

Saint Barnabas Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Jubilee Terrace
Leeman Road
York
YO26 4YZ

Diocese: York

Local authority: York
Dates of inspection: 29th May 2012
Date of last inspection: 20th November 2008
School's unique reference number: 121473
Headteacher: Karen Boardman
Inspector's name and number: Mrs C A Roberts 469

School context

The school is a smaller than average primary school. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average. The number of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is smaller than average. Since the last inspection there is a new headteacher and deputy headteacher. The school has achieved Artsmark Gold and Healthy School status.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Barnabas as a Church of England school are good

St Barnabas primary is a friendly and welcoming school, where children are enthusiastic and caring. Christian values have a positive impact on the daily life of the school, enhanced by the strong links with the local church and Christian organisations. The school is led by leaders who have a clear Christian vision. Everyone is working very hard to raise standards and ensure that all the children achieve their very best.

Established strengths

- The strong, caring ethos which promotes Christian values.
- The dedication and commitment of leadership, governors and staff.
- The impact of positive links with the local church and the wider Christian community.

Focus for development

- Review the school mission statement and aims in light of explicit Christian values.
- Develop pupils' planning and leadership of worship on a regular basis in church and school.
- Formalise monitoring and evaluation of worship, by including these at key times on the school monitoring calendar.

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

Christian values, particularly of care, respect and forgiveness, permeate the daily life of this school and are reflected in the good behaviour of the children and the good relationships within the school. Children enjoy coming to school and say 'everyone helps each other' and 'if someone is lonely we need to play with them'. They therefore love to become playground buddies or readers with younger children. Children are full of praise for their teachers, who they say 'help us improve', 'respond to you and listen' and 'do extra stuff for us'. Opportunities for spiritual, social, moral and cultural development are many, for example through reflection in worship, the beautiful spiritual garden, the prayer/ reflection space in the library area and the wildlife and pond area. Pupils know that this is a church school and give examples such as: 'we learn more about Jesus and God', 'we sing religious songs', 'we read the Bible'. The

Christian character has a major impact on preparing learners to become responsible citizens. For example by supporting Fair Trade with a stall in the local market, learning about and showing how to care for the rainforests, developing a link with a school in Uganda and learning about different lifestyles, supporting charities such as Macmillan, the RSPCA, and a local children's ward at York hospital. Religious education (RE) makes a very good contribution to the Christian character of the school, through learning about the impact of faith on everyday life and also with visits to places of worship, including the local church. There are many vibrant and colourful displays outside and inside school supporting the Christian character, for example the magnificent outdoor metal prayer tree, the beautiful stained glass windows, and the worship board in the main hall. However, the leadership recognises that there is scope to introduce reflection areas in all classrooms.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Worship is seen by everyone at St Barnabas as a special time where there is a strong emphasis on reflection and praise. This is enhanced by the good partnership with the local church and also local Christian organisations such as YoYo, YWAM and the Rock Church. Children say they enjoy worship, particularly when there is opportunity to do role play and take an active part in worship. Although children plan and lead major acts of worship, such as those for major Christian festivals in church, leaders recognise this is an area for development. Worship is very well planned with themes linked to Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) as well as Values for Life and the church year. Acts of worship are creative and engaging. For example through a variety of questioning, developing spontaneous prayer, and pupil story telling. Occasional prayer days are held through YoYo and Orison where children and staff engage in many innovative ways to reflect. Comments such as 'it was nice to ask God questions and think about them going to heaven', and 'it was peaceful and made me feel calm' reflect the positive impact such days have on the school community. The Anglican dimension is developed through using liturgical responses, by lighting the candle and through regular visits from the local vicar, as well as services in church. Worship is having a good impact on children, who recognise that the ideas and Bible stories they hear in worship 'make them want to help other people' and 'help them to care'. They are developing a good sense of Christian values through the carefully planned programme, such as courage linked to the Olympics. Worship is making a good contribution to spiritual development, particularly through prayer, reflection and singing praise. Children say they enjoy the opportunity for reflection as 'we can think our own thoughts during this time and that's good'. Leaders have started to formally monitor and evaluate worship, involving all stakeholders, and plans are underway to have set dates on the school's monitoring and evaluation calendar.

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

The headteacher and deputy headteacher have a clear Christian vision for the school, which is strongly supported by governors and staff. School leaders recognise that the time is now right to review the mission statement in light of explicit Christian values. All stakeholders understand and can articulate the key Christian values that underpin the life of the school, such as respect and forgiveness, and how these impact on the children. However, these are not yet explicit in the mission and aims. School leaders engage in regular self-evaluation of the school as a church school, particularly through using the SIAS toolkit. This is reflective and accurate, with a clear indication of future development needs. Governors are very hard working and extremely supportive of the school as a church school. They have been involved in diocesan training for governors on values and worship. However, the school recognise that there is a need to provide more of such opportunities. Governors have a clear understanding of future needs in terms of succession planning, and staff have opportunity to attend a wide range of training activities. Questions are asked of prospective candidates at interview about support of the school as a church school and it is given high profile at new parents' meetings. Parents are pleased with the school as a church school and say the school is 'a very friendly school' and 'everyone cares for their child'. They also say that the 'church bit is a part of everyday life here', and that 'children are encouraged to talk about God and faith.' Parents receive a regular newsletter which often highlights the Christian character of the school, for example fundraising activities and church services. There are good links with the local church and community such as services in church at Christmas and Easter, Harvest Supper in school for both church and school, support of the local St Barnabas Centre, a parent prayer group in school and the Live Wires group in church for 7 to 11 year olds.