

Hornby St Margaret's C of E primary school

Main Street
Hornby,
Lancaster
LA2 8JY

Diocese: Blackburn

Local authority: Lancashire
Date of inspection: Friday 11th November 2011
Date of last inspection: 30th June 2009
School's unique reference number: 119530
Headteacher: Mr Kerry Stafford-Roberts
Inspector's name and number: Paul Adnitt 590

School context

Hornby St Margaret's school is a very small rural primary school with 39 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are from white British backgrounds. Pupils are taught in two mixed age classes, one key stage 2 and one including pupils in Reception and key stage 1. An executive headteacher is in post, who shares his time between this and another local school.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Hornby St. Margaret's as a Church of England school are good

The school provides a good and supportive Christian environment which contributes well to pupil's spiritual and moral development. Pupils are happy and they care for each other. The school has made progress since its last inspection and the leadership team of the school are determined to continue this positive trend. The school is a very caring Christian community in which all are valued and feel they are special. Christian values strongly underpin all that the school does and this has a very positive effect upon the personal development of all pupils.

Established strengths

- The strong Christian leadership of the headteacher, who is well supported by staff, governors and parents
- The school is a welcoming Christian community where all pupils and staff are valued and nurtured
- The strong and effective links between school and the church
- The quality of relationships which supports the Christian ethos of the school

Focus for development

- Ensure that parents are aware of what makes the school distinctly Christian and that they are involved in evaluating its impact on pupils' spiritual development
- Develop the school environment in order to make the Christian nature of the school more obvious to pupils, staff and visitors alike.
- To provide further opportunities for pupils to plan and lead collective worship as part of the regular school programme

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

The school provides a good and supportive Christian environment which contributes well to the pupils' spiritual and moral development. Staff and governors seek to instill a respect for Christian values and attitudes within a happy, stimulating and caring learning environment. This environment is characterised by each pupil's good behaviour and the Christian care and concern for others that exists within and between members of the school family. Children feel loved and secure and recognize the school's high expectations. Children are proud to be part of the school. They can articulate very well what is right and wrong. The school puts great emphasis on forgiveness and reconciliation and children know how big a word 'sorry' is.

Pupils look after each other and show real care for one another. Staff know they are valued and pupils know they will be listened to. Children and families have a generous nature and show concern for world issues. The school hall has a clear focus through the worship table and other displays reflect work done in RE or worship. Displays in some classrooms and around the school help to highlight the Christian character of the school, though this needs to be developed to reflect further the Christian ethos of the school.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Worship is a valuable experience for all pupils, and it has a positive impact on the spiritual development of the pupils. Worship is given a high priority. Acts of worship are timetabled and delivered by a variety of people throughout the year. Pupils respond well to worship. They are able to participate often they listen well, respond willingly and show good levels of reverence, knowledge and enjoyment. There are times set aside for quiet personal reflection and prayer, which has a positive impact on pupils' excellent spiritual and moral development. They pray with confidence and sing happily. All adults participate in worship throughout the school week but not necessarily at the same time. Staff and children are often inspired and affirmed by worship and participants make good use of prayer and reflection time as a means of spiritual growth. Pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development is enhanced by collective worship. Learners are introduced to a variety of prayers, songs, styles of worship and also Christian affirmations, some of which reflect the distinctive Anglican tradition. All major festivals in the church year are celebrated. Consideration should now be taken to provide further opportunities for pupils to be involved in planning and leading worship.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

The RE provided conforms with the school trust deed and the school has adopted the diocesan syllabus. Five percent of the timetable is devoted to RE and the split is 80% Christianity and 20% non Christian faiths. There is much evidence that RE is taught with enthusiasm and covers areas appropriately. All learners make good progress in all three key stages and the school works very hard to ensure that standards of attainment and achievement are equal to or better than those achieved in core subjects. Planning and evaluation is thorough. Pupils are very articulate and are able to express their thoughts and beliefs. Reflection is an important element of RE lessons and children are given opportunities to take thinking forward. They readily join in and contribute to discussions and they listen well and are increasingly confident in talking about their faith. Their passion for the subject is evident in their enthusiasm during lessons. One pupil commented, "We like RE because you find out more about the Bible and what the stories mean. It's exciting!" Children are also given the opportunity to "Live Out" the Christian faith throughout the school year by different activities. The quality of RE teaching has a positive impact on pupils' spiritual, moral and social development.

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

A significant majority of the school's stakeholders speak confidently about the school's Christian vision. The mission of the school is shared with staff, governors, pupils and families on a regular basis. The governing body fully reflects the Christian ethos of the school and it is involved in monitoring school on a regular basis. Most stakeholders are involved in reviews of the school's Christian values, though evidence suggests that parents lack understanding of what it means to be a church school. This will need to be addressed if the school wants to develop its mission to all stakeholders. The headteacher bases his leadership firmly within his Christian faith and attitudes. He is well supported by a challenging and supportive group of governors, who consider spiritual development and growth important. Governors are actively involved in the church school self evaluation process. The RE governor regularly meets with the headteacher and RE leader to evaluate the distinctive Christian character of the school.