



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

### Caistor Church of England and Methodist Primary School

South Dale  
Caistor  
Market Rasen  
Lincolnshire  
LN7 6LY

#### Diocese: Lincoln

Local authority: Lincolnshire  
Date of inspection: 26 June 2013  
Date of last inspection: 15 January 2009  
School's unique reference number: 120590  
Headteacher: Mrs Zoe Hyams  
Inspector's name and number: Mrs Lizzie McWhirter MA 244

#### School context

Caistor Church of England and Methodist Primary school serves the town of Caistor and the surrounding area. Currently there are 274 pupils on roll who are mainly from a White British background. The headteacher has been in post since January 2010. The parish church of St Peter and St Paul and the Methodist Chapel are both within walking distance of the school.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Caistor as a Church of England and Methodist school are good

At the heart of Caistor Church of England and Methodist Primary School is its motto, 'we care, we share, we learn together'. The effectiveness of this vision in relation to the learning outcomes for pupils is very good. Supportive links with the churches in Caistor also help to prepare pupils for adult life. As a result, pupils are confident, have strong self esteem, and are encouraged to achieve their full potential, within a nurturing Christian community.

#### Established strengths

- The strong sense of a welcoming family Christian community, enhanced by close links with the local churches and the school's Anglican and Methodist heritage.
- The experiences offered to pupils in collective worship and religious education [RE], nurturing their spiritual development.
- The positive attitude of the pupils who become confident learners and are encouraged to achieve their best.

#### Focus for development

- Enhance the evaluation of collective worship, involving both pupils and governors.
- Establish a forum for clergy and pupils to explore ultimate questions together.

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

Caistor Church of England and Methodist Primary School provides an excellent learning environment where pupils are proud to belong, feel valued and achieve highly. Data shows that all pupils are making good to outstanding progress, with many Year 5 pupils making five or six points of progress this year. Systematic half termly tracking of pupil progress by senior leaders as part of the school's teaching and learning review ensures pupils are effectively challenged and very positive learning outcomes are maintained. Attendance is good. Exclusions are rare, and are handled by experienced staff in a spirit of trust and calm, with the support of parents and clergy. As a result, any such pupils show a desire to take on responsibilities, such as looking after the chickens or building an eco-greenhouse, resulting in improved attainment. An excellent example of this came from one pupil acknowledging, 'all you need to do is follow the Buddhist Eightfold Path'. In addition to academic learning, achievement has a greater breadth. Very positive learning experiences take place, such as the annual camping weekend as well as residential visits which enhance pupils' self esteem and confidence, supporting their personal development. Parents value 'how much this primary school prepares them as members of the community, equipping them for life'. Parents also speak highly of pupils' opportunity to play a variety of instruments and take part in concerts which 'accelerates their confidence'. Within this cohesive family, pupils 'flourish, are accepted and celebrated' and feel able to make a positive contribution, both in and out of school. The British Under 11 water skiing and Irish dancing champions are both pupils here. Some pupils aspire to be teachers, doctors or musicians because they are inspired by the role models they encounter at school. Bright, prominent displays around school together with reflection spaces in classrooms greatly enhance pupils' spiritual development. Such areas invite pupils' questions to God and honour prayer and Jesus' teaching in The Bible. Pupils' appreciation of religious diversity and global awareness is developed through links with a church primary school in Scunthorpe, fellow Hindu and Muslim pupils as well as international school links with Morocco. Pupils say they enjoy RE and 'learning about other religions and what they represent'. An excellent example was the re-enactment of Hajj in the upper playground. They demonstrate good theological literacy and are able to explain Christian concepts such as covenant as 'making a promise to God' and incarnation as, 'God becoming a human by sending himself as Jesus to show everyone how to live life'. The school grounds, which include the tiled garden, outdoor stage, woods, chicken run and raised beds all enhance pupils' spirituality, their awareness of God's creation and their place in it.

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

The attitude of pupils to collective worship is good because the quality of worship offered to them is making a real difference in their lives, contributing greatly to their spiritual development. Prayerful and meaningful worship takes place, with a focus on The Bible and hymn singing, true to the school's Anglican and Methodist roots. An excellent example is a focus on inspiring great lives, such as Nelson Mandela whom pupils acknowledge as 'good with forgiveness' reflecting that, 'when he came out of prison after 27 years he was greeting you all with democracy, peace and freedom'. He inspires them to 'stick at what we believe in', always trying to succeed. Pupils are clear that Caistor is a church school where 'we have time to pray and come together for worship'. There is great support from the vicar of the parish church as well as the Methodist minister who are regular and welcome visitors to school, leading worship on alternate Mondays. Pupils say they learn from Bible stories such as The Good Samaritan 'to do what they think is right' and are encouraged to 'help others in need, even if they are not your friend'. They cite The Lost Sheep, saying 'we all matter, and it makes a world of difference for that one'. Prayer is important in the life of this school which together with Jesus' teaching in The Bible, enables pupils to grow in their understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. In addition to Jesus' teaching in The Bible, Methodism was born in song and here pupils value singing inspiring words in hymns from around the world, enabling them to 'love others like sisters and brothers'. Key festivals are celebrated in church, such as Christingle and Wesley Day which pupils enjoy as 'whenever we go, it lifts our spirits'. Year 3 and Year 6 pupils experience worship at Lincoln Cathedral, thus supporting their understanding of what it means to be part of The Anglican Communion. Pupils value worship outdoors. Pupils enjoy planning and leading worship. This includes leadership by the Year 5 and 6 worship team, student council or classes on a fortnightly basis. Currently, pupil views are gathered through surveys, showing how the school has

progressed since the last inspection. As a direct result of Pupil Voice, the school ran a series on The Lord's Prayer to support pupils' understanding. Pupils' prayers are celebrated and shared in The School Prayer Book. Pupils welcome writing down their thoughts about worship to share with governors. In all these ways, worship is constantly enhancing pupils' spiritual development.

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

The school's Christian foundation is effectively promoted by the headteacher, clergy, governors and staff so the school's joint Church of England and Methodist foundation is celebrated and secured. Governors monitor and evaluate progression. Integral to the work of the governing body is feedback from curriculum visits. Foundation governors as well as the school's Bishop's Visitor are active and involved in school life. Foundation governors monitor worship and RE systematically, which feeds directly into termly governing body meetings. RE is effectively led and managed by the assistant headteacher whose innovative action plan comprises annual projects. This year's task was for pupils to design and make altar cloths, which included one on friendship. Christian values such as respect, reverence, service and responsibility are integral to RE and a creative curriculum which enhance pupils' well-being and personal development. Since the last inspection and subsequent diocesan support visit, the new altar, made by a local craftsman, provides a focal point for worship. Daily collective worship supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils have a voice through the student council, which is led by the vicar and assistant headteacher, commenting on policies and making decisions about the school's chosen charities. This demonstrates how the school has progressed since the last inspection. Some pupils had the opportunity to present their learning about Methodism and John Wesley to the Methodist Circuit meeting. Both Anglican and Methodist clergy serve on the governing body and welcome the opportunity to engage with ultimate questions on a deeper level with pupils. The school has identified areas for development. These include training for staff and governors on integrating values into the long term worship plan as well as training on philosophy for children [P4C]. Governors value support from the diocese for new staff and governors to enhance a better understanding of church schools 'through helpful discussion connected to the teaching of Jesus'. Parents are consulted and say they feel very well supported by the school. They also praise the way their children 'are supported in their learning'.

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