

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Settle Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Bond Lane,
Settle
BD24 9BW

Diocese: Bradford

Local authority: North Yorkshire

Dates of inspection: 18th January 2008

Date of last inspection: March 2004

School's unique reference number:121587

Headteacher: Mr Richard Wright

Inspector's name and number: Mr R D Masterton No. 483

School context

Settle Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School serves the rural market town community of Settle in North Yorkshire. There are currently 151 children on roll and an additional 24 in the school nursery. Approximately 10% of pupils are eligible for free school meals, There are 21 children on the special needs register of which 6 are School Action Plus including 1 with a statement. All the pupils are white and one uses English as a second language. Children leave aged 10 years at the end of Year 5 and transfer to a middle school. The school is located about 1km from the parish church. The number on roll is increasing.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Settle Voluntary Controlled Primary School as a Church of England school are good

Settle Church of England Primary School offers a good education to all children. It is fully inclusive. All children benefit. The Christian inspired purpose of the school is very tangible to everyone associated with its work and an increasing number of parents are choosing the school. By making more explicit the Christian inspiration and vision and through using precise evaluation methods, leaders and managers can steer the school to greater effectiveness as a church school.

Established strengths

- The deeply embedded Christian mission of the school within the work of all staff and governors.
- The outstanding personal development of the children who flourish.
- The strength of the links between the school and the parish worshipping community.

Focus for development

- Revise the aims and mission statements to fully reflect the way that Settle school is inspired by its Christian foundation and mission
- Develop and embed the use of objective strategies to accurately monitor and evaluate the impact of the school's distinctive Christian ethos and its progress and development as a church school

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

Settle Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary is an effective school with much intrinsic strength, purpose and resilience to meet children's individual learning needs. Inspired by the school's Christian foundation and beliefs, there is a professional concern for children and relationships in the school. School managers and staff have a shared sense of purpose and aspiration stemming from the school's Christian character, ensuring all children succeed and are happy to work. The degree of children's commitment to their work and the high level of participation in extra curricular activities testifies to their enjoyment of being at Settle school. Children are inspired by the stimulating areas in which they work with displays and areas of the school that provide for both their intellectual development and their thinking about spiritual, moral social and cultural issues. Their own work is celebrated strongly. They

reach standards that are above average and their achievement is good. Children with special learning needs also make good progress. Parents speak highly of the way their children are helped to learn and the progress they make. The children's personal development is outstanding. The school nurtures children's development in many innovative ways for example they participate in the civic ceremony of remembrance during November laying a school wreath. They are challenged and moved to respond to the needs of other people in different circumstances to themselves including support to children from Chernobyl. Children are taught and encouraged to speak publicly and to demonstrate and share their skills and achievement. Thus they grow to become confident, articulate, thoughtful, sensitive and caring young people. In the way that they mature and then make a contribution to their community, particularly in supporting each other, they become almost part of the 'team' and the established strength of the school. The maturity of the children, who are just ten years old when they leave, is very high.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Daily collective worship and the other occasions in the day when children are quiet and prayers are said, are of central importance to the routine of the school and provide an important inspiration for children's spiritual development. Through collective worship, children recognise and celebrate each other's talents and achievements in a context that is part of praise and prayer. Their behaviour is exemplary and their interest evident from their willing participation. Collective worship is planned with rich components of biblical stories, social / moral themes, traditions and festivals from the Anglican calendar and the joy of children's own achievement. Planned by the head teacher and a member of staff, it is led by school staff and parish clergy, with many contributions from children themselves. Foundation governors have opportunities to monitor the quality of collective worship through their participation but there is currently no systematic approach to monitoring and evaluation of this area. No children are withdrawn from collective worship by their parents. There are many links between worship in school and parish worship. School work and life and children's participation contributes to, and integrates with, worship events in the parish church. Children know the church well, even though it is an expedition to get there. School collective worship, undertaken in church, draws in many members of the wider school community, especially for special festivals, and contributes to the links between the school and the parish worshipping community. Children remember what they have seen and done in their worship. It makes an important contribution to their personal development and they can relate their worship, particularly connected with the major Christian festivals to what they have learned in religious education. Through worship, older children are beginning to rationally address some of the intellectual dilemmas concerning what Christians believe. Notwithstanding these difficult ideas, they also know and value the messages of love and care explored in collective worship which underpin the work and purpose of their school.

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

The commitment and vision of the head teacher, who rejoices in every aspect of children's achievement, inspires the staff and the many volunteers to engage creatively in the Christian mission of the school to meet children's needs and nurture their spiritual growth and development. What results is a very strong corporate commitment at all levels ensuring the progress of every child, no matter how varied or demanding his or her needs might be. However, the Christian-inspired purpose of the school is so well understood and embedded in the way staff and governors work, that it is understated. The school aims and mission statements do not sufficiently emphasise the distinctive Christian character of the education provided. Parents value and praise the school highly for the success that it brings. Whatever their faith background, they are pleased that the school is recognisably Christian in its mission, and they praise the provision that it makes. There is an exceptionally strong link between the school and the parish church. It derives from the interest and commitment of clergy, foundation governors and other governors and means that the school plays an important rôle of Christian witness, together with the church, in the town community. Foundation governors play an active part in school life, volunteering their time and reviewing provision. They both support the school and offer challenge. However the use of objective evaluation criteria and evidence from children of the impact of provision and initiatives, is not yet developed as a tool for church school progress and improvement.