



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Aiskew Leeming Bar Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School

Leeming Lane
Leeming Bar
Northallerton
DL7 9AU

Previous SIAMS grade:

Good

Diocese:

West Yorkshire & the Dales

Local authority:

North Yorkshire

Dates of inspection:

12 November 2014

Date of last inspection:

November 2009

School's unique reference number:

121472

Headteacher:

Stephen Simper

Inspector's name and number:

Ruth Packwood 524

School context

Aiskew Leeming Bar Primary School is a much smaller than average school which serves the community of Leeming Bar. For many in the surrounding villages this is their school of choice and 53% of children live beyond the catchment area. There are currently 51 pupils on roll. The school experiences higher than normal levels of pupil mobility, particularly with pupils from Service families. Pupils come from a mixture of socio-economic backgrounds. There are 23 pupils eligible for pupil premium and this includes 15 children from Service families. 25% of children have special educational needs. The headteacher has been in post for seven years. He is about to take up a post as executive headteacher of a collaborative partnership that is being established between Aiskew Leeming Bar and a nearby Church primary school.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Aiskew Leeming Bar as a Church of England school are good

- The school's distinctive Christian values, which were revised by the children and put into language that they can understand, are totally embedded in every aspect of school life. This means that children have a secure understanding of the expectations for attitudes and behaviour and all relationships within school are very good.
- Links between the values and teaching from the Bible are made during collective worship and are expanded on, as appropriate, in religious education [RE]. This effectively promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all learners.

- Children, parents, staff and governors all understand and endorse these values, and staff live them out on a daily basis. As a result trust is developed, children feel happy and secure and, in this nurturing atmosphere, they make good progress and achieve high standards.

Areas to improve

- The leadership and management of the school need to make the Christian basis for the school values more explicit and separate them from the skills they wish children to develop.
- Develop learners' understanding of Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith.

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

The leadership and management of the school are motivated by Christian values of compassion, service and justice. They welcome all children including those who return to this country from overseas postings and others who may not have had positive experiences in other schools. The firm, fair, consistent approach by staff and children means that the expectations for behaviour and attitudes are clearly communicated to children new to the school. This develops trust and children settle quickly. Children are encouraged to reward each other when they see a particular value exemplified, and weekly achievement awards are always linked to the core values or skills which are clearly displayed in each classroom. This has a very positive effect on pupils' personal development and wellbeing. Many comment on how much they enjoy being in a small school where everyone knows each other. They are enthusiastic about the quality of their experiences in school and the ways in which they are encouraged to challenge themselves to achieve the best they can. As a result children enjoy coming to school and attendance is very good. Children are motivated to do well and to take responsibility for their attitudes to learning and the need to persevere. All children, including those with special educational needs, make expected progress and the majority of children make good or excellent progress. Where needs are identified, additional provision is put in place and carefully monitored until there is the required improvement. Relationships in school are very strong and any conflict is dealt with through reconciliation and forgiveness. The values and skills are promoted across all areas of the curriculum and clearly identified in planning. RE is well led in school and is regularly evaluated. Children and staff enjoy RE particularly the additional opportunities for discussing important questions about faith, values and belief and how these affect the way people live. The use of the new syllabus is promoting an improved understanding of diverse communities and how their beliefs affect their world view. This is making a positive contribution to their spiritual and moral and cultural development. By linking teaching in RE with the school's values, staff are effectively consolidating the contribution of RE to the Christian character of the school. Children of all ages are encouraged to take responsibility in school, initially for themselves and then for others. At lunchtimes and during collective worship children sit in mixed age groups, rather than in year groups and everyone in school knows everyone else's name. This is something that children are proud of and see as a benefit of a small school. There is an active school council and the school council now decides which charities the school will support during the year with children taking responsibility for organising events such as the 'Pyjama and Onesie' day organised for Children in Need. The understanding of Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith is an area that has been identified for improvement. All recommendations from the previous inspection have been implemented.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

The school community value collective worship and recognise the importance it has in the life of the school. Many say that it brings everyone together, others that it is a very calming experience. It is carefully planned to incorporate the core values of the school, the key festivals and celebrations in the church year and to address aspects of social and emotional learning.

The lead teacher and foundation governor plan, monitor and evaluate regularly. The reports they produce highlight the positive elements that children have identified. They also record the children's suggestions and there is good evidence that many of these are implemented. Children say how they enjoy worship and value the monthly opportunities they have to plan and lead worship. They volunteer for this and, although help is available if needed, they have a great deal of liberty to plan and deliver worship. Collective worship often includes Biblical material and teaching about the person of Jesus Christ. There are opportunities for children to discuss ideas in pairs during worship, as well as for personal response in prayer or reflection. As a result, collective worship effectively promotes children's spiritual and moral development. The impact of this is seen in the respectful way children relate to each other, and in the way in which they try to make links between the school's core values and their own lives. The prayer wheel which is used by children to display the photo of anyone in school who needs prayer, and a prayer request box is used regularly by the children who have a developing understanding of the purpose of prayer. Their understanding of Anglican practice is developed through use of liturgical colours on the table where the candle and cross are placed and through the weekly visits of the local vicar or a member of the church. Children attend St John's church at Easter, Harvest and Christmas, when they participate enthusiastically in the planning and delivery of worship. Parents / carers and governors regularly join the school for worship and are very positive about their experiences which have helped them to understand the school's core values. Members of the wider village community joined with the school in their recent Remembrance Day service. There was a particular focus on members of the village who had given their lives in the service of their country and with many children having links with the armed forces this was particularly poignant and relevant.

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

Leaders and managers have a clear vision of the school as a church school based on distinctive Christian values which they can confidently articulate. These were initially developed when the headteacher first took up his post. They have been revisited regularly and more recently children were encouraged to rewrite the values in language they could understand. A number of skills were added to these values and these 18 areas define the expectations for behaviour and attitudes at Aiskew Leeming Bar. They are displayed in each classroom, referred to regularly, are highlighted in plans for each area of the curriculum and give a real cohesiveness to the school. As a result the children have a shared language to express what they are doing and why, and have a deep understanding of how they should conduct themselves in school. They look out for positive behaviours in each other and have the opportunity to reward these. Parents, children, staff and governors were invited to complete a survey on how well the values are understood, the impact they have and what could be done to refine them. The response was overwhelmingly positive and the outcomes are now evident in the very good progress and achievement that most children are now making, and in their spiritual, moral and social development. However, in their current form, the Christian values, which are clearly understood by leaders and managers, are more implicit than explicit. Clear links need to be made between the values and teaching from the Bible. The leadership demonstrates the priority it gives to this area by giving a senior teacher responsibility for the development of the school as a church school. This has been effective and foundation governors have attended diocesan training to equip them for their role in challenging the school and enabling it to make progress. Self-evaluation is rigorous and accurate and leads to effective measures to secure improvement. Staff in school receive appropriate professional development and the leadership has sufficient confidence in the senior staff to enable the headteacher to take on the role of executive headteacher in a collaborative partnership with a local Church school. The school is well regarded by the local community. Partnerships with two local churches are nurtured and maintained. Parishioners take an active interest in the life of the school and enjoy the fortnightly school newsletters. They feel their partnerships with the school are mutually beneficial and encourage joint events, such as the 'Make and Bake' sessions at St Gregory's. There are good relationships with the Air Force Base maintained through the community

development officer and a foundation governor. Personnel from the Base have volunteered to help the school build an outdoor shelter and garden which has been planned by children as a quiet space for reflection. The school serves the community in a number of ways for example by singing at local homes for the elderly. The most recent initiative is to invite members of the village to join children and staff for a community lunch in school. Parents have been invited into school to talk about their jobs or places of work and the skills and values that they need to fulfil their responsibilities. Learners are able to make links with the values that the school promotes and see their relevance to the world of work.

SIAMS report November 2014 Aiskew Leeming Bar Church of England (VC) Primary School DL7 9AU