



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

### **Westminster Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School**

Westminster Road  
Bradford  
BD3 0HW

**Previous SIAMS grade:** Good

**Current inspection grade:** Good

**Diocese:** West Yorkshire and The Dales

Local authority: Bradford

Dates of inspection: 25 January 2016

Date of last inspection: 20 June 2011

School's unique reference number: 128081

Headteacher: Rob Freeth

Inspector's name and number: Roger A Bateman 788

#### **School context**

Westminster is a larger than average primary school which currently has 658 pupils on roll, serving a culturally and ethnically diverse community near the city centre of Bradford. It is an area of high deprivation and high pupil mobility. The school has increased in size by 50% since the last inspection. Over the last 5 years the school has experienced two expansion programmes which have included significant, disruptive building works. A number of new staff have joined the school as pupil numbers have increased and many of the school's established practices have had to change as a result of this. The current arrangement of the headship being shared between the Headteacher, who works three days per week and Head of School, who works fulltime, has been in place for 12 months. The school now has two deputy head teachers and three assistant head teachers.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Westminster as a Church of England school are good**

- The work of the school in focusing on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding which contributes positively to community cohesion and positive relationships.
- The holistic support, care and encouragement given to pupils and their families is rooted in the school's Christian values of hope, justice and service.
- The behaviour of pupils and the mutual respect they have for each other based on the Christian values of service, friendship and peace pervades the daily life of this school.
- The work of the school in engaging with all pupils, but particularly those new to

English, to enable them quickly to become part of the school family and make good academic progress.

### **Areas to improve**

- Governors to review and where appropriate develop their understanding of the school's Christian values so that all stake holders can confidently articulate how they underpin the work of the school
- Develop plans to incorporate a quiet outdoor area for reflection in their playground development plans
- Increase the range of leaders, including governors, involved in planning, delivering and evaluating collective worship

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

The whole school community staff, parents and governors are proud of the Christian values which underpin the inclusive ethos that is contributing so positively to community cohesion in this school. These values of hope, peace, friendship, justice and service are clearly identified within the school prospectus; however, some stakeholders could not articulate the impact of these values on school policy or practice. Community is very important to all stakeholders in this school. Staff, parents and pupils all commented that school 'is really like part of the family'. One parent commented that school felt, 'just like home' another said, 'I'm really comfortable coming to talk about anything.' There is a real sense of the Christian value of koinonia within this school and the leadership and management of school have enthusiastically promoted an inclusive practice where fellowship or the sense of family, where each person is valued and is important, is promoted. However, within the school, this is always referred to as 'community.' The school is passionate about and successful in developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development as identified in the Ofsted inspection January 2014. Their inclusive approach creates an environment in which all pupils flourish spiritually and personally. Pupils talk with enthusiasm about their prayer trees and time for reflection within their classes. They know that each one of them is important to the school and accepted for who they are. Older pupils enjoy the responsibility of being 'buddies' or translators, contributing to the school's values of service, friendship and peace. Although some academic results are below national expectations, the progress of children who have results from Year 2 and Year 6 are broadly in line with national results and expectations. The stimulating and thought provoking displays around school, emphasising acceptance and equality, contribute positively to community cohesion. The mosaic showing pupils of the different faiths in school and the 'value' tree made up of pupil handprints are particularly effective. The innovative practice of naming key stages after continents and classes after countries emphasises that all pupils, whatever their heritage, are welcome, valued and important, emphasising the school's values of friendship, peace and hope. Pupil voice is recognised and pupils are proud of their role as school council members or playground buddies and translators. Pupils have to apply for these posts giving them an increased sense of worth in both themselves and the school. One pupil said, 'I'm proud to be able to help the other children in our school'.

Many pupils and their families benefit from the excellent support provided by the 'Unlocking Potential Team' and the innovative work that they do. Parents said that they enjoyed coming into school and learning about what their children were doing. 'I look forward to every Tuesday, it's the highlight of my week,' said one parent. The school effectively supports parents with both courses on such subjects as reading, maths, parenting skills and healthy eating and cooking for example but also supports vulnerable families seeking grants and benefit claims for which they hold a weekly appointment system supporting the Christian values of hope, service and justice. Both pupils and parents referred to the charity work contributed to by the school, often supporting local charities such as the Bradford Women's Aid, BRI children's ward and Macmillan coffee morning. Charities suggested by the pupils reflecting the school's values of hope and responsibility.

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

Collective worship is held daily but due to space and the number of pupils only two days are whole school worships. Other days are class or 'base' worships involving six classes. Children's evaluation shows that they enjoy these occasions because they have an opportunity to be more involved and do creative things. During the whole school worship observed, which was led by the head teacher, it was clear that they enjoy attending. They enter worship respectfully, listen carefully and participate well in an opportunity for discussion to reflect on the theme of being a refugee. Effective and appropriate use is made of the use of symbolism reflecting the different faiths present and affirming the inclusive ethos of this school. Pupils present prayers with confidence, participate well and sing with enthusiasm. Worship concluded with the closing prayer which had been written by the school council reflecting the school values of hope, friendship and peace. Themes are planned, principally by the worship manager, who has effectively linked worship themes to the topics covered by the nurture group and the social and emotional aspects of learning (SEALS) group so that the whole school are thinking about the same topic. Until recently the local church presented 'Open the book' and both pupils and staff talk about with enthusiasm about this presentation of Bible stories. The impact of collective worship is enhanced by the use of 'the big question' which has been externally evaluated as making an impact on children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Children talk enthusiastically about the big question and the ones they found the most interesting. Examples of which are 'Should we help refugees? Is war ever right? Why should we help people?' Pupils speak confidently about the significance of prayer and each class has a prayer tree or prayer branch which contains evidence of children's prayers on topics ranging from the war in Syria to the flood victims in the Calder Valley. The impact of collective worship is evaluated and children's evaluations are used to help plan and shape future worship topics. The impact of collective worship is also seen in the genuine care that pupils show for each other irrespective of their faith or culture. 'It's our job to look after one another,' was a comment from one of the 'buddies'.

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

This school is led and managed by an innovative and effective partnership of two part-time Head teachers which, at the governor's request, has been externally evaluated and identified as being successful. Leadership and management are ably assisted by a dedicated team of skilled staff and committed governing body. They are, as a member of staff said, 'one family' and there is a real sense of community which is evident in all relationships within school. Another member of staff stated that, 'it is a real privilege to work here, I've learnt so much'. The school leadership and management have a clear understanding of the Christian values that underpin the life and practice of this school and these are clearly stated in the school's prospectus. The values of hope, peace, forgiveness, justice and service underpin the ethos and practices of this school. All members of the school community, including parents and governors, acknowledge the impact of the school's values on learning and achievement although these values are not clearly articulated by most stakeholders. The impact of these values is reflected in pupils' positive attitudes to learning and behaviour and their enthusiasm for school. Pupils' school attendance has risen and is now at expected levels. Pupils are also keen to take part in the numerous after school clubs that are offered termly. The recent parent questionnaire indicated that over 99% were confident that the child is safe at school and happy about the education that their child receives in school. The curriculum offered is taught imaginatively and all classes are encouraged to have a range of resources that enable pupils to work independently encouraging endurance and service. Pupils are set targets and staff have high expectations of them. Pupil progress and attainment is regularly monitored and effective intervention groups are provided for those pupils not making expected progress. This is monitored by the school leadership and regular reports are presented to governors to ensure that they have a clear understanding of the school's current position and fulfil their role effectively.

SIAMS report January 2016 Westminster Voluntary Controlled Primary, Bradford BD3 0HW