

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Hathern Church of England Primary School

Pasture Lane Hathern Loughborough Leicestershire LE12 5LJ	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Leicester
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local authority	Leicestershire
Date of inspection	15 November 2017
Date of last inspection	November 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Controlled Primary 120175
Headteacher	Stephen Dunn
Inspector's name and number	Reverend Alison M. Morris 759

School context

This is a smaller than average primary school which serves the village of Hathern. The split school site caters for 145 pupils on roll aged from 4-11 years. The percentage of pupils who receive support for special educational needs and/or disability (SEND) stands at 6% while 9% of pupils qualify for the pupil premium grant. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds with very few ethnic minorities; the most significant group being pupils from Polish backgrounds. The recent OFSTED inspection in January 2017 judged the school as 'good'. The school is a member of the Loughborough Primary Academy Partnership.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Hathern as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The commitment and dedicated leadership of the head teacher is successfully making an impact on the community the school serves. Together with the leadership team and governors, he is purposefully infusing the distinctive Christian vision into all aspects of school life.
- Embedded Christian values are seen particularly in the pupil voice. They enable pupils to speak about the Christian faith, identity, belonging and how this impacts upon their daily life in this school
- Collective worship plays a key role in expressing the schools inclusive Christian character.

Areas to improve

- Foster different partnerships and strategies which will allow pupils to experience different religious lifestyles and cultural traditions to deepen pupils understanding of a multi-faith and multi-cultural world.
- Build upon the already existing process of monitoring with more rigour and robust formal systems of monitoring and evaluation by all stakeholders to ensure high standards of provision are sustained.

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

This is an outstanding school which expresses its distinctive Christian character through a genuinely loving atmosphere that impacts positively upon all pupils. The Christian vision is embedded through the use of explicitly Christian values and ethos. These values, such as hope, respect and love, which are rooted in the teachings of Jesus Christ, are deeply embedded through the CARE (co-operation, awareness, respect and enjoyment) code. There is a rich vibrant environment permeated by positive values and British values, in which learning and achievement flourish. Specific expressions of distinctiveness such as the displays of the Values Tree enhance pupils' understanding. As a result, the Christian distinctiveness and values shape and support the holistic approach to meeting the needs of each child.

Highly effective intervention programmes, such as the Growth Mindset approach and excellent provision for special needs have a direct and life changing impact on all pupils and particular those with deep seated needs. A successful Forest School has impacted upon the emotional needs of specific pupils to optimise their learning potential. Support for pupils' well-being is excellent because they are all treated with dignity and respected as unique individuals to be nurtured. This has led to pupils from all ability groups achieving well and reaching high standards of attainment. Inclusion of all pupils is exemplary so that disadvantaged pupils achieve well. High expectations and aspirations have a significant impact upon pupils' lives because they positively influence their attitudes, behaviour and relationships. Harmonious staff relationships provide excellent Christian role models which are attributed to both the school's Christian character and values. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development is outstanding because the school's Christian character infuses throughout the curriculum.

Religious education (RE) makes an excellent contribution to pupils' SMSC development as belief matters in this school. Pupils understand what it means to be a pupil at a church school and make the link to Christian teaching in the Bible. The Leicester Syllabus for RE provides an effective learning scheme which fosters deep respect for Christian values. As such, RE impacts on the school's Christian distinctiveness and character. Careful integration of the 'Understanding Christianity' resource continues to impact upon pupils' ability to speak about religious concepts. As a result, pupils are enthusiastic about RE and are challenged by creative learning activities, such as, the Lenten Prayer Walk. Pupils are fully aware that Christianity is a multi-cultural world faith. They have a good degree of understanding of and respect for diversity and difference within faith communities. Current effective strategies include participation in a 'Temple Tour.' The school is already taking steps to embed pupils' experiential understanding of other world religions.

Maturity and team work are encouraged through fundraising for charity, for example, The Carpenter's Arms, a local rehabilitation centre. Pupils are given leadership roles through an effective school council which allows pupils to flourish into self assured young people. For example, pupils have participated in The Big Meal project. Pupils feel safe, happy and are proud of their school. Exemplary standards of behaviour are due to a well-disciplined school embedded with Christian values which promotes a clear understanding of right and wrong. Pupils are well mannered and eager to succeed. Excellent attitudes to learning by pupils are promoted within this caring Christian environment. They are motivated to attend because of an inspirational curriculum, which is broad and balanced, together with rich spiritual experiences such as Prayer Walks. Classrooms have reflection areas which make a significant contribution to pupils' understanding and spiritual development. Focussed displays and artefacts create a distinctively Christian environment in which all pupils mature and flourish.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Worship is inclusive, affirming and accessible, with a strong focus on the person of Jesus Christ and the Christian belief in God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. As a result, pupils have a good understanding of the Trinity. Worship is very well planned based on Christian beliefs, festivals and Christian values. Pupils come to understand the relevance of such values in their lives through good use of Bible stories.

Worship is greatly valued and makes a good contribution to spiritual development through reinforcing Christian values. It is engaging which make a substantial contribution to the daily experience of all. Great care is taken to use a variety of approaches to worship that include key elements of Anglican traditions and practises. Thoughtful use of inclusive language allows all pupils to listen, reflect and respond appropriately on their own lives. Use of this pupil centred approach to worship provides meaningful experiences rooted in Christian beliefs and festivals. Through the moral message pupils are encouraged to relate their learning to their own behaviour and life, fostering responsibility and respect. For example, the worship observed, on 'peace' engaged all pupils to reflect upon the impact of war and remembrance.

Pupils are very attentive because effective use is made of stories, music and prayer. As a result, pupils are enthusiastic and keen to sing and pray. One pupil said, 'I like worship as we get chance to celebrate God'. Their understanding of worship is enriched through the use of visual images, symbols, lighted candles and liturgical colours which evoke an

atmosphere of God's presence and a sense of belonging for pupils. A greater sense of spirituality is enhanced through quiet moments which are built into worship to allow pupils to be still and reflect.

Pupils' involvement in planning and leading of worship is developing since the last inspection through membership of the collective worship club (COWO) which impacts upon school life. Substantial links with both the Anglican and Methodist clergy ensure Christian values are understood and reinforced. This also nurtures pupils' attitudes to faith and strengthens pupils' spiritual development which is exemplary due to the substantial impact of the Christian character of the worship.

Prayer and reflection are integral parts of daily worship which foster spirituality and allow those who want to, to explore a relationship with God. Pupils value its impact upon their lives. As a result, pupils speak confidently about their own faith and personal prayer. One pupil said, 'Jesus teaches us how to be a good person of God.' Appropriate use by pupils of spirituality corners demonstrates their understanding of the purpose of prayers and provides time to reflect beyond collective worship. Key Christian festivals such as Easter and Christmas which are always celebrated in the church reinforce the shared vision and pupils' knowledge of Anglican traditions and practises.

Very detailed plans underpin the worship and are monitored and evaluated. Since the last inspection a more planned system of evaluation from observations and pupils' interviews are in place as a result of work by foundation governors and the vicar. However, this is not sufficiently well embedded as a formal system to ensure that the quality of worship continues to be of a high quality.

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

Inspirational leaders have worked with commitment to develop an explicit Christian vision which pervades the school. This vision thoughtfully encompasses all that the school stands for based upon the mission statement of 'Learning and Caring Together'. Thoughtful focus upon the specific values of Christian love and care for each other is interwoven along with the Christian traditions which seek to activate pupils' beliefs and values. The headteacher's leadership style provides a clear strategic direction which is rooted in his own personal faith. He is strongly supported by a dedicated deputy headteacher who is contributing significantly to the success of this leadership team. Together, their motivation and vision are taking the school forward. The deputy head teacher has made a substantial difference to how the staff lead across the split school site and manage this expanding school. This is an example of how the invitational Christian ethos which extends into the community is attracting more children for admission to this school.

Governors are very supportive of the headteacher's leadership. Purposeful and professional partnerships exist between all staff to promote a vision of Christian care and love for each other. All staff articulate, understand and ensure that the distinctive Christian values and ethos are vital to the school's vision. Issues identified in the previous inspection have been addressed.

Governors accurately evaluate the school's effectiveness as a church school, acting as critical friends in school improvement. Effective self-evaluation uses rigorous tracking systems which are used for monitoring and evaluating pupil achievement so that their needs are met. Together, school leaders and governors plan strategically and have an honest and challenging view of future needs. Insightful succession planning and identified professional development mean staff are given training for middle leadership and beyond. This has already impacted well through the effective implementation of the school development plan which is informed by a distinctive Christian vision. The school has strong links with the clergy and the local church. As a result, the vicar and the foundation governor, through their hard work, make a distinctive Christian difference to this school. Regular visits by the vicar nurture the close links that are interwoven between the church and school in this rural community.

Statutory requirements for both RE and collective worship are met. The enthusiasm with which both areas are led spreads through to staff and pupils. Purposeful timetabling and effective deployment of the highly skilled RE leader enables this subject to be very successful. As a result, it means that RE impacts across the whole school curriculum, particularly with Christian distinctiveness and its positive links with SMSC. School evaluation of RE ensures that books are monitored by both senior leaders and governors.

Effective partnerships exist with the diocese, multi-agencies and the wider community, in particular Loughborough Primary Academy Partnership, which results in mutual benefit for all. Another example is how the Friends Teachers Parent Association provides refreshments before church worship to foster welcome and hospitality. This has led to increased attendance by parents, which has addressed a focus from the last inspection. Parents are happy with the school as a church school and pupils' personal development. This is achieved through enrichment activities, for example, the teaching of the French language and musical productions like 'Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat'. This enables all pupils to flourish spiritually, socially and academically.