

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

| Hapton Church of England Methodist Primary School | |
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| Manchester Road, Hapton, Burnley, BB11 5RF | |
| Current SIAMS inspection grade | Outstanding |
| Diocese | Blackburn |
| Previous SIAMS inspection grade | Good |
| Local authority | Lancashire |
| Date of inspection | 18 May 2017 |
| Date of last inspection | January 2012 |
| Type of school and unique reference number | Controlled 119447 |
| Headteacher | Jacque Clarke |
| Inspector's name and number | Gail Fullbrook 530 |

School context

This smaller than average joint Church of England and Methodist school serves the village of Hapton and the surrounding area. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs, an education healthcare plan or who speak English as an additional language are well below the national average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is slightly below the national average. The majority of pupils are White British with a small minority of Asian heritage pupils.

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

- The highly effective and distinctively Christian leadership of the headteacher, senior leaders and governors influences all aspects of school development.
- Christian values are deeply embedded within the life of Hapton School. As a result pupils are happy, achieve well and show positive attitudes to learning.
- The school's commitment to the personal development and well-being of all pupils is exemplary.
- Strong links with St Margaret's Parish Church, Hapton Methodist Church and the wider local community make a significant contribution to pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development.

Areas to improve

- Develop a new vision statement that reflects the current excellent and distinctively Christian character of the school and is sufficiently robust to drive further development.

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

Hapton school is a warm and exciting school where the Christian values of love and care pervade all areas of its life. The commitment of the headteacher, staff and governors to ensuring that pupils are happy and ready to learn is evident in pupils' achievement and attainment. Consequently, almost all pupils make very good progress and are happy and confident learners. The school's Christian foundation is evident in the high priority given to pupils' personal development and well-being. Golden Time choices include being able to visit to the school's well-being centre. There, under the supervision of the family learning mentor, older pupils give shoulder and hand massages and nail treatments to their peers. As well as relaxation activities pupils have access to the school's radio station which is housed in a space craft. This exemplifies well the school's vision statement of 'excellence in caring, sharing and learning'. It is clearly underpinned by Christian values and extends to ensuring that school is an enjoyable place to be.

Pupils are proud of the importance of Christian values within the life of their school. They know that their understanding of the values help them to behave well and to show positive attitudes to learning. Staff model a Christian way of life. This supports pupils in developing the personal moral compass that guides them and prepares them well for adult life. A deep understanding of Christian values, supported by application of the question, 'What would Jesus do?' contributes to pupils' excellent behaviour. Pupils recognise that Christian values are rooted in the stories of Jesus' life and his teaching. An example of this understanding came from a boy who talked of the courage of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. Another pupil recalled the forgiveness Jesus showed towards Judas.

A wide range of experiences support pupils' excellent SMSC development. The wealth of activities on offer on the playground enrich playtimes and help pupils to learn to play well together and to respect each other. Visitors to the school enrich pupils' awareness of different cultural backgrounds. For example, pupils know about the lives of many of the children they support in the Bethany Trust in Tanzania and of their pen pals in Sierra Leone. As a result, pupils show respect for those whose of different faiths or cultures. Pupils develop a sense of awe and wonder at the world around them. They are proud of their allotment and thankful for the produce they can cook and enjoy. Times of reflection are routinely offered within lessons and as a result pupils are comfortable when considering some of the big questions of life. Many express a deep and mature sense of spirituality.

Through their joint Anglican-Methodist foundation pupils have first-hand experience of the different ways in which Christians can worship. Religious education (RE) is a strength of the school and makes a significant contribution to its Christian distinctiveness. Pupils have a good knowledge of the important characteristics of a wide range of religions and develop a depth of knowledge about the core religions they study. Christian and Muslim pupils enjoy learning from each other of the differences and similarities between their faiths. RE lessons are engaging and creative and support pupils' excellent SMSC development.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship is central to the life of the school. It is valued as a time when the school community comes together to learn, pray and to offer praise. Pupils sing with passion and enjoyment. Words are memorised, actions agreed upon and the performance of the song is offered powerfully and prayerfully. Pupils enjoy the range of experiences offered within worship. Through drama, dance, listening to stories and occasional film clips they learn about Jesus, his teaching and his life. Pupils are encouraged to respond personally to the experiences offered. Thoughts such as 'the healing of the blind man reminded me of how powerful God is' and 'God is like a power ranger because he can never be defeated' illustrate the depth of many pupils' response.

Understanding of the biblical stories that underpin Christian values is developed within worship. Pupils make links between the stories and their own lives. Some talk of times when they have changed the way they do things as a result. Pupils are familiar with most of the major festivals of the Church year and the story they tell of Jesus' life, crucifixion and resurrection. Older pupils understand the importance of the Eucharist to Christians.

Prayer is offered within worship and across the school day by both adults and pupils. A number of pupils talk of times when they pray at home. Each month the school offers prayer for one of the children supported in Tanzania, many of whom pupils know personally through visits to the school of the Bethany Trust choir. Through this and other examples of prayer offered in response to particular situations, the prayerfulness of the school community is apparent. Following the Methodist Covenant service pupils wrote personal covenant prayers where they committed themselves to particular actions. One girl wrote, 'I freely give kindness and joy to my friends. Line me

up to be trusting and to follow you.’ The school’s worship group regularly monitor classroom worship spaces and share ideas with teachers about how they could be changed and developed. As a result the worship spaces are attractive and well used. Pupils of other faiths feel respected and included. A parent of a faith other than Christianity shared ways in which the school adapts its practice to ensure that all children feel included and valued.

The use of Christian greetings and prayers are well embedded in school practice. Pupils’ knowledge and understanding of key Christian theological concepts is secure and well-grounded in biblical stories. Pupils have an age appropriate understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Worship is outstandingly led and managed by the headteacher and the well-established worship group. Annual plans are drawn up by the ministers of both churches and the headteacher. They reflect the church year and focus on developing understanding of theological concepts and Christian values very well. Teachers are routinely involved in leading worship and are supported in this by visitors to the school, clergy, governors and the worship group. The worship group has spent time reflecting on what makes worship interesting and this, along with their evaluative comments, give effective support to the headteacher when future plans are drawn up. As a result, the school’s outstanding worship is continually refined and improved.

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

The highly distinctive Christian vision of the school, whereby pupils experience excellence and achieve well through Christian caring, sharing and learning, is known and understood by all members of the school family. Governors have however, identified that the wording of the vision statement no longer reflects the school’s explicit Christian character.

The school, in its commitment to excellence for all, shows Christian love and compassion to individual pupils and families, particularly in times of need. The school is led by an inspirational headteacher. The employment of a full time family liaison officer illustrates the priority given to addressing barriers to pupils’ personal development, well-being and learning. Through the availability of people to talk to and spaces when pupils and parents can be at ease, the school seeks to ‘knit together the lives of children so that all are equipped to be excellent’. The school environment is well maintained, with functional modern school furniture. It is exceptionally well resourced.

The school’s distinctive Christian character is evaluated and developed in line with other aspects of school life. It forms a key priority in the school’s achievement action plan and is monitored and updated by governors each term. Governors attend worship weekly, have links with classes and receive regular reports from the headteacher that relate to the school’s Christian character. As a result they know the school well and are well-equipped to support the school into the future. Working with the headteacher they have ensured that the foci for development during the previous denominational inspection have been effectively addressed.

Teachers, including the RE and worship coordinators, regularly attend local authority and diocesan training to support them in their roles. At all staff meetings time is spent reflecting on the ways in which the school is supporting individual pupils. As a result, where there is recognition that further professional development or pupil support is required, it is quickly identified. Teachers are given good support for their work within a church school and those seeking to take on leadership roles are appropriately encouraged. Expertise in RE is valued by the school’ and the coordinator makes a considerable contribution to its Christian distinctiveness.

Pupils of all faiths and none feel a strong connection with both the Anglican and Methodist churches to which they belong. This connection extends to the local community where the school is seen as being distinctively ecumenical. The school has strong links with the local community and supports many community events. For example, the school plays an active role in the village Remembrance service. Parents are appreciative of the caring attitude of the school and its sense of being a Christian family. One parent spoke of the ‘powerful feeling of welcome and love’ that the school offers. Another talked of the ways in which the school personalises the curriculum for individual pupils and their families. Strong links with the Diocese ensure that the school is well informed about the very best of church school practice and this is reflected in the excellence of the Christian character of the school.