



Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Highburton Church of England Voluntary Controlled First School	Northfield Lane Highburton Huddersfield HD8 0QT
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese/Methodist District	Leeds
Previous SIAMS inspection grade:	Good
Local authority/date of academy conversion	Kirklees
Name of multi-academy trust/ federation	N/A
Date/s of inspection	23 January 2017
Date of last inspection	20 April 2012
School's unique reference number	107715
Headteacher	Gaynor Leadbeater
Inspector's name and number	Pauline Hilling-Smith 641

School context

There are currently 177 pupils on roll at this school.

Almost all pupils are White British. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language.

The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average.

The headteacher was appointed in September 2013. A new assistant headteacher was appointed in September 2015

The local church is within half an hour's walk from the school.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Highburton Church of England Voluntary Controlled First School as a Church of England school are good

- Christian values underpin all aspects of the life of the school ensuring that friendship, forgiveness, aspiration and respect underpin the learners' academic achievement, social interaction and enjoyment of school.
- Achievement is effectively monitored and any areas of underachievement are swiftly rectified.
- Strong partnerships with parents, the community and the local church have a significant impact on learners' development.

Areas to improve

- Formalise the monitoring of the school as a church school by the governing body and ensure that the link between the monitoring and development plan is sharply focused.
- Ensure opportunities for staff development of leadership in church schools.

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

The school's distinctive Christian character is colourfully and clearly expressed through the excellent displays throughout the school. It is evident in all areas and aspects of school life. Pupils quickly and easily identify how these Christian values affect their daily life and achievements. Pupils have achieved above average standards in English and mathematics for the last three years. The school has had a clear focus on improving a dip in progress last year in mathematics especially for girls in Key Stage 1. This is paying dividends. All pupils make good or better progress in personal development. They learn how to care for everyone, in the school, local and wider community and wave each morning to an elderly lady as they pass her house. Parents appreciate the impact that the teaching of Christian values of friendship, forgiveness, aspiration and respect have upon the relationships they observe and experience between all members of the school community. The system of peer counselling called the 'befrienders' contributes well to the school's Christian values. As a result, learners are eager to come to school and enjoy learning. This is shown in their well above average attendance. They take great pride in their work which is displayed highly effectively in this attractive and welcoming environment. Pupils and parents are highly motivated to help the disadvantaged in the wider and global community and often suggest and lead initiatives themselves such as that to ensure that all members of the community have food to eat. The well-organised and thought out RE curriculum makes a good contribution to the Christian character of the school. The school's Christian values are displayed clearly in the school and captured succinctly in the school logo. Most pupils know and understand the Christian foundation of these and their significance in maintaining the happy and harmonious community. There is a deeply embedded atmosphere of friendship and spiritual well-being of staff and pupils. The staff know their pupils and their families well; they work together to enhance the school's provision. For example, by providing classes in computer coding and making a significant contribution to setting up the extensive outdoor learning field and forest. Pupils say they feel very secure and safe and consequently they are confident to express their views. Every individual is encouraged to think deeply and always feels that their opinion is valued. Learning about Christianity and other religions through visits to a range of places of worship equips pupils with a greater understanding of the diversity of the human race and teaches them to accept each other's differences.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship is recognised as an important feature of the daily life of the school. Pupils recognise the value of worship and sing to a high standard. They participate enthusiastically especially when the puppets or their favourite visiting speaker comes because, they say, it is fun. They acknowledge the time of worship as being an opportunity to relate how they behave to the example set by Jesus. When pupils demonstrate Christian values they are rewarded and acknowledged for the points they have achieved for their house. In collective worship pupils have the opportunity to reflect on why the quality of relationships in school are so strong and, for example, consider why things are not always what they seem. Pupils are proud of the many opportunities they have to be involved in planning and delivering collective worship both in school and in church. The worship team carefully keep a file giving comments about what went well and what could be improved. The foundation governors look at these files and this contributes to their monitoring and evaluation of worship. However, there is no formal written evaluation of these comments which could lead to sharply focused plans for improvement. Pupils understand the importance of prayer in a believer's life, and willingly participate in the daily opportunity to say the school prayer or the Lord's Prayer. They also enjoy making up their own prayers which may be read out in collective worship. Effective reflective areas in school occupy an important place in each classroom and contain regularly updated attractive resources. Understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit is developing well with the contribution made by the new vicar. The pupils have a sound understanding that many of the principles or values that are taught through worship find their origin in the Bible. The pupils experience a range of Anglican traditions through acts of worship held in the school and in the local church. Worship is planned around the church calendar. Pupils investigate global issues, for example, why there are problems in the world and how they can make the world a more just and better place.

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

The headteacher is a well-respected and effective leader. She has played a pivotal role in the development of the school as a church school. She has been particularly strongly maintaining this focus since September 2016 alongside the new vicar and with the appointment of a new RE leader. She has been instrumental in establishing and communicating the new logo which clarifies the vision of the school based on carefully selected distinctively

Christian values which reflect the school's mission. She has established the ways in which these values can impact on the life of the school in a practical way every day. The leader of RE, appointed from within the staff, has been given good support to fulfil her role and to maintain and develop previous good practice. The assistant headteacher was also appointed from within the staff in September 2015. He has been given opportunities to develop as a leader but as yet not specifically as a leader in church schools. The effectiveness of the governing body has developed well since the last inspection. This is because an experienced governor was elected as chair from within the body and he has guided the appointment of new governors and cemented the link between the school and the church. He is also the church warden. The new vicar, also appointed in September 2016, has already made a significant impact on the leadership of the school. She has a strong focus on supporting the staff in debating the 'big questions' with pupils and ensuring staff welfare. Although monitoring by the governing body of the school as a church school leads to improvements, a clear link between this and development planning is not sharply focused and as such its impact is more limited. Governors ensure that the school meets the statutory requirements for collective worship and that RE and other aspects of the curriculum are informed by the school's Christian vision and values. Governors ensure that partnerships with the local and wider community contribute significantly to school life and that there are clear benefits for pupils in understanding the needs and contributions of diverse communities.

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