

National Society Statutory Inspection of Methodist and Anglican Schools Report

Trinity Church of England/Methodist Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Kiln Lane
Skelmersdale
Lancashire
WN8 8PW

Diocese: Liverpool

Methodist District: Liverpool

Local authority: Lancashire

Date of inspection: 1st July, 2011

Dates of last inspection: 15th January, 2008

School's unique reference number: 119406

Headteacher: Mr Richard Kershaw

Inspector's name and number: Mr. Frank Driessen 675

School context

Trinity Church of England/Methodist School is a larger than average school in Skelmersdale. It draws pupils from a variety of social backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is slightly lower than the national average whilst the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is slightly lower than that normally seen. The school has achieved the Lancashire and National Healthy School Awards, Active Mark and Green Flag status.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Trinity School as a Church of England and Methodist school are outstanding

Pupils are secure and happy in a vibrant, caring and welcoming environment where Christian values underpin all aspects of school life. The desire to acknowledge and celebrate the presence of God has created an ethos which gives spiritual depth to the whole being of the school. It is a school that ensures every child knows the love of God personally and is able to share that love in the community.

Established strengths

- Care and support based on the love and understanding of each child as a unique individual
- The excellent quality of relationships between staff, parents and school that makes Trinity a secure and happy Christian family where everyone feels valued
- The strong Christian leadership and commitment of the head teacher who is very well supported by a talented and committed staff and governing body
- The very strong Christian ethos of the school which helps to raise the self esteem of children and staff

Focus for development

- Revisit the Church/School Partnership award to affirm the strong progress made since the previous submission
- Give more staff the opportunity to lead whole school collective worship
- Develop the school website into a beacon for its distinctive and effective Christian commitment and involvement within the community

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

There is a calm and caring atmosphere within this school that is firmly underpinned by the

Christian relationships between all its members and extended community. This is a significant feature of Trinity CE School and is founded securely on Christian love in action. Children possess a positive sense of worth and apply faith values to their decision-making, an approach successfully delivered through the 'Values' project. An emphasis on pupils' emotional well-being is embedded by the learning support assistant who uses effective strategies and support mechanisms to ensure barriers to learning are minimised for each child. Indeed, her strategies of love, forgiveness and reconciliation securely underpin the caring relationships within the school and further support the restorative aspect of the school's highly effective approach to behaviour management. Christian signs and symbols are clearly evident throughout the school and they, alongside the daily use of interactive prayer walls in each classroom, immerse both visitors and pupils within this distinctive spiritual ethos. This is further defined by the pupils' prayerful conversation becoming a natural part of their lives with a Reception child able to ask God to 'look after my friends and family.' Well-taught and effective RE makes a valuable contribution to the Christian ethos and is part of the engaging and challenging level of teaching and learning that is so evident throughout the school. Children's achievements are praised and rewarded not only on a daily basis but also in 'Worker of the Week' celebration assemblies. They are encouraged to grow in independence and to take increasing responsibility as they grow older, demonstrating excellent aspects of citizenship. Children's behaviour is exemplary and they say their school is 'an amazing place.' Ongoing opportunities for spiritual development abound, with the Foundation Stage establishing early principles through the planting, growing, harvesting and eating of fruits and vegetables, alongside the hatching of butterflies and their release into the school gardens.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship is clearly a meaningful and joyful experience to all children regardless of background. Their enthusiasm is evident from the exuberant and confident way in which they participate. All members of the school community join in the prayers and respond appropriately to the different elements of the worship. Children enter the hall quietly and reverently knowing they are there for a special time of coming together with God. Acts of worship are very well planned by a team comprising adults and an excellent and knowledgeable pupil worship group which also evaluates the impact of the worship. A cross and candle at the front of the hall help to affirm the Anglican and Methodist combined basis of worship. The elements of song, prayers, Bible readings, all led by the children, and an excellent talk by the Methodist minister combined to make a deep and profound statement about the way in which Jesus helps us to cope with the burdens in our lives. Despite the seriousness of the message the whole worship time was interspersed with good humour. Children experience a wide variety of worship styles which reflect Anglican traditions. It is further enriched through regular visits to both the Anglican and Methodist churches where pupils and members of the extended community share in acts of worship such as Harvest, Christingle, Christmas and Education Sunday. The children speak with much delight about their times of worship and what they like about it. One child commented, 'It makes me feel joyful before the day starts.' Another child observed, 'I think it is the most important lesson of the day.' They often write prayers and confidently share in leading different parts of the worship. Excellent use is made of multi-media technology, all of which is operated by the children, to provide high quality audio and visual stimuli. This combination of pictures and music is very powerful.

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

Outstanding leadership by the head teacher, very ably supported by the deputy, staff and governors, enable the vision of the school and its Christian distinctiveness to be effectively promoted. The governors recognise this unique Christian family and feel they have a responsibility to develop leaders not just for Trinity CE but also for other schools. This is achieved through high quality diocesan training and clear and effective delegation of management responsibility. Parents value and support the outliving of the school's explicit Christian values and speak very positively of the care and support shown for all their children. One parent said 'It's the next best thing to home. It's not just an education. All staff are concerned to do their best for our children.' The school council makes an important and highly effective impact upon the life of the school. Regular meetings between the head

teacher and incumbents, as well as the ongoing involvement of both the pupils' worship group and a dedicated church/school focus group, demonstrate the commitment to the distinctive Christian nature of the school, which culminated in one of the first Church/School Partnership Awards several years ago. Because of these strengths the governors feel confident in monitoring and evaluating the school's distinctiveness and challenge the head through open and meaningful discussion. Foundation governors have a very clear understanding of their role within the life of the school and are highly effective in supporting both the Anglican and Methodist foundation. One parent described the close relationship between the school and both churches as a 'natural flow, part of everyday life.' The school's promotion of community cohesion is very good with effective links with the local and national community and an excellent international link with a Ugandan school. The children's empathy for those less fortunate than themselves is demonstrated through their support of an extensive range of charities. One child said, 'We need to make other people's lives better.' This provision is greatly enhanced through the passionate involvement of the schools' pastoral community worker and deputy who have developed the ARK (Acts of Random Kindness), an initiative that plans and delivers projects within the local community with children actively involved in planning and delivering the fundraising activities.

SIAS report July 2011 Trinity Church of England/Methodist School, Kiln Lane, Skelmersdale Lancashire WN8 8PW