



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Ulceby St Nicholas Church of England Primary School

Church Lane
Ulceby
North Lincolnshire
DN39 6TB

Previous SIAMS grade: Outstanding

Current inspection grade: Outstanding

Diocese: Lincoln

Local authority: N/A

Date of inspection: 24 June 2015

Date of last inspection: June 2010

School's unique reference number: 118024

Headteacher: Chris Smith

Inspector's name and number: Anne Platt 807

School context

Ulceby St Nicholas Church of England Primary School is a smaller than average sized school, with 111 children on roll. Almost all the pupils come from a White British background. The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is below the national average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is in line with the national average. Ulceby St Nicholas converted to an academy under the Lincoln Anglican Academy Trust in 2014. The school was awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark in July 2014. The local church community is currently in an interregnum.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Ulceby St Nicholas as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The renewed focus on the distinctive Christian ethos of the school is at the heart of all strategic decisions and is driving school improvement.
- The inclusive and personalised approach to learning rooted in the Christian values of respect and responsibility. This ensures that every pupil has high aspirations and fulfils their potential.
- Christian values underpin the school, define its work and are evident in every aspect of its operation.
- The strong sense of community ensures that pupils and their families are supported and nurtured.

Areas to improve

- Ensure all children have an understanding of Christianity as a multicultural global faith.
- Develop learners understanding of the value of personal prayer and reflection as part of their own spiritual journey.
- Ensure the classroom learning environments reflect the distinctive Christian character of the school.

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

Ulceby St Nicholas is an improved school where pupils' achievements are rising rapidly. The inspiring and committed leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher supported by the Academy Trust are key to its success. Together, they promote a strong Christian vision and all stakeholders are supportive of this. Parents greatly value the emphasis on pupils' personal development and wellbeing with one commenting, 'at this school children are not just a fact and a figure but an individual who is nurtured.' Success in both these areas is rooted in the school's Christian character and its core values. These have a strong impact on pupils' attitudes to learning because they prompt them to think carefully about how they work with others and to persevere with challenging tasks. The distinctive Christian values are made explicit through displays around the school and through direct links with the school's behaviour policy. As a result of this, they also have a very positive impact on the behaviour of pupils which is exemplary and on relationships at all levels. However, the distinctive Christian character of the school is not reflected in classroom learning environments. Pupils clearly enjoy religious education (RE) in which they show good knowledge of Christianity as well as respecting other faith traditions, such as Judaism and Sikhism. An interfaith week was enjoyed by all pupils and deepened their understanding of other faith communities. Older pupils experienced a visit to a mosque where their respectful behaviour was noted by the Imam. Pupils value 'learning about God and what people believe', which nurtures their spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development. Pupils can relate Bible stories to their own experiences. One pupil made links between how Jesus calmed the storm as an inspiration to calm himself when feeling stressed. However, pupils' understanding of Christianity as a multicultural global faith is underdeveloped. In this welcoming community pupils are happy to come to school. It is a place where exemplary relationships are nurtured. There is a very strong sense of living in a Christian community in which church and school links are very important. Strong support from local Methodist and Anglican churches has enabled the school's Christian character to grow and develop. As a result, children are proud of their school and talk confidently about why it is special to them. Pupils understand the importance of giving to charitable projects such as the Jorim Children's Home in India, through which they experience the Christian values of compassion and responsibility. Curriculum themed activities, school visits, the local community and links with a Romanian school together enrich the curriculum and provide for high quality learning experiences. These activities strongly support pupils' excellent SMSC development.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship has been a focus of development since the last inspection. This has led to outstanding improvement, where worship is regarded as central and at the heart of the school. One visiting minister commented, 'a sense of stillness has grown. Calm is at the heart of worship.' Pupils are enthusiastic participants, singing well and demonstrating reverent responses. Worship has been enhanced by the contributions of live music and the development of a choir. The strong impact of worship is sustained throughout the school day with children keen to share their experience with others. Worship is an extension of the school's core purpose which is highly focused on achievement. This, underpinned by a foundation of Christian values ensures children believe in themselves. Through worship and the prayers that are said during the day, pupils develop an understanding of the nature and purpose of prayer. Pupils readily write prayers for collective worship and these are used regularly as part of the daily service. One pupil commented, 'I like prayers. They are a time to reflect on the good.' However, not all pupils utilise personal prayer and reflection as part of their individual spiritual development. Bible stories are a regular part of worship and stories focusing on the life of Jesus, are central to the planning. This together with the emphasis on prayer is enabling pupils to develop an understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Pupils enjoy worship led by a variety of visitors including representatives from Methodist and Anglican traditions and the Bishop's visitor. The school use the parish church for celebrating

major Christian festivals. The choir, conducted by pupils, have performed there at family services. Pupils see the experience of worship in church as special. One pupil said, 'it's more sacred and holy in church.' This mutual support is valued by the community and has maintained links with St Nicholas Church during the period of the interregnum. Pupils, staff and governors take an active role in leading, monitoring and evaluating worship. This had led to improvements in relation to the structure of worship and how children conduct themselves in the worship space.

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

The inspirational leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher, supported by the Academy Trust, ensure that this school promotes a vision rooted in distinctively Christian values. Through their nurturing ethos they make certain this is a highly effective school which promotes pupils' spiritual development and improving academic achievement. All staff are valued and are role models for high expectations in care and respect for pupils and each other. This then leads to a school where everyone is valued and made to feel special. The staff team is underpinned by a group of supportive governors who firmly believe in the value of their team. Children feel safe and secure as a result of an evolving environment that is well led and managed by a committed Christian staff. Values of friendship, trust and respect are evident and nurtured by all. The school's self-evaluation is honest and accurate. The areas of development have been carefully identified, and the issues from the previous inspection have led to outstanding developments in collective worship. Governors, in particular the chair, play an effective role in monitoring the effectiveness of the school as a church school. The leadership of collective worship and RE is effectively led by the headteacher and deputy. Strong RE teaching ensures that all pupils, regardless of their starting points or their beliefs, are enriched spiritually, morally, socially and culturally. Collective worship plays a pivotal part in the life of the school. Pupils regularly lead collect worship through which they are empowered to develop spiritually. The arrangements for RE and collective worship meet statutory requirements. The involvement of a range of Christian churches, their clergy and parishioners in the life of the school is highly effective. This adds considerable capacity to the Christian character, worship and pastoral support of the pupils and staff. This and the support of the Academy Trust have ensured substantial benefit for the school community. The newly designed school banner is a testament to this collaborative working. It reflects pupil's ideas communicated by skilled needlework into a celebration of St Nicholas as a church school. Preparation for future Christian leadership is taken seriously, and is addressed through teamwork and participation in training provided by the school staff and diocesan advisors. This has resulted in a strengthening of the school's distinctive character, particularly its values, which is experienced, recognised and understood by the school community.

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