



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

The Holme CofE Primary School (Academy)

Openfields
Headley
Bordon
Hampshire GU35 8PQ

Previous SIAMS grade: Satisfactory

Current inspection grade: Good

Diocese: Guildford

Local authority: N/A

Dates of inspection: 29 April 2016

Date of last inspection: 20 March 2013

School's unique reference number: 139920

Headteacher: Ruth Worswick

Inspector's name and number: Marcia Headon 761

School context

The Holme Primary School with 123 pupils aged between four and eleven is smaller than most primary schools. The percentage of pupils who receive additional government funding is below average as is the proportion who come from minority ethnic heritages or speak English as a second language. The number of pupils who have special educational needs or disabilities is above the national average. The school became an academy in 2013 as part of Guildford Diocese Good Shepherd Trust. The headteacher joined in September 2014. Ofsted judged the school to require improvement in May 2015. An Ofsted monitoring visit in November 2015 was positive.

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

- The clear leadership and vision of the headteacher has significantly enhanced the Christian distinctiveness of the academy.
- The growing links with the local church have strengthened the spiritual development of the pupils.
- The high quality of the relationships within the academy underpins all aspects of its work.

Areas to improve

- Highlight the Christian values of the academy more strongly so that pupils are more fully aware of their contribution to the academy's Christian distinctiveness.
- Involve pupils more in the planning and leading of collective worship in order to develop their spirituality.
- Consider further how religious education (RE) lessons can be planned to ensure pupils are given opportunities to apply their knowledge and skills to their own lives.

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

The academy has a well-defined set of values, some of which are explicitly Christian. They are well known by the pupils and as one said, 'they help you to make the right choices in life'. Values-based education drives the work of the school strongly. For example, policies are underpinned by the values and when making decisions about pupils the values are always considered. However, there is now an opportunity to make the Christian values even more explicit and hence to enhance the academy's Christian distinctiveness. Because of its ethos of stewardship and its desire to see all children receive the best, the school meets the academic needs of its pupils well. Results in 2015 were much improved from 2014 and pupils made much better progress. In Early Years the proportion of pupils who reached a good level of development was above average as was the proportion who achieved the expected level in the Year 1 phonics test. All children in the Year 6 tests made at least expected progress and the percentage achieving more than expected progress in reading and writing was above the national average. Progress has continued to accelerate in all year groups. The needs of children with special educational needs and disabilities are very well catered for and they are given high levels of support. The values support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Relationships within the school are very caring and it is a highly inclusive community. Behaviour is good and there is a strong emphasis upon the values of respect and courtesy. However, while these values are explicitly underlined in 'RTime', the links between them and Christian theology is not always made. The pupils support others less fortunate through considerable charity work. Opportunities such as 'Pause to Be' or the use of Chime Bars give pupils time to think and help to develop their spirituality. They display tolerance – to those of other faiths and none. As a young pupil said 'everyone should be able to make their own choices'. However, they have a much weaker understanding of the role of the Established Church nationally or of the role of the Anglican Church worldwide.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Pupils enjoy collective worship and it is an important part of the academy's Christian distinctiveness. For some it is a time to reflect and talk to God while others like listening to Bible stories. Worship is planned in depth by the headteacher and is carefully organised to emphasise the connection between the academy's values and Bible stories as well as reflecting the Christian calendar. Pupils approach collective worship with reverence and the lighting of the candle signifies a time of prayer, which they use well. They are very enthusiastic about the songs they sing which are carefully chosen to link to the academy's values. They particularly like worship led by the clergy as it involves them in the story telling. The impact of worship is reinforced by class teachers immediately following up on the theme explored: this is helping pupils to appreciate the importance of the academy's values and the Christian foundation of the school. Services held in the local church at important festivals help to develop pupil's understanding of the nature of worship and the recent introduction of special services for Key Stage 2 is increasing awareness of Anglican liturgy. Older pupils show a good understanding of the importance of the Trinity and for the younger pupils this is developing. Class worship and services in church give some opportunities for pupils to lead worship but currently they are not involved in its planning. Recently prayer has become a much more important part of academy life. The concept of prayer spaces was introduced most effectively and has enhanced the importance of prayer. Prayer spaces around the school are well received by pupils and used by some parents. There is very sensitive use in collective worship of pupils' prayer requests written on 'paper dragons' to 'help allay our fears' and from prayers placed in prayer boxes. An evaluation of the impact of collective worship has just been undertaken by a governor conducting a pupil survey, but this is at an early stage of development. The academy meets the statutory requirements for collective worship.

The effectiveness of the Religious Education is satisfactory

The academy is fully aware that standards and progress in RE are not as good as in other subjects. A recent revision to the academy's approach to the planning of RE to incorporate 'big questions' is just beginning to have an impact with improved debate, questioning and reasoning by pupils. The introduction of blocking RE lessons together, has meant that staff place a higher priority on RE, plan more thoroughly and match work more closely to pupils' needs. As a consequence, pupils are beginning to display greater interest in the subject. Overall the quality of teaching and learning is improving. Assessment in RE is at an early stage of development and although pupils are given verbal feedback by teachers, written feedback needs further refinement. The academy follows the Diocesan Guidelines for RE. A variety of activities in RE such as art, drama, and music as exemplified through 'Pentecost in percussion' make a positive contribution to pupils' moral, social and cultural development. A group of Year 4 pupils were busily investigating Christian heroes from different ages and cultures by acting as detectives with a bag of clues. They were posing one another testing questions and debating the nature of the contribution these heroes had made. Nevertheless, some older pupils have gaps in their knowledge which inhibits them from being able to ponder deeper questions of meaning. In the academy as a whole there is less understanding of or discussion about what can be learnt from religion or how it is relevant to their lives. As a result, RE does not make a strong enough contribution to pupils' spiritual development. Although other faiths such as Islam, Hinduism and Judaism are studied, because of their lack of prior knowledge, older pupils find it difficult to make comparisons or draw similarities. The headteacher, who acts as RE coordinator, provides good leadership of the subject. She has cleverly 'buddied' staff together to ensure accurate and thorough moderation of pupils' work. She has a full understanding of what is needed to accelerate pupils' progress in RE. She keeps her own knowledge up to date by attending conferences. Resources for RE are improving. The academy meets the statutory requirement for religious education.

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

The academy has been on a rapid journey since the previous inspection and has made significant progress. It has addressed the areas for development very conscientiously and the development plans for the future are well founded and entirely appropriate. The headteacher constantly models the Christian values. Her energetic and decisive leadership has set the tone of the academy as a Christian community and she is determined to enhance the academy's Christian distinctiveness further. She is very well supported by her deputy headteacher and together they provide strong leadership. Staff development is a high priority and much of this is provided by the Diocese. The headteacher knows the strengths and weaknesses of the academy well and the self-evaluation is accurate. The Governors take their role seriously, and although they have not yet formally monitored or reviewed the school's Christian distinctiveness, they have appropriate development plans to address this. The school has conducted one such survey and parents are positive about the Christian ethos of the academy. The governors have been conscientious in their own training. Links with the local church are now being re-established after a period when they were less evident. The local Rector provides strong support for the academy. A group from the church come in regularly to lead collective worship and run an after school club and the pupils have participated in events at the church such as the flower festival. The parish is kept well informed of events at the academy. The academy has a good relationship with the Diocese and values the support given by the Good Shepherd Trust. Parents are strongly supportive of the academy and of its values based education which they describe as 'being like an essence throughout everything'. They regard the leaders and staff of the academy as being highly approachable.