

## Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

### Danby Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Ainthorpe Lane, Danby, Whitby YO21 2NG	
<b>Current SIAMS inspection grade</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Diocese</b>	<b>York</b>
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Date of inspection	21 June 2018
Date of last inspection	June 2013
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Controlled Primary 121486
Executive headteacher	Liz Orland
Inspector's name and number	Lizzie McWhirter 244

#### School context

Danby Primary School currently has 35 pupils on roll, who are mainly from a White British background, in this small rural primary school serving the local area. Cohorts are small and the proportion of pupils who have special needs and /or disabilities is high. There have been significant staffing changes since the previous denominational inspection and a new governing body in place. Currently there is now an executive headteacher, also the religious education [RE] subject leader, who was appointed in April 2018. She is also headteacher of Egton Primary School, judged outstanding at its last denominational inspection. Danby School is also part of the Esk Teaching Alliance and works closely with a consultant headteacher.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Danby as a Church of England school are good

- This is a small welcoming family community where everyone is nurtured and accepted for who they are, reflecting its Christian ethos. Consequently, pupils grow in confidence and in both their academic and personal development.
- Recent instability and disruption has been stabilised with a new headteacher and a relatively new governing body. This means the school is now well placed to move forward rapidly together as a church school. This is due to prompt and appropriate action taken by the new headteacher that is effectively moving the school forward.
- Good relationships exist at all levels which provide a firm foundation for this school's continuing school improvement journey.
- The diocese has been instrumental in putting the current leadership in place as part of its ongoing commitment to the school.

#### Areas to improve

- Establish the school's Christian vision and values, policy and practice so the whole school community has ownership of this important foundation and cornerstone for growth.
- Ensure that monitoring is robust and rigorous, especially in RE and collective worship, two key aspects of Christian distinctiveness in order to ensure the quality of experiences offered to pupils and inform future planning.
- Extend pupils' engagement in planning, leading and evaluating collective worship as young leaders in this church school.
- Deepen pupils' global awareness of Christianity as a worldwide faith. In addition, enable them to meet people of all faiths to nurture their spiritual and cultural development.

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

Danby School is embarking on a new chapter in its life. A substantive headteacher is now in post, and, together with her staff and governors, is making a real difference to the lives of the pupils and the families whom they serve. An inherited vision and subsequent values are being revisited to ensure this new community embraces the way forward as one. This is a key priority. Much has been achieved since Easter, but time and resources are needed to implement and embed policy and practice. Currently, this is not in place. However, this caring Christian environment is helping inspire all to sustain a lifelong journey to develop knowledge, faith and skills and enable all to learn, grow and flourish. Attendance is good and there have been no exclusions. Relationships and behaviour have improved and are good. Perseverance, care and respect are in evidence at Danby. For example, this school is very inclusive of vulnerable pupils. There have been a number of success stories where external support and working closely with parents has been beneficial. Progress and attainment over time is good in Key Stage 1, and in line with national averages. However, this is not the case in Key Stage 2, where there are pupils with complex needs, and results for progress and attainment are well below average. Pupils enjoy a wide range of activities to promote achievement at all levels. For example, Year 5 and 6 pupils take part in activities, such as 'Hit The Surf' in nearby Whitby, Crucial Crew and the Archbishop Leadership Awards to encourage life skills and aptitudes, such as perseverance. Such activities encourage pupils to be confident in social situations, develop a strong sense of right and wrong and articulate their beliefs. Worship and RE are beginning to make good contributions to pupils' spiritual and personal development.

Pupils enjoy RE, especially asking important and challenging questions, such as, 'Where will I find God?' and 'How is God Jesus' father when Mary gave birth to him and Jesus is known as God?' Pupils go on to suggest possible answers to such key questions on a prominent and vibrant display. Pupils are proud of their RE work, notably prayers they have written and reflections on the journey of life to heaven. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of the Christmas and Easter story is good, with attention to detail. They find RE fun as well as challenging and cite thinking about creation and science, asking 'Why did God make the earth?' Learning in RE does not only take place when pupils study Christianity, but is also in finding out about other faith traditions. Some older pupils said they found 'learning about Ramadan interesting' and say they would like to know more about other parts of the world. Whilst charitable actions and fundraising activities help promote global awareness, pupils have a limited understanding of Christianity as a worldwide faith. Pupils are very accepting of those from other cultures and backgrounds. The school is very aware that pupils need to meet people of all faiths and visit their places of worship. Currently, this does not take place.

### **The impact of collective worship on the school community is good**

Collective worship is an important part of school life at Danby and enjoyed by adults, including parents, and pupils alike. There is an emphasis on Christian values, key festivals in the church year and biblical teaching. Pupils comment that the most important part of worship for them is 'learning about Jesus'. They draw inspiration from Bible stories and cite Daniel and Joshua as good role models. For example, they explain that, 'Joshua kept trusting God and kept going until he succeeded'. Daniel's story encourages them to pray to God and 'know that God's always with me'. They go on to say that the story of David and Goliath helps them to 'stand up to challenges'. There are close links with St Hilda's Church and its clergy and parish community, most recently in an interregnum. The pattern of worship includes worship in school led by the Methodist minister. Currently, the reader from St Hilda's leads worship in school fortnightly and in church, especially for festivals. Pupils value such times as Harvest, not least because this is a strong farming community, with one pupil adding, 'my dad's a farmer'. Whilst pupils know the importance of St Hilda's connection with Whitby Abbey, joint St Hilda's Day services are planned with Egton School, to whose parish church is dedicated to the same saint. Pupils enjoy hymns and talk about who they sing about. For example, they speak of 'God in three parts, all different people but part of the same person'. They go on to talk of 'God as creator of all things, like the bee and tiny ant and the pebbles on the beach. Jesus was sent down to earth by God. He turned water into wine and encouraged people to worship God. He died on the cross.' Pupils are invited to pray and reflect as well as lead aspects of worship. Themes in worship, such as try, try and try again challenge pupils to 'believe in yourself' as an important life skill. Pupils also remember the 'importance of God to friends and family'. Some pupils were privileged to meet the Archbishop of York when he visited the school on his pilgrimage as part of the diocesan family of schools. Pupils recall how he led them in the saying of The Lord's Prayer. Collective worship is improving although regular systems for monitoring are not yet in place. This is because the school makes use of an outstanding planner provided by Egton and the headteacher and consultant headteacher model worship that is a rich experience for everyone.

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

In recent years, Danby has experienced significant changes in both staffing and governance, but is now entering a

more stable period, with an experienced head and member of the Diocesan Board of Education at the helm. The new leadership and management team have enthusiasm, vision and purpose to move the school forward. Indeed, the headteacher's positivity and enthusiasm is 'catching' and she has been welcomed for the changes she has made within a short space of time. North Yorkshire colleagues cite how she has 'guided the school through a challenging period'. Teachers and governors have welcomed her direct approach and systems have been put in place. Above all, the whole community knows that 'the children are at the heart of any decisions made'. Areas from the last inspection have been addressed, with the ethos team planning to expand their work. Reviewing the school's vision and values as well as all policies and setting up worship teams are a priority as well as training about diversity. An emergency Christian distinctiveness plan is in place, with short, medium and long term steps to success clearly identified. These are the right priorities for action. Much has been done, but there is still a long way to go in terms of implementing and embedding policy and practice, taking everyone forward together on its journey of school improvement. For example, it has been identified that the pupil worship teams from Egton will meet with Danby pupils to model leading worship. Staff embrace this, citing Danby as a 'fun and lively' place to work. They find the school's leaders supportive and the pupils happy and enthusiastic to learn, describing Danby as 'on the way up'. The RE subject leader is currently the headteacher which ensures this key aspect of Christian distinctiveness is now having a higher profile for staff and pupils alike. Whilst both worship and RE meet statutory requirements, the monitoring of these two key areas are very much a priority for the school at this moment in time. Currently, this is not in place. Links with the diocese and local schools, especially within the Esk Valley Teaching Alliance, are very supportive, with the school benefitting from diocesan training. The school features monthly in the village magazine, 'Esk Views'.

The work of the consultant headteacher has been invaluable. In the two days a week she works with the school, she leads collective worship, looks at pupils' books and standards and expectations, in monitoring and supporting Christian distinctiveness. Although the impact of recent improvements is in its infancy, the systems that have been put in place by the headteachers ensure these improvements are sustainable. Wellbeing for all, including the new headteacher is a priority for governors which they see as the 'heartbeat of the school'. Patience and care and above all, love, underpins the way the staff work with all pupils, especially those most vulnerable. In this 'happy, vibrant, caring and nurturing' environment, they want to help the pupils to succeed. Staff cite Jesus' commandment to love one another as their inspiration in this family community where 'everyone knows each other'. Parents speak highly of how their children are 'really confident when talking to adults, saying hello and making connections, recognising different generations'. Parents also praise the school's work with the village's elderly residents. They also speak of the ways in which their children adhere to the values taught at school. For example, one parent spoke of her son, wanting to say prayers at bedtime, showing an interest in creation and choosing a book about different faiths from the library. The potential going forward is very positive.

SIAMS report June 2018 Danby CE VC Primary School, Whitby YO21 2NG