

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Hoylake Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School	
Market Street, Hoylake, Wirral, Merseyside, CH47 3BH	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Chester
Previous SIAS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local authority	Wirral
Date of inspection	15 May 2017
Date of last inspection	May 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Controlled 105063
Headteacher	Catherine O'Neill Edwards
Inspector's name and number	Mike Graham 286

School context

Holy Trinity is an expanding average sized primary school situated in the centre of Hoylake. Most children are of White British background with a small number of children from other cultures. The proportion of children entitled to the pupil premium, extra funding for the disadvantaged, is below the national average. The school serves mainly the local town but a number of pupils travel from nearby areas. The headteacher, senior leadership team and many of the staff have been appointed since the last inspection.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Hoylake Holy Trinity as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The clear Christian vision of the headteacher sets the tone for all of the school's caring work with the pupils - some of whom make up a church ethos group to lead on Christian values and worship. All staff and governors follow the headteacher's lead with utter conviction.
- Christian values permeate and drive all aspects of school life and are lived out in the outstanding relationships between all members of the school. Mutual respect and care ensure that children are secure and happy in their learning. As a result, they make good to outstanding progress.
- Excellent worship and religious education (RE) lead to impressive maturity in the pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural (SMSC) development.
- Church links are excellent, with numerous joint ventures building relationships and providing a strong Christian presence radiating care and support to the local community.

Areas to improve

- Devise a new child-friendly mission statement and/or motto to reinforce and state boldly the Christian vision that is the beating heart of the school.
- Establish an annual 'Holy Trinity Celebration' to deepen the community's awareness of the school's Christian heritage, and to strengthen pupils' understanding of the Trinity.

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

Christian values such as love, trust and forgiveness are the foundation of all the school's work. A governor commented, '...they are actively lived and embedded in all areas of the school community. By rooting these values in Christian teaching, the children all have something real, tangible and wonderful to remember them by'. The Christian care lavished on every pupil brings security and a sense of joy in learning. There is no fear of failure or of making mistakes, so that the pupils are able to give of their best. The academic progress achieved, as recognised by Ofsted last May, is good to outstanding. The school's own record-keeping data confirms this, and indeed there have been steady improvements in results over the last few years. Work with vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils is outstanding, with the learning mentors playing a key role in support and encouragement of pupils and families. This results in outstanding progress for this group of pupils and in improved attendance levels, which are now approaching national expectations. The exceptional Christian care and love make these positive outcomes possible. The pupils' social and moral development is very impressive. They have a clear sense of right and wrong, and show respect and good manners to everyone. Their behaviour is exemplary. An example is their response in worship to the raising of hands by leaders, some of whom were young pupils, at times when silence is appropriate after brief paired discussions about the theme. Quietness descends in seconds, so that all present could 'hear a pin drop!' The pupils' spiritual and cultural development is also excellent. A key contribution is made by RE. The subject leader is skilful, sensitive and full of enthusiasm for her subject. This leads to outstanding teaching. The pupils' knowledge of Christianity and the impact this has on the Christian character of the school is highly significant. Their understanding is deepened as they explore Christian themes. A Year 6 girl learned a lot about forgiveness in a study of the last supper. She said that this was through 'Jesus' sacrifice for us, explained through His breaking of bread and sharing the wine – His body and blood'. Exceptionally skilful and sensitive teaching with years 1/2 and 5/6 showed why most pupils make such outstanding progress.

Pupils also study other world faiths to good effect. They understand, for instance, the crucial part played by regular prayer in the lives of Muslims. The pupils are quite clear about the value of these studies, one saying that knowing about other people's lives 'gives you different opinions'. The welcome extended to those of other faiths is also striking. After initial anxiety when enrolling her children, a Muslim mother now has 'no worries', since they have received 'love, help and friendship'.

Relationships between all members of the school community demonstrate Christian values superbly. For instance a Year 3 boy became visibly upset during the singing in worship. A member of staff simply went quietly to him and held his hand as they sang, gradually restoring calm through this simple loving act.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship at Holy Trinity is sincere and relevant, and makes a significant difference to the lives of everyone in the school family. The variety of leaders, including pupils, staff and clergy, engages everyone in worship. The regular, carefully structured and wide-ranging evaluation ensures that worship is constantly evolving and improving. All are fully and in fact joyfully involved. The vicar provides appropriate experiences of Anglican traditions in worship, including the popular 'Communion in the Community'. This is a child-friendly Eucharist held in school with the older pupils and open to the whole community. The vicar is fully immersed in the spiritual life of the whole school family. Parents and carers speak highly of 'Rev Paul', one saying that 'He always makes the children feel welcome, even the noisy babies!' Sensitive teaching in RE and worship, and confirmation classes for those who wish to take part in them, make the regular child-friendly Eucharist services powerful and effective. Many pupils thereby reach a deep level of Christian maturity. Members of the recently formed church ethos group lead worship and help others to do so. The spiritual and social maturity they demonstrate is exceptional.

Biblical teaching, stories, plays, reflection, prayer and excellent singing, often with actions to emphasise the meaning of the song or hymn, are all part of a rich tapestry of spiritual inspiration. The pupils and adults present are captivated, thus gaining great insights into the Christian faith and values. The pupils have an impressive grasp of the Christian understanding of God as Trinity, including teachings about the Holy Spirit. One Year 6 girl commented, 'The Holy Spirit filled the disciples and can fill us, just like Jesus was filled with the Spirit at His baptism.' There is, however, no real celebration of the school's name to reinforce the community's understanding of this vital teaching and important heritage. Worship in classes is intimate and yet well integrated with whole school worship. A weekly challenge is given each Monday, which classes explore and respond to at appropriate levels, thus gaining in confidence in these smaller groups.

Prayer is seen and understood as a natural part of a life of faith. The pupils accept quite naturally that 'we just say things to God in our heads. He's special. He can hear your thoughts', as a Year 6 boy put it. The pupils also welcome the areas in each classroom where they are able to reflect on issues and write or say their own prayers. Spontaneous prayer is also prominent and highly significant. A Year 1 boy prayed beautifully when offered the

opportunity following a class-led whole-school worship. Prayer features frequently throughout the school day, not just in worship. This confirms the pupils' spiritual awareness and understanding. For example four Year 4 girls wrote a prayer at lunchtime, 'A standing stone can't keep us from God, a brick can't keep us from his love.'

Parents and carers join with the school and the church community at key points in the church calendar to worship in church together. They also enjoy 'messy church' four times a year, with whole families enjoying fun, games, food and worship in the church hall. The pupils play important roles in leading such services at Harvest, Christmas and Easter. These occasions undoubtedly play their part in maintaining and strengthening the bonds between the communities.

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

The headteacher leads the school with a clear Christian vision. 'As Jesus is the light of the world, we too aim to shine light and spread warmth and the Church message throughout our community. We aim to be the hub of the community, with church and school united in Christian witness.' Her own faith shines through all her work and relationships in school, with the focus always on the well-being of the children. The leadership team, staff and governors follow and support this joyful lead with immense commitment. The Christian love and support given to every child releases their full potential, often from starting points below national averages. The source of this love is clearly the example of Jesus, whose teaching and life inspires and guides the school.

The vision is clear to almost all members of the school community, and everyone admires the caring and wholehearted work of the staff team. However, the mission statement does not do justice to the school's Christ-centred approach. The foundation governors are closely involved in school, helping with clubs and in classes. Their presence reinforces the strong links with the church and governors. They know the pupils well and add to the already loving and caring ethos. Their enthusiasm in supporting the pupils in their work and in their awareness of Christianity and faith in general is infectious. One said, 'Disadvantaged children are loved and included.'

The impact made by the school's Christian vision is secured by detailed, honest and strategic planning. Governors are keen to challenge when appropriate as well as bringing well-deserved encouragement to the staff team. Issues raised by the previous report have been tackled thoroughly and successfully. Future leadership in church schools is promoted through excellent teamwork, good delegation and high quality in-service training.

Partnerships and relationships with other local schools, St Hildeburgh's (the local parish church), St Luke's and Hoylake Evangelical church, the diocese and the community at large are strong and mutually beneficial. The 'big bash' summer camp at St Luke's and a journey through Christian history at the Evangelical church are two examples of these joint ventures. Giving to local and international charities reinforces the pupils' understanding of Christian compassion through helping others. The pupils take a strong lead in building positive friendships through the buddy system whereby those in Year 6 befriend and support the Reception pupils. Year 5 pupils act as play leaders for the younger children too. Parents and carers are immensely proud of their school, and appreciate the significant improvements made in recent years to an already successful school. Comments included, 'Individual care is given to each child, with love and encouragement', 'The Christian ethos here is so crucial' and 'It's the best little place in the world!' It is certainly a very special place, and has the capacity to continue its development, in partnership with the church, as a beacon of Christian love and care in the locality.

SIAMS report May 2017, Holy Trinity CofE VC Primary School, Hoylake, Wirral, Merseyside, CH47 3BH