



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Gonerby Hill Foot Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Gonerby Hill Foot
Grantham
NG31 8HQ

Previous SIAS grade: Outstanding

Current inspection grade: Outstanding

Diocese: Lincoln

Local authority: Lincolnshire

Date of inspection: 1 July 2016

Date of last inspection: 8 July 2011

School's unique reference number: 120524

Headteacher: Claire Stylianides

Inspector's name and number: Anne Lumb (333)

School context

This is a larger than average primary school serving the northern outskirts of Grantham and the parish of Great Gonerby. Most pupils come from white British backgrounds. The proportion of children with learning difficulties, English as an additional language and those eligible for the pupil premium is below average but increasing slightly each year. The headteacher has been in post since January 2012.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Gonerby Hill Foot Church of England Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding

- Christian values are explicit and deeply embedded in the daily life of the school so that all members of the school community know, understand and live them out which has a significant impact on the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of learners.
- Great value is placed on collective worship and Religious Education (RE) across the school and the impact on individuals is clearly evident in the high quality of relationships.
- Foundation governors and senior leaders consistently and confidently articulate, live out and promote a Christian vision such that the children's academic achievements are secured in a Christian context of nurturing the whole child.

Areas to improve

- Deepen the children's appreciation of the nature of the Trinity by exploring it in greater depth through the school's values.

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

The school's Christian values, which include forgiveness, compassion and service, are deeply embedded in the daily life of the school and firmly rooted in Christian teaching. Consequently children speak with confidence about showing compassion not only to each other but to everyone as they talk about being prepared to cross over the road to help someone, like the Good Samaritan did, since it does not matter

where people are from. Attendance is excellent with parents saying that their children want to attend school 'even when they are unwell.' This is an inclusive church school where all members of the school community feel safe, happy and secure. Parents comment on the growing confidence of their children taking on roles such as 'class greeters' and the way in which the needs of particular groups, such as service families, are met. Each child is known, valued and nurtured as a child of God. Parents appreciate that the headteacher knows each child as an individual. Each child's progress is regularly monitored and analysis of performance is rigorous. Intervention, individual support and challenge ensure that all learners make at least good progress at all levels and across all areas of learning. Prayer and reflection are central features of school life. Grace is said before lunch and time for reflection is part of the school day. The children value these; 'It's time to think about God, to know a bit more about God.' Opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are embedded within the life of the school community. These opportunities are closely linked to the school's values so that, for example, in a Geography lesson on Fairtrade children develop empathy for different cultures and ways of life as well as begin to understand the principles of fair trade and the importance of living in community. All the children are courteous, greeting visitors to the classroom with information on what they are learning about in that lesson, and behaviour is of the highest standard so that relationships across the school are excellent with children putting the values they learn into practice; 'When you argue and you want to say sorry so more than just saying sorry you can forgive them.' Learners are aware that Christianity is a multicultural world faith. They learn that Christians live all around the world and that the Bible is translated into many languages with children who are part of the school community from different countries able to talk about this from their perspective. RE is given a high priority within school being very well led and managed by a senior leader. Diversity and difference in world faiths is explored through 'digging deeper' and asking engaging questions; 'We learn to respect different religions because we understand why they do things.'

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Great value is placed on collective worship by all members of the school community. Whole school collective worship at the beginning of the week is followed by class collective worship later in the week, providing opportunities to explore themes in greater depth in age-appropriate ways. Children appreciate these opportunities to discuss collective worship with their class teachers, 'especially if it relates to a class topic, a value or an ongoing issue in school.' Collective worship is engaging, inspiring and inclusive. For example, two girls sharing their recent experience of First Communion in the local Catholic church they attend highlighted the inclusivity of celebrating the practices of different denominations. Themes are carefully chosen to explore Biblical stories with teaching that links them to the school's values. This raises aspirations and inspires a high level of spiritual and moral reflection which challenges children to take responsibility for their own actions such as raising money for various charities. Children have a rich experience of worship as a range of people, including staff, clergy, representatives from different Christian traditions and the children themselves, lead the collective worship times. Children comment that when visitors speak in collective worship it is 'very inspiring and makes you want to try your best. It's good for our values' and 'they use stories to link to the Bible.' Children value opportunities to pray and reflect and see the use of the school prayer as an important tradition which 'brings the school together', 'makes it special' and 'reminds us how we should live – showing compassion and serving God and one another.' The children write their own prayers which are included in a school prayer book and express deep reflections on what they feel or have learned. There is a strong focus on the person of Jesus Christ in collective worship time and the use of simple words of welcome at the beginning of collective worship reminds the gathered community that this time helps them to remember that 'God is three persons in one' as a candle with three wicks is lit. Although children have some understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit there are not yet enough opportunities to extend and deepen that understanding. Monitoring and evaluation by a range of stakeholders takes place regularly, provides insight into ways in which collective worship influences the life of the community and informs further developments, such as enabling children to take increasing ownership of planning and leading class-led whole school collective worship.

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

School leaders consistently and confidently articulate a vision for the school which is rooted in

distinctively Christian values and which impacts on the lives of learners and the school as a whole so that by 'following in God's footsteps', with the Christian faith at the centre, 'the whole community can grow together and flourish to be the best they can be, having a foundation in Christian values but integrating with people of different faiths.' Senior leaders are well-supported and challenged by highly committed foundation governors who secure the impact of the school's vision through effective monitoring and evaluation which has led to, for example, a high priority being given to ensuring that the school community is very inclusive so that faith and belief can be explored in depth and a high degree of respect for different faiths results. Parents are highly supportive of and contribute fully to the school community with high levels of parent participation in class-led acts of collective worship and attendance at services in the local church. Links with the local churches are strong with children referring to the local Anglican church as 'our church' where they feel comfortable and able to ask deep questions about God, Jesus and heaven. The headteacher and children regularly contribute to the parish newsletter ensuring that the wider community has the opportunity to engage with activities at the school. The school takes part in the annual Church Schools Festival in Grantham so that children have a growing awareness of the diversity of local communities. The development of all staff and governors as leaders in church schools is planned strategically with the processes for the retention of all staff ensuring that the school's Christian ethos, values and distinctiveness are maintained. Appropriate Diocesan training is accessed by staff and governors which has led to, for example, more effective teaching and learning in RE. The leadership of RE and collective worship is given high priority so that, through regular and effective monitoring, evaluation and support, the school's Christian distinctiveness is continually moving forward in aspirational and innovative ways. The focus for development points from the previous inspection have been addressed with the impact of work on developing the school's Christian character being clearly evidenced during the current inspection process. The statutory requirements for collective worship and RE are met.

SIAMS report July 2016 Gonerby Hill Foot Church of England Primary School, Grantham NG31 8HQ