

Arnside National Church of England Primary School

Church Hill
Arnside
Cumbria
LA5 0DW



Diocese of Carlisle
Growing Disciples

Diocese:	Carlisle	
Local authority:	Cumbria	
Dates of inspection	10/10 /12	
Date of last inspection:	11/10/07	
School's unique reference number:	112311	
Headteacher:	Mr Alan Cook	
Inspector's name & number:	Penny Hollander	National Society No. 526

School context

Arnside National CE School became an academy in December 2011. It is in the southern most part of Cumbria near to the Lancashire border. It is in a rural location with 141 pupils currently on roll and additionally has 26 nursery places. The vast majority of pupils are of white British ethnicity. Standards of pupil achievement have been consistently high over a number of years.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Arnside CE School as a Church of England school are good

The school continues to demonstrate well its distinctive Christian character through the Christian values it embraces, especially those of respect, responsibility and trust. These effectively underpin all of school life. They are recognised and supported by all stakeholders Together with the continuing strong links with the church community they ensure its effectiveness as a Church of England school.

Established strengths

- Excellent relationships between all members of the school community
- Distributive leadership across the whole school
- Strong links between the church and school

Focus for development

- A review of the of the school's Christian vision and values in line with the school's academy status and as a Church of England school
- Embed assessment of religious education (RE) across the school

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

Children feel safe and are very happy in school. They say that everyone works well together and they look after one another. They are particularly appreciative of their teachers who they feel always help and care for them. Teachers act as good role models and effectively demonstrate Christian values of respect, care and responsibility which permeate school life. These are known and appreciated by stakeholders. Children's behaviour is exemplary and they articulate this as following the example set by Jesus. They understand the need to forgive others as "Jesus forgives us" through the speedy and fair resolution of conflict in a spirit of reconciliation. Their spiritual development is enhanced through strong links with the church and participation in such events as "Experience Easter" held in church. Relevant interactive displays such as "Qualities of King Jesus" also encourage and challenge children's thinking about Christian values. Cross-curricular work is used effectively for children to explore social and cultural dimensions in school life. The school benefits from

visits and visitors to explore the wider world, including global links in a Christian context. One recent example is the visit of a farmer from Malawi to talk to the children about Fairtrade. As a consequence a link is now established with a school in Malawi. The children talk animatedly about how they are beginning to share their interests and experiences with these children. Pupils benefit from a wide range of opportunities to share from and learn with others at a local level, particularly through sporting activities. The after school 'J Club' also demonstrates a commitment by the church community and school to widen children's understanding of Christian teaching in fun and social ways. Pupils' social and cultural development is further enhanced by the various residential visits and they speak enthusiastically about how much they learn about environments different from their own. For older pupils the visit to London is a particular annual highlight. Pupils show their care for others less fortunate than themselves through charity fundraising and demonstrate Christian values of compassion for all by such actions as their contributions of food from their Harvest Festival service to local charities such as Manna House in Kendal and the Homeless Action Service in Lancaster. Pupils are also aware of their responsibility in looking after the environment in which they live as part of God's creation through their actions to recycle what they can and are currently working for an eco-award.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Pupils are enthusiastic about collective worship and are consistently engaged in a number of ways particularly in singing, answering questions and role play. Some opportunities are however missed for children's decision making and more frequently taking a lead in worship. Nevertheless, children clearly enjoy these times and appreciate the variety of approaches that are taken by those that lead worship. They speak warmly about the regular contributions made by the vicar and NISCU. They say that they also learn a lot from the Friday films of Bible stories. "It's fun and makes us think about the teaching in the Bible". Pupils and staff, regardless of background are included and affirmed by worship and develop their daily thinking and actions. For example in an act of worship observed during inspection about the need to work together children afterwards were able to explain that this is a natural part of their school life and follows the example of Jesus working with his disciples to help those he met who needed help. Plans for worship are well embedded. The school has successfully addressed a focus for development from the last inspection to evaluate the impact of worship on the school community. Pupils are now actively engaged in this and regularly use an evaluation form devised by the school council. These comments inform future planning. For instance a wider range of approaches in telling Bible stories is now used, including the use of puppets and drama. The school and church work well together for worship at significant times in the church year when the children plan and lead parts of the school services held in church. These times help children to understand and use Anglican tradition. Parents support these occasions particularly well. Pupils also value links with other Christian traditions such as the Methodists and Roman Catholics in their local area.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

Children talk enthusiastically about their religious education (RE) lessons and achieve well. They are able to discuss both what they have learned about religion and what they learn from religion. For example in one lesson observed children were able to show the importance of water in both Christianity and Islam. They were able to explain the similarities between both religions in the need for cleansing and renewal. The school recognises through its own self evaluation document that the development of the RE curriculum is a key objective. The school has worked hard to ensure that the new schemes of work now in place reflect current requirements and draw upon the new Cumbria Agreed Syllabus. This has successfully addressed a focus for development from the last inspection. The next step is to embed assessment of children's learning both to inform planning and to ensure consistent progress and tracking for all pupils. A range of teaching and learning strategies, including reflection and enquiry, are used effectively. The church as a resource for teaching Christianity is used well in various ways including as a place for reflection. Children are able to explain clearly the place and purpose of the church in their lives. They also show knowledge of places of worship from other religions through visits such as to the Buddhist Temple at Ulverston, and through the vicar's experience of Islam as a mission partner in Pakistan. Relevant in-service training ensures that teaching in RE is kept up to date and leads to good learning.

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

Senior school leaders and governors ensure that Christian values inform policy and practice. This is evidenced from the mission statement they have jointly developed in recent years. Stakeholders, including learners, have been consulted and strongly support the Christian vision of the school but they are not necessarily always engaged in a regular review of this and the school's Christian values. This is an area for development. RE and collective worship are well led and contribute to the school's distinctive Christian character. These areas are regularly monitored and evaluated by a designated governor and shared with the governing body. Self-evaluation, which involves staff and governors, informs development planning and shows clear understanding of future needs as a church school although succession planning is not always clearly articulated. Personal professional development for staff and governors is beneficial for the whole school and church community. One example is the annual diocesan day for headteacher and incumbent. From one of these occasions "Experience Easter" was successfully introduced into school. This was appreciated and supported by the school, members of the church and local community. The strong mutual support between the school, local and wider communities continues to develop for the benefit of all. The school is recognised as a central part of the local community and the many visitors who contribute to children's knowledge and understanding of the locality is well received. In turn, the school contributes to local community events, including those which involve the church. Parents are very supportive of the school both in fundraising and all school events. These include those connected with the church, particularly the church services held at important times in the church year. Children take seriously the responsibilities they are given in school decision making. The school council is proud of the contribution it makes and draws upon suggestions made by pupils in the class suggestions boxes. New playground equipment and the Friendship Bench are two examples where this has been put into practice.

SIAS report October 2012, Arnside National CE School, Church Hill, Arnside, LA5 0DW