

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

### Hempsted Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School

St Swithuns Road, Hempsted, Gloucester, GL2 5LH	
<b>Current SIAMS inspection grade</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Gloucester</b>
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Date of inspection	23 May 2018
Date of last inspection	20 May 2013
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Controlled 115608
Headteacher	Richard Waller
Inspector's name and number	David Crunkhurn 884

#### School context

Hempsted Church of England (VC) Primary School is a one-form entry primary school serving its local village and the surrounding area of Gloucester. Children come from a mixed social and economic background. Most children are of white British heritage. The number of pupils in receipt of Pupil Premium funding is lower than the national average at just over 11%. Since the previous inspection, leadership has moved from a co-headship to a single headteacher, supported by a deputy and assistant headteacher.

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

- The vision and drive of the headteacher, deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher, are embedding strong Christian values and a distinctive Christian ethos throughout the school community.
- The care, guidance and support that is given to pupils and their families, reflects the school's commitment to sharing God's love with the school community.
- Religious Education (RE) is enthusiastically led by a highly motivated subject leader. It engages pupils well with big questions, which challenge thinking and enrich pupils' personal development and spiritual journeys.
- The excellent partnership with the church has been instrumental in promoting the Christian character of the school to parents and families.

#### Areas to improve

- Provide more opportunities for spirituality to be explored across the wider curriculum in order to enrich pupils' spiritual journeys.
- Enable pupils to have an even greater involvement in worship by providing more opportunities for them to plan and lead.
- Strengthen approaches to self-evaluation so that all members of the school community contribute regularly to this process.

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

Hempsted Church of England Primary School is a happy, caring Christian community, which is led by a well-respected headteacher, supported by a highly effective deputy and assistant headteacher. Together they are driving the school's vision of 'Growing together in God's love', sharing this through the various activities the school engages with.

Pupils, particularly those with additional needs, make good progress by the time they leave the school. Leaders attribute this to the Christian character of the school. This is evident in the work the school has introduced on pupil well-being. Staff are committed to creating environments that reflect the Christian character of the school and support pupils with their learning. This is acknowledged by pupils, who feel that they are valued and supported well by teachers 'who care for us'. Parents also speak highly of the school and the education offered to their children. They are positive about the care given to their children, which encourages them to 'grow as a whole child, not just academically'. They say that the Christian ethos makes a positive impact on family life, as the values taught in collective worship are being lived-out in family relationships. Where issues of attendance, punctuality and behaviour arise, these are responded to sensitively and with compassion. Senior leaders consider the individual needs of pupils and work with families for the best outcomes, relating their decisions to the school's vision statement.

Since the previous inspection, the school has worked with the vicar to create a spirituality statement. This is being used to shape aspects of the school's work and help all members of the school community in their personal spiritual journeys. As a result, relationships between the church and the school community have grown and developed to mutual benefit. The potential impact of spirituality across the wider curriculum is an area that has yet to be explored. Parents are grateful for the support that the church offers them in times of personal difficulty and the school has benefitted from inspirational support from the vicar, especially in aspects relating to collective worship.

Religious Education makes a positive impact on the lives of pupils. Teachers provide pupils with experiences to explore big questions relating to faith, belief and practice. They explore a variety of religions in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus, which is supporting their understanding of how people from different faith communities live together. Teachers also make good links between biblical texts and school values and this is having a positive impact on relationships. As Hempsted is a predominantly white British community, RE plays an important role in developing pupils' understanding of difference and diversity.

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

Collective worship engages pupils with biblical texts and makes a significant contribution to their spiritual development. The approach to worship, including the thoughtful use of candles, is developing an understanding of the Trinity. The support from the local church, particularly the vicar, has been transformational in developing pupils in their involvement in worship. Monthly Eucharist services are attended by the worship team, who actively participate in the welcome by reading and in the leading of prayers. This is deepening their understanding of elements of Anglican tradition. Acts of worship go some way towards enabling pupils to understand the central place of Jesus within the Christian faith.

Prayer is given a high priority in school. There are spaces for reflection, which are used by pupils during the day for personal prayer. Pupils speak of the importance of these places and how they use them to 'speak to God at any time'. During times of collective worship, pupils are invited to offer spontaneous prayers. These invitations are enthusiastically responded to.

The biblical roots of the school's Christian values are explored deeply during collective worship. Key biblical texts are used effectively to enable all members of the school community to appreciate their place within the Christian faith. This impacts on the excellent relationships that exist between all members of the school. Pupils relate biblical teaching to their friendships and explain how the example of Jesus helps them when they need to forgive.

The headteacher's personal commitment to the impact of collective worship has been pivotal in bringing about improvement. He is enthusiastically supported in this by his highly effective and dedicated assistant headteacher. Together they have worked hard to improve monitoring and evaluation so that pupils views are acted on. As a result, positive changes to worship have taken place. Pupils are much more involved in leading and planning. This has had a very positive impact on the value that is placed on worship by pupils. The creation of the Worship Club

has provided pupils with the space to explore and plan acts of worship that are shared with the whole-school. This has helped to address the area of development at the last inspection and is now inspiring pupils to want to actively participate in worship. However, pupils say they would like to lead more regularly on their own, an aspect the school acknowledges.

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

All leaders are extremely committed to the development of the school's distinctive Christian character. Shaping a Christian vision has been a priority in recent years, which has been summed up in the statement 'Growing together in God's love'. This phrase has been achieved through wide consultation with members of the school community, drawn together by members of the governing body. The outworking of this vision statement is seen in the headteacher's commitment to leading the school through the promotion of Christian values. He is supported by a very diligent and competent group of leaders and governors, who are working well together to embed the vision in policies and the wider curriculum.

Governors' monitoring of the impact of the vision is developing well. They have a clear understanding of where this is having an impact in school and where it needs to be more firmly embedded. This has been achieved by the establishment of an ethos and standards committee, which plays an important role in the contribution to church school self-evaluation. This good practice in self-evaluation has not yet been extended to regularly include members of the wider school community.

The strong commitment of the church to the school is evident in the many and varied activities that are offered to all members of the school community. Worship is supported by regular visits from the 'Open the Book' team and this is strengthening the partnership with the church. Parents appreciate the strong pastoral support offered by the school, supported by church. They speak fondly of the role that the vicar has played in providing a space for them to come together to talk and pray. This partnership has been instrumental in supporting the spiritual development of the wider school community. The link with Western Tanganyika, whilst in initial stages, is supporting pupils in their understanding of the global nature of Christianity.

Leadership of RE has a high priority and is effectively led by a committed teacher. She has worked hard to implement the requirements of the Gloucestershire agreed syllabus and related national materials. Training for teachers is developing well. However, assessment processes are not yet strong enough to measure the impact of teaching on pupils' knowledge, understanding and application of religious themes studied. The school meets the statutory requirements for religious education and collective worship.

SIAMS report May 2018 Hempsted Church of England (VC) Primary School, Hempsted, Gloucester, GL2 5LH