



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

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

### Hipswell Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Catterick Garrison  
North Yorkshire  
DL9 4BB

**Previous SIAMS grade: Good**

**Current inspection grade: Outstanding**

**Diocese: West Yorkshire and the Dales**

Local authority: North Yorkshire

Dates of inspection: 21 April 2016

Date of last inspection: 30 September 2010

School's unique reference number: 121499

Headteacher: Jon Sykes

Inspector's name and number: Doug Masterton 483

#### School context

Hipswell Church of England Primary School predominantly serves the large army base of Catterick. There are 159 children plus a 20 place part-time nursery. Troop movement causes large numbers of children, (up to 80), to leave or join each year interrupting their primary education and with many being educated in multiple schools at home and abroad. Most children are White British and with about 3% from Nepal. Around 2% of children are eligible for free school meals.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Hipswell Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding.

- Drawing inspiration from its distinctive Christian character, Hipswell school offers highly effective education and care that is specially tailored to meet the needs of children in a transient army community where continuity of learning is often interrupted.
- Children develop considerable maturity both academically and spiritually. They incorporate the school's Christian values into their thinking and lives, having been strongly inspired through collective worship.
- Very sound governance and leadership have developed Christian purpose and strength within school provision. Commitment to the school's effectiveness as a church school is widely shared and owned.

#### Areas to improve

- Offer children more structure and support enabling them to discuss further ideas linked to faith and belief and to understand key Christian concepts including that of the Trinity.
- Inspire the greatest contribution that children can make to school collective worship and give them full opportunity to plan and lead it themselves.
- Help children to extend their awareness of the major faith traditions within the UK.

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

Hipswell Primary School is a learning community driven by a belief in Christian values and it has grown a very effective special capacity to respond to the character and operations of the army community that it serves. The school has a very clear Anglican character utilising a determination to value and apply the teaching of Jesus in order to nurture respect, kindness, perseverance, truth, generosity, peace-making, forgiveness and love in ways that are always characterised by kindness, politeness and offering help. For very many children in school, their education is interrupted by family postings. That the school secures standards that are at or above the national average is indicative of the good progress that children make whilst at Hipswell, the individual care that is given and the quality of liaison with the schools from which children transfer. The progress made by children attracting the pupil premium, (including those whose education is not interrupted), is equally secure. Children's personal development is impressive. They grow to become ambassadors for the Christian values the school cherishes; they are polite, kind to each other, thoughtful about what they learn, keen to succeed and enthusiastic to contribute to the life and work of the school. There is a rich, well-planned curriculum, infused with the promotion of the school values, and it grows children's competencies together with their understanding of the world. Children are particularly interested in what they learn through their religious education (RE) and discuss big questions. They want to understand more - particularly concerning the difficult ideas associated with their conception of God, belief and faith. In this respect they need some further support. Relationships in school are excellent with a very effective, relaxed and mature rapport between children and adults. Ideas are welcomed from all stakeholders and there is a very strong ethos of commitment from all groups who work to ensure the success of the school. Teachers strive to give children an awareness and understanding of the diverse nature of society and draw upon the cultural diversity within the garrison community to enrich understanding. Children demonstrate a high respect towards other cultures and faiths but lack opportunity to have contact with their peers from other faith backgrounds. RE is a key school priority. All teaching staff recognise it as important, part of their responsibilities and integral to the mission of the school. High standards are expected, children respond accordingly and are inspired and motivated by what they learn. Indicative of the culture of the school is the high profile success of the 'HMS Heroes' initiative which supports children from service families using peer group assistance as the source of help. This modus-operandi chimes exactly with the school Christian ethos of love and service to others and the thriving programme at Hipswell inclusively welcomes children from all backgrounds who wish to join in.

**The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding.**

Collective worship is the key event each day around which school life revolves. All children and adults in school come together and ways are found to overcome the space constraints making it possible for parents to join in on occasions. Children's opinions testify readily to their perception of its importance and their joy, interest, curiosity and sense of well-being that stem from taking part. Collective worship has a clear Anglican character using a lighted candle, reverence, prayers, truly inspirational music and based around a programme closely linked to school values, the Christian calendar, Bible stories and the teaching of Jesus. Strategic planning, undertaken by the head teacher, illustrates and promotes the school Christian values on all appropriate opportunities. This work empowers many staff to design and lead inspiring collective worship for the whole school and in their classes. On all suitable occasions there are very frequent and extensive contributions by children – suggesting their ideas, role playing and contributing prayers. Prayer is used extensively and its use pervades the whole school. Prayers that children contribute on their class prayer trees are frequently incorporated into collective worship and also used by staff alert to respond to anyone who might be needing help. Children talk freely and positively about prayer and many clearly use it themselves accepting its value with or without a background in faith to explain why. Spaces in the school grounds encourage reflection. Prayer and teaching from the Gospels, is well represented in children's experience but familiarity with and understanding of the concepts of the Trinity are weaker. Particularly strong, however, is children's understanding of a response to faith and its practical outcomes for the way that they live. The parish priest leads collective worship regularly and on special occasions it takes place in the parish church. Highlighted by the previous inspection, the school has taken the utmost care in setting up rigorous systems to evaluate the impact of collective worship from the

perspective of all stakeholders which has further improved and cemented its quality. Special mention is due in respect of the work of the collective worship team, a group of older children who are interested, dedicated and committed to working with the head teacher to evaluate and improve provision. Their example demonstrates that many more of the children can be further challenged to take full responsibility for planning and leading collective worship themselves.

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

The Christian character of this school has a high profile, evident from pride in its foundation, clear witness through signs and actions and a focus on prayer. The consequent commitment to meeting each and every child's needs, often with expense a secondary consideration, has led to the good academic progress and very strong personal development of the children. Parents praise the school for the way it develops their children as caring individuals with a sense of self-worth. Leaders are determined that the school will always be fully inclusive, welcoming all children no matter what may be their backgrounds or the difficulties they have experienced. Every child is cherished. To bring about this vision, the school has developed its monitoring, reporting and self-evaluation by all stakeholders, including children, to a very high standard. Strategic planning of the distinctive curriculum is very secure; that undertaken by the head teacher for RE is remarkable in its vision and detail. It exemplifies his commitment to securing outstanding school provision of a Christian character thus enabling staff to work effectively to this end. Governors exercise close scrutiny of the school and provide the challenge and support that has led to outstanding effectiveness. They have built their work around implementing identified developments arising from the previous inspection, establishing robust evaluation of collective worship, embracing children as stakeholders in review, creating spaces for reflection and ensuring Christian values permeate planned learning. Staff at all levels have been able to grow their professional skills for work in a church school. Indicative of their resilience is the extent to which teachers have the confidence and desire to play a full part in the teaching of RE in their classes and thus cementing the Christian character of the school. Links and joint activities with the local parish church are well established and the school works closely with the parish priest adding value to his mission towards the Catterick community and helping it reach well beyond the milieu of the church congregations. Hipswell school makes good use of links with the diocese to secure training for staff and contributes to special celebrations of worship. The conscientious and detailed work of the head teacher over a number of years has secured the distinctive and effective character of the school and sustained continued improvement. His experience is recognised and is now being shared through his support to other local schools. Collective worship and RE fulfil statutory requirements.

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