THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND EDUCATION OFFICE

The Methodist Church

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Folksworth CE (VC) Primary School	
Apreece Road, Folksworth, Peterborough PE7 3TY	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	**Good**
Diocese	**Ely**
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Local authority	Cambridgeshire County Council
Date of inspection	24th November 2016
Date of last inspection	14th November 2011
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Controlled Primary 110812
Headteacher	Caroline Adams
Inspector's name and number	Richard Liddington 816

School context

Folksworth Primary School is smaller than average school with 92 pupils on roll. The percentage of children in receipt of pupil premium, having special educational needs (SEN) or of minority ethnic backgrounds is significantly below the national average. The headteacher has been in post for 16 years.
45% of the teaching staff were new to the school this term and a new incumbent was appointed in June 2016. He is also a member of the school's governing body. The school achieved a Good OFSTED grade in March 2016.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Folksworth as a Church of England school are good.

- Folksworth school has a strong and distinctive Christian character which informs all aspects of school practice and this makes a significant contribution to the children's education.
- Relationships at all levels of the school community are of the highest quality and this ensures a very supportive and inclusive learning community.
- The school leadership is effective in its monitoring of provision and outcomes and is committed to further improving the distinctiveness of the school.

Areas to improve

- Further develop the spiritual, moral, social and cultural curriculum to ensure a more enriched and personalised spiritual journey for the children.
- Increase pupil engagement in collective worship by providing regular opportunities for them to plan and lead collective worship.
- Review the number and range of identified core Christian values so that they can better inform the vision and strategic planning process.

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

Folksworth's distinctive Christian character is obvious to all visitors and pupils. A range of highly creative and symbolic displays help to identify and support the school's ethos and everyone connected with the school expresses a clear and genuine pride in being part of a church school. The school's Christian ethos is based on a set of explicit Christian values adopted from the Values for Life material. To ensure their Christian distinctiveness and long term effectiveness these values were adopted across the cluster of local church schools and "form the bedrock" for all aspects of school practice. This results in an extremely effective and inclusive learning environment. The school's values are primarily delivered through acts of collective worship, cross curricular links and perhaps most importantly through the attitudes and expectations of all members of staff. As a result, the behaviour of pupils and the relationships between all members of the school community are exemplary. Pupils almost exclusively enjoy school and happily and voluntarily support each other both within and outside the classrooms. Issues of bullying or discrimination are extremely rare and where incidences do occur the children are confident enough either in their own abilities or in the commitment of staff, to deal with these effectively and fairly. This reflects the school's strong commitment to the Christian values of truthfulness, responsibility and justice. The school's distinctive Christian character also drives a deep desire to value each child and ensure the highest possible levels of academic achievement, personal development and wellbeing. This results in a deep commitment to high quality class teaching, combined with focussed support for identified pupils. Historically standards of achievement have been broadly in line with national expectations; however results in 2016 dipped. The school is therefore working on a number of fronts, most notably that of increasing parental engagement and support, in an effort to address this. Early signs are that this has been well received by parents and is having an impact on progress. The school's Christian character also drives a bespoke response to individual, pupil and family circumstances. This results in good levels of attendance and pastoral care. Pupil premium funding for example has been used to develop the life skills of a child deemed a school refuser and this has led to significantly improved attendance. It is also used to ensure the access of vulnerable pupils to a wide range of extra-curricular activities and both educational and pastoral support. As a result, vulnerable pupils achieve well at Folksworth. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) has a high profile in the life of the school. Where it is done well, pupils demonstrate extremely thoughtful and reflective links between SMSC, the school's Christian values and the RE curriculum. They talk enthusiastically for example, about how visits to places such as Ely Cathedral and the National Arboretum affected their thoughts and understanding of issues such as faith and military conflict. Best practice in cross-curricular planning and assessment of SMSC is not always shared however and as a result, opportunities for reflection and spiritual development are inconsistent. The school's commitment to the values of generosity and service is also reflected in their excellent support for a number of different national, international and local charities, many of which are chosen by the pupil collective worship group. RE has a high priority in the life of the school and makes a good contribution to the Christian character of the school. The RE curriculum provides pupils with good opportunities to explore the Christian faith and their particular studies of the twinned diocese in Vellore helps them to develop a good knowledge and understanding of the wider church. The breadth of the RE curriculum also enables pupils to articulate an age appropriate awareness and understanding of other world faiths and beliefs.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good.

Collective worship has an extremely high profile in the life of Folksworth school and children demonstrate a very good understanding and appreciation of its religious and spiritual significance. Collective worship serves as the primary way in which the school's Christian values are unpacked. Acts of worship are planned and delivered through the exploration of Bible stories and concepts, with a strong focus on the teachings of Jesus. Children enjoy collective worship and talk confidently and enthusiastically about how it helps them to "worship God", develop "good attitudes" and "treat other people with tolerance and respect". The themes being explored are regularly developed within classrooms and this results in the children being able to articulate strong links between the things that they have learnt and the values being explored. Children for example talk enthusiastically and confidently about how the parable of the prodigal son had encouraged them to make the most of their lives and that God's arms are always open, even when they have "messed up". Children similarly describe how their understanding of the value of peace had been widened as a result of acts of worship and that this encouraged them to pray more regularly. Children demonstrate a good understanding of the nature and purpose of prayer and talk particularly enthusiastically about their use of an outdoor peace garden to reflect on issues such as relational difficulties, family bereavements and other life challenges. The nature and structure of collective worship has been developed as an identified action point and pupils now demonstrate a good theological understanding of the Christian faith as well as a range of Anglican traditions. Pupils exhibit a particularly good knowledge of the liturgical calendar and are able to relate this to major festivals. Pupils across the school age range also demonstrate a very thoughtful and often mature understanding of the character of God, including the purpose and divine nature of the Holy Trinity. One child for example described in detail, the omnipresence of the Holy Spirit, and how it tells her to "try her hardest and to be kind and helpful."

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Acts of worship are effectively delivered by different members of staff and the incumbent and include regular visits to the linked church. Pupils enjoy participating in acting out stories, helping with the technical delivery of acts of worship and regularly evaluating the impact of the assemblies. With the exception of major festivals however, neither children nor other denominational groups are currently involved in planning and delivering acts of worship and as a result, the children's involvement in and experience of a range of worship styles is somewhat limited. Foundation governors also regularly monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of collective worship. This has directly led to the development of the values based themes , improved parental accessibility to acts of worship and to the planning and delivery of highly creative and spiritually reflective Christmas and Easter celebration services. As a result of the special consideration shown towards children who have SEN, acts of worship are fully exclusive. No parents currently withdraw their children from collective worship.

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

Leaders have recently revised the schools Christian vision statement. This states that "as an integral part of our village community, we are dedicated to providing an educational experience of the highest quality within the context of our Christian values." A total of fourteen Christian values are identified and these inform all aspects of school practice. Pupils, staff and governors all express a common understanding of how these values should be demonstrated and how they have become increasingly embedded in the life of the school. They talk particularly positively about how the schools Christian character has become more distinctive since the last inspection, how symbolism has increased within school displays and most significantly how these changes have resulted in an increasingly positive, inclusive Christian community. The relatively large number and diversity of these values does however, limit the ability of leaders to coinsistently articlate how this vision is to be achieved or its impact measured. The continuing development of Folksworth as a church school retains a high priority amongst senior leaders. A clear policy and timetable is in place to monitor the distinctiveness and effectiveness of the school and this involves pupils, staff and foundation governors. Their involvement has helped to identify a number of relevant priorities on the school improvement plan. These include further improvements to the RE and SMSC curriculum and the ongoing consideration of possible conversion into an academy, as part of a church trust. This reflects leaders' ambition for the continuing improvement of the school, whilst enhancing its Christian foundation. All previously identified action points have been successfully implemented. Partnership with parents, the local church and diocese are all strong and this enables the school to improve provision and outcomes for pupils as well as enabling the school to make positive contributions to the local community. Parents are highly complimentary about the school's Christian ethos and appreciate the fact that although explicitly Christian in nature, the school's values are also inclusive of people of different faith and no faith backgrounds. They speak extremely positively about how the school's Christian character provides an honest and welcoming climate for them to approach the school as well as ensuring their children's academic, social, emotional and spiritual development. Parents describe for example, how the school "excels in these issues" and that the school's Christian ethos makes a big difference in the children's "understanding of the heritage and history of Christian beliefs." The recently appointed incumbent is already making a significant contribution to the life of the school. He regularly leads collective worship and is actively involved on both the governing body and within the wider school community. The school and church both benefit from a commonly held vision for their mutual improvement. The school for example is directly involved in the growth plan of the church. A *Family Folkus*church service is now held at the school and this attracts approximately 80% more worshippers than would be seen at the traditional church service. The effectiveness of foundation governors, especially one recently appointed to this role, has improved as a result of diocesan led training. Governors' monitoring is now specifically focussed on developing the distinctiveness of Folksworth as a church school and the school has also benefited from a recent, diocesan led audit of RE, which has identified further ways in which the quality of teaching and RE curriculum might be improved. RE and collective worship are both effectively led by the headteacher. Self evaluation of these subjects has resulted in action plans being implemented and financial resources are available to support these changes which aim to further improve the distinctiveness and effectiveness of Folksworth as a church school. Provision for RE meets the National Society's Statement of Entitlement for religious education and collective worship meets statutory requirements.

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