

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Hindlip Church of England Voluntary Controlled First School	
Droitwich Road, Fernhill Heath, Worcester. WR3 8RJ.	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Worcester
Previous SIAS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local authority	Worcester
Date of inspection	12 July 2017
Date of last inspection	12 July 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Controlled 116822
Headteacher	Carolyn Tew
Inspector's name and number	Stephanie Boulter 785

School context

Hindlip is a smaller than average Church of England First school on the outskirts of Worcester city. In September 2013 the school formed a collaboration with Tibberton CE First School under one Executive Headteacher. After a successful trial year, the governing bodies federated. The school has 95 pupils on roll of which 50% are from out of catchment. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is 20%, with 2 children who have English as an additional language and 10% of pupils come from ethnic minority backgrounds.

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

- The compassionate leadership of the headteacher enables every child to flourish and achieve well.
- The development of a core set of six Christian values has completely transformed the ethos of the school. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how they impact on their personal development and this is clearly reflected in their exemplary behaviour and positive approach to learning.
- Strong partnerships with the local parish and Fernhill Heath Baptist Church positively impact on the spiritual development of all members of the school community.

Areas to improve

- Embed systems which will enable governors to include discussions with children into their regular visits to school in order to gain direct feedback on the impact of the school's Christian distinctiveness, collective worship and religious education (RE).
- Establish a robust system of tracking pupil progress in RE from Reception to Year 4 so that it can inform teachers' future planning in the subject to make it even more challenging.

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

Hindlip VC First School is a vibrant, creative Christian family with pupils who love their school, their work and their teachers. The inspirational vision of the headteacher is tangible in every aspect of school life, resulting in a highly developed understanding of spirituality, which is shared across the whole school. Pupils are enthusiastic about their learning and are encouraged to constantly challenge themselves, resulting in above national progress across the ability range. This is particularly evident with pupils who have special educational needs (SEN). Christian values are explicitly taught across the curriculum and as a result have a significant impact on pupils' spiritual and moral development. One pupil described how, 'Jesus always protected the weak, so our value of love teaches us to do the same.' The school's distinctiveness and effectiveness is also evident in the stimulating and creative ways in which it promotes its six core values, which were chosen by children, parents, governors and staff. Respect, love, perseverance, truthfulness, friendship and courage are all firmly embedded in the life of the school. Pupils are actively encouraged to look after one another and staff regularly nominate pupils whom they have seen displaying the values. These children and their actions are then celebrated in an assembly. As a result, pupils understand how these values impact on their daily life. Pupils' efforts are acknowledged both inside and outside of school. Pupils are articulate, curious and want to be in school. Consequently, their attendance is above the national average. As well as being able to apply the school's values to their behaviour and learning, pupils also link them to Bible teachings both in the Old and New Testaments. One parent described how, 'As parents we promote values at home, which are then confirmed at school and again when the children go to church or the vicar comes into school.' This has resulted in a community where shared values are consistent and lived out in everyday life. Links with Arua Emmanuel Cathedral in Uganda and Happy House, an orphanage in Kenya, enable pupils to become immersed in other cultures and faiths. Global issues and needs are discussed with children, consequently they demonstrate a strong sense of responsibility for the future and for all people in need, both locally and internationally. Charitable giving is therefore a strong feature of the school, both for local and international charities. Teaching in RE uses a wide variety of creative strategies to engage and challenge the pupils. Children enjoy the subject because they are allowed to have a voice. There is an intrinsic link between spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) and the values of the school, both in planning and in lessons. The RE coordinator is passionate about her subject, and the status of the subject is extremely high in the life of the school.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship at Hindlip is central to the life of the school and is the inspiration for promoting and learning about Christian values and biblical teachings. Worship is distinctively Christian and is a time when children celebrate God, their school and each other. They make important steps forward in their spiritual development as a result of engaging and interactive acts of worship, such as Open the Book. Children are given the freedom to make suggestions and take the initiative. This results in pupils who are confident and have a 'can do' attitude, even if things do not go quite right all of the time. The values chosen by the school community are prominent in the planning of worship and there is excellent and sustained involvement with the local Anglican and Baptist church. Daily acts of worship begin with awe and wonder images and music, which help children to reflect and contributes to their spiritual development. Children can confidently discuss Bible stories from worship and talk knowledgeably about different times of the church year. They feel that worship makes the school a praying school. Anglican traditions are observed by the use of liturgical colours for the worship table, with worship planning throughout the year reflecting the seasons and festivals of the Christian calendar. The worship table includes a cross, and a three-wicked candle representing the Trinity. This aids children in their developing understanding of the Trinity and how God can impact on their lives. One pupil said, 'The Spirit lives in everyone and helps them do great things.' Another pupil when asked about prayer said, 'Prayers are a thank you for all the things we have in our world and for us to be sorry for those who have no homes or food or drink.' Pupils' independence in leading worship is developing well and through this they understand how people who have a faith can make a difference in the world. Prayer is central to the life of the school. Reflection areas, both in classroom and in the grounds, enable children to 'be still' during the day and contribute significantly to children's well-being and mindfulness. Parents said that their children repeat the prayers learned at school on a regular basis at home. They love to write their own prayers, which are used in collective worship during the week and at special services. Staff and pupils regularly evaluate the impact of worship in school, however, governor monitoring is not formal, frequent or rigorous enough to have any real impact. Monitoring results in some changes to the content of worship, which is constantly changing to meet the needs of all pupils. The introduction of iSingPop, a set of uplifting pop songs based on Christian values, has enabled the school to share its ethos and core values with the wider community.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

RE is explicitly underpinned by Christian values and has a high profile in the school. Good and outstanding teaching means that children make outstanding progress in the subject, reaching standards at least in line with, and often exceeding, core subjects. The RE curriculum is imaginative and exciting in terms of the learning activities provided and the teaching approaches used. For example, children in Year 1 develop their understanding of Christian baptism through role-play. They are further challenged by looking at the similarities and differences between this and a Muslim welcoming ceremony. Older children look at questions, such as, 'Why do some people think that life is a journey?' They use words in hymns sung in collective worship to explore the qualities and values considered to be important to put into a suitcase for life's journey. Art and outdoor learning also contributes to a rich curriculum that engages the children. This creative approach is very effective in ensuring all pupils are able to access learning and make progress. RE is well planned with staff embracing the new approach to RE teaching. Children develop and apply skills of enquiry in the subject effectively. They investigate the Christian concept of the Trinity and explain that this means Father, Son and Holy Spirit 'as one'. Younger children talk about Jesus as the Son of God and can relate the school's core values to a Bible story. Teachers' planning is thorough and takes account of misconceptions in previous learning; this ensures that learning is well-matched to the needs of all pupils. SMSC development in RE lessons has a significant impact on children's responses, which are thoughtful and considered. Assessment is well-organised and methodical, but the school recognises the importance of strengthening the tracking of pupils' attainment across the school to ensure continued progress and challenge. The RE subject leader is enthusiastic and effective and monitors teaching and learning. She works with the headteacher to produce action plans which identify specific areas for improvement. This commitment to RE, along with a clear understanding of its purpose in a church school, ensures that provision and outcomes in the subject are outstanding. She has an excellent long-term vision for embedding the new Understanding Christianity materials.

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

There is a strong, clear Christian vision held by the headteacher and this vision, through inspirational leadership, is valued and shared by the whole school community. This results in a vibrant, caring school where all are valued as individuals who are created in God's image. The Christian distinctiveness of the school is evident everywhere, resulting in a community which recognises when they have made mistakes, are supported in rectifying them and are not afraid to take risks. The headteacher has pupils and staff at the centre of all decisions and policies and governors support her determination to enable all staff and pupils to be the best they can be. Governors know the school well and are regular visitors. They are committed to staff development to enhance the Christian distinctiveness of the school. Staff, parents and governors are clear that it is the Christian values and ethos that encourages the behaviour and respect for others seen in the school. This results in confident children and has a positive influence on the high academic standards and attendance within the school. Monitoring by governors is not sufficiently rigorous at present and so does not adequately inform strategic planning across the school. The curriculum is informed by a distinctive Christian vision, which has a significant impact on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. RE and collective worship support the values and aims of the school effectively and successfully. Partnerships between parents, local churches, the wider community and the diocese are strong, whilst global links with Uganda and Kenya ensure children have an excellent understanding of Christianity as a living, multi-cultural, multi-ethnic world faith. Also, local charities such as Droitwich foodbank and cancer charities benefit from the children's care and love of others. Staff and governors have a clear understanding of Christian distinctiveness through diocesan training and moving between schools in the federation. Through this partnership they develop the necessary skills to enhance their role as leaders in church schools. Parents praise the school for the way it nurtures their children in love and Christian values. They feel part of the school community and state that the relationships and values that are lived and taught by the school impact positively on their children's behaviour and attitude to learning long after they have left the school. Links between the school and church are exemplary and result in pupils who are fully involved in the life of the community. Strong leadership at all levels has ensured the areas of development from the last inspection have been met and the school, through insightful action, planning has an ongoing vision for its development as a church school. The headteacher, staff, governors, parents and the church describe Hindlip VC First School as a family. This, along with its explicit and thoroughly embedded Christian values, makes it both distinctive and extremely effective as a Church school. The school meets statutory requirements for collective worship and RE.

SIAMS report July 2017 Hindlip VC Church of England First School Fernhill Heath. WR3 8RJ