages of pupils who are in receipt of free school meals and have a special educational need are also above national averages. The number of ethnic minority pupils is well below the national average.

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

- The headteacher passionately articulates and lives out the school's Christian vision which impacts on the wellbeing of the whole school community.
- This is a loving school where both staff and pupils understand the distinctive Christian values and put these into action on a daily basis.
- Opportunities for prayer and reflection significantly contribute to pupils' spiritual development.

Areas to improve

- Implement a process for governors to regularly hold the headteacher to account in ensuring the effectiveness and distinctiveness of the school as a church school.
- Establish a formal system to monitor and evaluate the impact that collective worship has on the lives of the whole school community in order to drive and sustain improvements.

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

The school is characterised by a loving, family atmosphere where Christian values are clearly lived out by the entire school community. Pupils and staff have a clear understanding of the school's Christian values (trust, forgiveness, honesty and friendship) and can articulate how they impact on their lives. The school leadership understands the link between pupils' emotional wellbeing and their academic achievement. Significant time and effort has been invested in helping the most vulnerable learners, particularly through close, supportive work with

families. As a result attendance has improved and pupils feel safe and secure in school, ready and eager to learn. This is a practical manifestation of the Christian vision, 'value in everyone', being put into practice. Staff invest time and effort into classroom displays resulting in exciting learning environments. Pupils' work and achievements are proudly displayed around the school further emphasising the value placed on all pupils. The behaviour and relationships of pupils are impressive and of a high standard. Pupils speak of how collective worship and religious education (RE) help them to learn about the school's Christian values of trust, forgiveness, honesty and friendship. Pupils talk of how they are encouraged to put the Christian values into action and to consider how they should treat others. Respect is evident across the school; pupils are kind and courteous to one another, and to staff and visitors.

Collective worship, RE and the wider school curriculum provide significant opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development. Events such as anti-bullying week allow pupils to actively engage with Bible teachings and consider how they should then treat others. RE and collective worship also contribute to pupils' understanding of and respect for diverse communities. The recent inter-faith week enhanced pupils' understanding of different faiths and cultures. Pupils speak of how they are encouraged to celebrate diversity and to show respect to all people. School leadership has correctly identified that further action is needed in providing pupils with first-hand experience of diverse communities. The school's Christian values are clearly linked into the RE curriculum. As a result, pupils develop a good understanding of Christianity and can speak about Bible teachings with confidence.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Great value is placed on the importance of collective worship at both a whole-school and class-based level. All staff see the value of collective worship, resulting in a clear impact on pupils' lives, especially with regards to behaviour and relationships. Pupils are engaged by collective worship and talk with enthusiasm about what they learn. Pupils speak of the opportunities collective worship gives them to understand the Christian values and how they should then act towards other people. Kindness cards are awarded by all staff to pupils who model Christian values during the school day. Celebration assemblies are then used to recognise those pupils who have put Christian values into action. Parents see the impact collective worship has on their children. Parents speak of how their children discuss the school's Christian values at home, questioning other people's behaviour whilst watching the news.

The headteacher is responsible for collective worship across the school. She has planned a programme that engages pupils in developing their understanding of the school's Christian values. Christian festivals such as Christmas, Easter, and Harvest are celebrated throughout the year. This means that learners are familiar with the main features of the Church's calendar and helps in developing pupils' understanding of Anglican traditions. Time is also given for making pupils aware of the festivals of other faiths and reflecting on their practices. There are impressive opportunities for prayer and reflection, significantly contributing to pupils' spiritual development. Pupils are given reflection time at the end of each day to consider the meaning of the Christian values to their own lives. Pupils are encouraged to pray during collective worship. This is aided through the lighting of and focus on a candle at the front of the school hall. Pupils speak of the real benefit prayer brings, allowing them to reflect and then act upon personal issues and thoughts.

Bible stories and teachings are used regularly within collective worship to support pupils' understanding of the school's Christian values. Consequently, pupils have developed a solid understanding of the teachings of Jesus Christ and of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Pupils speak with interest of Bible stories they have engaged with, including the Parable of the Good Samaritan, and how this teaches them to act towards others.

A wide range of staff, pupils, local clergy and visitors deliver collective worship, providing the school community with a rich diet of worship styles. The headteacher recognises the importance of establishing a formal system to evaluate the impact worship has on the lives of the school community. She understands that this can then be used to drive and sustain improvements.

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

An obvious 'loving leadership' emanates from the headteacher; she passionately lives out the school's Christian vision of seeing 'value in everyone'. This has impacted on all staff resulting in them too living out the vision and ensuring that all pupils are given opportunities to reach their full potential. Staff believe that if their practice is not good enough for their own children, it is not good enough for the school's pupils.

School leaders have a good understanding of pupils' achievement and progress; they were visibly upset at the disappointing 2016 Key Stage 2 outcomes. However, accurate and commendable self-evaluation has led to improvement strategies that are clearly linked to the areas in need of development. Noticeable impact is already being seen with regards to the areas of reading and maths.

Governors have an understanding of the school's Christian vision and values, with Christian distinctiveness being a standing item at each governor meeting. However, they are less clear on the impact the vision and values have on pupils. The headteacher drives much of the process of self-evaluation. Formal systems for governors to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the school as a church school are not sufficiently robust to sustain improvements. Staff are involved in a range of professional development opportunities which positively impact on their practice. The headteacher has identified key staff with future leadership potential of church schools. These members of staff feel empowered and have been handed extra responsibilities resulting in improved practice across the school.

Mutually beneficial links exist between the school and the local church. Enthusiastic clergy regularly come into school to lead or take part in worship and to run activities with the children. Joint initiatives such as the 'Holy Trail' help to deepen pupils' understanding of Christianity. Pupils regularly visit the local church and engage in services and community-based activities such as Remembrance commemorations and Jarrow March celebrations. This all has a clear benefit for pupils, particularly in developing their understanding of the local community. A strong and impressive partnership has been created with parents. An understanding has developed from parents that teachers and support staff take time for their children, care about them and treat them as individuals.

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