



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Leverton Church of England Academy

Main Street
North Leverton
Retford
DN22 0AD

Previous SIAMS grade: Good

Current inspection grade: Good

Diocese:

Local authority: Not applicable
Date of inspection: 27 January 2016
Date of last inspection: 12 November 2010
School's unique reference number: 137986
Headteacher: Rebecca Chadwick (Acting)
Inspector's name and number: David Shannon 617

Academy context

The school became an academy in April 2012. It is a small rural school of 95 children with few pupils from minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with disabilities or with special needs is above average. The school has been led by an acting headteacher for nearly three years and recruitment processes were starting in January 2016 to resolve this leadership issue. There are close ties with St. Martin's Parish Church, which works in partnership with the Methodist chapel.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Leverton Academy as a Church of England academy are good

- The Christian ethos of the academy is apparent in daily academy life, so that it has a clear impact on every aspect of it.
- Pupils are cared for and loved by everyone who works at the academy, which results in a very positive atmosphere in which children feel valued as children of God.
- The leadership team have a clear Christian vision for the development of the academy, so that they are actively moving it forward.
- Links with the Anglican-Methodist community flourish because governors are developing the Christian distinctiveness of the academy in partnership with them.

Areas to improve

- Ensure Religious Education contributes to the whole school curriculum, so that pupils are stimulated by its delivery to answer searching questions
- Enhance worship by involving pupils in the planning and evaluating of worship activities, so that they see ownership of worship as something they share
- Increase the role of pupils and Governors in the analytical monitoring of the three year development plan for Christian distinctiveness in order that its impact

can be intensified.

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

Leverton Academy promotes its Christian values of hope, encourage, accept, respect and trust to drive up standards. The dedication of the staff, most of whom were new to the academy in September 2014, actively promotes spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Relationships are based on Christian love and care, so that attendance is improving and the small number of pupils on targeted school support feels happy and secure. Pupils experience a wide range of learning and extra-curricular activities, which give them a good understanding of global communities whose identity is quite different from their own. Pupils value particularly the range of cultural and spiritual learning activities, so that their horizons are broadened to understand what diverse communities' value. Pupils have a clear sense of morality, which impacts on the way they treat each other; no one is left to work or play without friends.

Squabbles are quickly ended and bullying or incidents based on prejudice non-existent, so that the academy is acting as a magnet for pupils who have felt isolated in bigger primaries. Religious education (RE) reinforces the teachings of Jesus on reconciliation and embracing diversity.

Pupils enjoy RE and particularly embrace opportunities afforded to learn in several different ways, which means they can choose their preferred learning style. Diocesan materials to support the teaching of RE have been adopted and are being delivered by all staff with the support of the acting headteacher as RE coordinator, so that all staff share effectively in its delivery. Leaders have ensured RE is well resourced and part of every teacher's professional development, so that it is delivered with confidence in an engaging way. Attainment in RE is being monitored through a new assessment system and progress in RE is improving. Pupils are outspoken about combatting global poverty, sending sixty-five shoe boxes to the "Operation Christmas Child" charity. Pupils understand their role as custodians of God's creation, and were particularly concerned at news of beached whales on the Lincolnshire coast. The academy awards system promotes hard work and taking care, so that each Friday's special assembly emphasises how we all have God-given talents. The academy is striving to become an outstanding church academy by recognising and nurturing the unique, God given value of each child.

The impact of collective worship on the academy community is good

The pupils talk about the connection between collective worship and their view of themselves, relating occasions when something said in collective worship has made them alter their ideas. They participate willingly and sing with enthusiasm, looking forward to worship both in the academy and in the village church and chapel. The programme is distinctively Christian, promoting the core values of the academy, which are then replicated in displays in the entrance hall and around the building. The multi-purpose hall has been furnished with displays capturing the spiritual life of the academy, including the pupils running a community Christmas lunch. A variety of worship leaders is used, all following a termly and weekly theme to promote continuity. Pupils can explain the teachings of Jesus and show confidence when talking of their own response to the challenge posed by choosing faith. They are increasing their knowledge of Christian concepts such as the Trinity, the sacraments of communion, baptism, confirmation and marriage. They can make sense of some stories in both the old and new testaments and see the significance of the nativity and Easter. Learners do take encouragement to pray collectively and individually, and parents have been impressed by the wish of many to pray over meals and the day's end at home. Pupils use well the reflection areas in each class, placing stones in a basket in an act of "letting go of burdens". The opportunity to pass on topics and your own prayers for when the whole academy comes together is still developing. The academy prayer was written by a pupil and is prominently displayed, including on the website, and reverently used, giving a strong identity to the community. Parents and friends value school worship, so that they accept in great numbers every opportunity to share in it. There is as yet insufficient opportunity for

pupils to choose themes, plan and lead worship activities, so that they share in its ownership. The Parish Church of St Martin's is currently without a vicar, but the village is developing an ecumenical partnership through the Methodist minister, who frequently leads worship in the academy.

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

The acting headteacher and the assistant head communicate effectively the Christian vision of the academy, so that pupils are keen to learn and self-confident, with a clear view of their self-worth as children of the Creator. The leadership team has improved the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning; this has included some steps to improve collective worship, the RE curriculum and Christian distinctiveness as required by the last inspection. They have been supported by a teaching school and an outstanding nearby school, so that they are confident in moving the school forward. Virtually all teaching staff were new in September 2014, but they embrace the Christian vision of school leaders, and so are working effectively together to raise standards. There are strategies in place to improve progress, based on the concept of "going the extra mile", with careful tracking using levels progressing from "paddling" to "diving". Every adult displays Christian love in a caring atmosphere, which is raising standards throughout the school. The appointment of a new coordinator for pupils with specific educational needs has enabled pupil premium money to be carefully targeted, thereby helping learners to overcome considerable learning disadvantages. New staff have excellent support from their mentors, who quickly enable the newly qualified staff to adopt the ethos of the academy. The governing body has experienced considerable change, with some new foundation governors recently joining, so that governors speak enthusiastically about the importance of the academy's Christian mission. Governors are developing their role of recording their frequent visits, including an analytical input as to what is working well. They have a good grasp of where challenges remain and how promoting the Christian ethos will improve every aspect of the academy. The foundation governors have been supported by the Diocese in overcoming significant challenges, so that bridges have been built with the Anglican, Methodist and local communities. Parents unequivocally love the academy's values, supporting the development of the academy's distinctively Christian vision, by taking the increasing number of opportunities to be involved. The school leaders and governors ensure that statutory requirements for RE and collective worship are fully met; this academy makes a significant impact on the well-being of its pupils and their local community.

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