



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Hartpury Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Over Old Road, Hartpury, Gloucester, GL19 3BJ

Previous inspection grade: Good

Current inspection grade: Outstanding

Diocese of Gloucester

Local authority: Gloucestershire

Date of inspection: 19 October 2015

Date of last inspection: 22 November 2010

School's URN: 115627

Headteacher: Tony Lerner

SIAMS Inspector: Alison Lock NS 605

School context

Hartpury is a small village school with 95 pupils, most of whom are white British. It is set in a rural location close to the city of Gloucester. The school accommodation is comprised of modern buildings set on a large site giving high quality facilities for all ages from nursery upwards. The headteacher has been in post just under three years. Ofsted graded the school as "Good" in November 2014 following a period where the school required improvement. The two local churches are both situated a considerable distance from the school.

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

- The combined strong leadership of the headteacher and the religious education (RE) subject leader has resulted in a flourishing school with a distinctively Christian character
- A vicar is pro-active throughout the school community helping to train staff, supporting pastorally and challenging by bringing new ideas to the leadership.
- The teamwork between the staff ensures that everyone plans and works to keep the school ethos as a central part of school life.
- The school's Christian values impact on the relationships throughout the school so that all members of the community respect and support each other.

Areas to improve

- The governing body to develop a systematic and consistent process of monitoring and evaluating the Christian distinctiveness of the school leading to wider ownership.
- Include the whole school community in the planning, leading and evaluation of collective worship in order to increase its impact on all involved.

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

Hartpury School has developed a vision which states that Christian values lie at the heart of all they do. This is very apparent in all aspects of school life and evidence of the impact of this ethos is easily seen, for example within the strong relationships between the children themselves and with the adults in the school community. As a result of Christian values being lived out on a daily basis, behaviour is good throughout the school and pupils can demonstrate how they support each other. The staff team meet at the start of each term to reflect on the current value and what it means to them as well as to the children. This results in close co-operation creating a committed team that work together within the ethos of the school to ensure that the children receive well-planned, enthusiastic and effective learning experiences. Both parents and pupils appreciate the fun ways that the school also relates the Christian values to everyday life such as through Generosity Bingo. Spirituality is clearly understood by all school staff and is included in the planning of the taught curriculum as well as the other occasions that occur throughout the year. This results in pupils who are able to articulate well the impact of their learning on their lives. An annual art evening results in a large piece of work displayed in the hall, created jointly by parents and pupils that is used regularly by members of the community as a tool for spiritual reflection to highlight the values that are part of Bible stories and daily life. Christianity is taught very well as seen through regular observations resulting in the pupils having a good understanding of it as a world faith. This is being reinforced by a link with Hyderabad in Pakistan following a visit to the project by a member of staff. Because of the values of compassion, generosity and service, pupils fundraise for worldwide charities, also demonstrating their awareness of the needs of children in other countries. RE is a core subject of the school included in the strategic planning. Lessons are very well planned and evaluated based on the Locally Agreed Syllabus and other relevant materials so that pupils are both excited and challenged by them, recognising the contribution their learning makes to their lives. Levels of achievement in RE are carefully monitored with the result that standards are in line with other core subjects within the school. As a result of evaluating good practice in another school, a new initiative using class books has further stimulated enthusiasm for the subject raising its profile in each classroom as the staff and pupils celebrate their learning. The local churches are too far from the school for staff and pupils to walk and so parents support the school by supplying transport at least three times a year enabling the community to celebrate Christian festivals together. Governors and parents say how much they appreciate celebrating together. The vicar is very active in his role within the school community as he regularly stimulates the Christian ethos by providing new ideas and also by leading collective worship and giving pastoral support. Following the recent bereavement of a parent, the school has actively supported the family and regard this as a natural role for this outstanding Christian community. The inclusion of prayers written by pupils in the funeral was much appreciated by both adults and pupils. The school site is thoughtfully organised so that pupils have to opportunity to be reflective as well as active; for example, the Friends of the School have recently built an outside worship area at the request of the school council in which the whole school can gather.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

The whole school community places importance on collective worship as a daily time for reflection and worship. As one pupil reported, recognising its role in her life, "it is a time to connect with each other and with God". Pupils talk easily about the core Christian values and how they affect their decision making and behaviour. Collective worship is well planned by the headteacher as co-ordinator using the expertise of the vicar and RE subject lead, and a structure based on the values, the seasons of the church year and Bible stories. It is usually led by adults but pupils enjoy being actively involved through the worship team and also leading regularly, but not frequently. There are plans to give

the children more ownership of the worship by enabling them to plan and lead more often. Anglican liturgy and candles are used as an integral part of the worship giving pupils a developing understanding of the Trinity. Prayer is an important focus in the school day through formal prayers in worship and at other times of the day, but also through prayer books where the pupils write and use their own prayers. They know that there are different types of prayer and that it is a way of communicating with God. Pupils also ask for prayer by putting requests in a box that the vicar empties weekly and takes to be said in church. Plans are in place to focus on prayer this term centring on practical ways of living spiritually. Evaluations are used to develop the impact of collective worship resulting in changes being made but they are not systematically planned. The local churches are used to celebrate some of the festivals in the Christian year which are popular events supported and valued by the community, but the school is also used regularly as a venue for inter active worship occasions. The vicar has initiated staff training in Hartpury and other schools showing how children can be given ownership of their worship life resulting in greater levels of confidence in leading.

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

The outstanding leadership of the head teacher, RE subject leader and vicar, who is also a foundation governor, has given clear direction to this church school since the last inspection. They enthusiastically and confidently articulate the vision and ethos of the school so that the Christian distinctiveness is at the heart of strategic planning leading through to everyday practice. They are supported by an active, willing governing body. However, governors are not yet systematic in their development of the school's ethos or in their monitoring and evaluation of its impact. Parents are very appreciative of the way the Christian values impact on their children's education and feel involved through regular evaluations. These are then reported widely so that everyone knows what actions have been taken, thus ensuring that self-evaluation by the whole school community is integral, rigorous and centred on the school's vision. Parents report that there is mutual respect based on Christian values between all the adults of the community so that concerns are actioned and celebrations shared. Professional development of staff is a high priority and is conducted within the school using in-house expertise. As a result, teamwork is strong and there is highly effective practice across the school. Diocesan training and resources are also used regularly which have stimulated visits to other schools and the sharing of good practice.

SIAMS report October 2015 Hartpury CE VC Primary School GL19 3BJ