**National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report**

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| **Hilperton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School**  Newleaze  Trowbridge  Wiltshire BA14 7SB  **Previous inspection grade: Outstanding**  **Current SIAMS grade: Good**  **Diocese: Salisbury**  Local authority:Wiltshire  Dates of inspection: 17 June 2016  Date of last inspection: 29 November2010  School’s unique reference number: 126328  Headteacher: Vicki Cann  Inspector’s name and number: Andrew Rickett 201 |
| **School context**  Hilperton is smaller than the average size primary school with 168 children on roll. They are arranged into six class groups. The large majority of children are of a white British heritage. The number of children with learning needs and/or disabilities is in line with the national average as is the number entitled to receive pupil premium. Overall attendance is in line with the national average. The school is an active member of a cluster of 21 local schools who work together providing mutual support and training. |
| **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Hilperton as a Church of England school are good**   * Distinctively Christian values are embedded in the life of the school and make a contribution to the children’s understanding of relationships and their attitudes towards learning. * Acts of worship make a considerable impact on the life of the school and the children’s appreciation that Bible stories underpin the core values. * The headteacher, together with other school leaders, has ensured that the school has developed a clearer understanding of its Christian ethos since the previous inspection. |
| **Areas to improve**   * Agree a shared definition of spirituality across the school community so that opportunities for children to experience spirituality can be identified in all aspects of school life. * Equip children with the skills to use questioning and critical thinking to support their exploration of matters of faith and belief. * Develop systems for leaders and managers to monitor and evaluate the impact of new initiatives on the wellbeing and learning of children. |
| **The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is good at meeting the needs of all learners**  The Christian ethos is well established and supported by six values well known to the school community. Following a review with children and adults, the six core values have clearer links to specific Bible stories. This has given children a better understanding of how Christian teaching underpins their meaning. These values include respect and honesty. Children explain how Bible stories, such as the ‘good Samaritan’, show both respect and resilience. They also grasp how this understanding applies to their own lives both in school and outside of it. The values therefore are distinctively Christian in their interpretation. The school community has some understanding of how these values relate to the mission statement, to ‘nurture, develop and launch lifelong learners’, but there are few current members of staff who were part of the discussion to decide the mission and therefore there is not a shared sense of ownership of it. However, Christian values do make a significant contribution to the children’s positive attitudes towards learning and the enthusiasm with which they engage in lessons. It also makes a contribution to the high quality of relationships throughout the school community which is characterised by care and kindness towards each other regardless of who they are. This has contributed to the successful improvements made to raise the quality of the children’s education and the standards they achieve. The development of spiritual awareness has been a focus and the school is moving closer towards creating a shared understanding of what it means to all members of the school community. Work so far has involved adults and children and has produced some exciting results that the school is keen to take further. Children already have good opportunities to reflect using the class reflection areas and do so with maturity. Religious education (RE) makes a valuable contribution to the children’s growing moral and social development. Children share their ideas confidently and relish being challenged in their thinking and respond with insight and maturity in their RE lessons. Even so, there is still more that they can do to acquire skills to question and think more critically about matters of faith and belief. Children appreciate that they should respect everyone and show a tolerance and high regard for others. They know that people should be treated kindly whatever their belief or background and model this behaviour whether on the playground or in lessons. |
| **The impact of collective worship on the school community is good**  Collective worship is an important part of the life of the school because it actively promotes core Christian values and does so in a way that emphasises their relevance to the everyday lives of children. Furthermore, acts of worship are happy times full of spirit and a sense of a community that enjoys coming together and being with each other. This is reflected in the quality of children’s engagement in worship when they respond eagerly to questions and sing with enthusiasm. The headteacher, and other worship leaders, also ensure that messages children hear in worship help them to understand difficult concepts. For example, when exploring what it is to be themselves, the worship touched on how sometimes we may do things that we aren’t proud of. However, children are very clear that if you are truly sorry and ask to be forgiven, then a ‘weight’ can be lifted from the ‘back of your mind’ and you can ‘start again with no hard feelings’. They understand that prayer can help to do this because God loves everyone regardless of who they are and listens to everyone. They have a mature appreciation of the purpose of prayer and are developing their understanding of God and how to develop this relationship through talking with Him. Again, children are clear that this is open to everyone whether they have a faith or not. Collective worship is well planned around themes which are relevant to children and which are delivered with an emphasis on the core values. For example, worship was exploring transition during the inspection to help children prepare for the next stage in their education. The ‘Lighting the Candle’ group makes a valuable contribution to the success of worship. They are regularly involved in leading worship and have contributed to innovations such as the introduction of the very popular song which is sung as children enter and leave the hall at the start and end of worship. Evaluations of worship are effective. They focus on the impact on children and these have informed improvements. The celebration of Christian festivals in the local church helps children to understand the Christian year and the role of the church in the life of the school. |
| **The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school are good**  The headteacher has ensured that the school has developed a more overt Christian character since the previous inspection. Members of the school community are more aware that the school has a vision rooted in Christian teaching and that this has a positive impact on children’s attitudes to learning and approach to relationships. The headteacher is very well supported by members of staff and governors. Parents also support the way that the school is developing its ethos in a way that maintains its inclusiveness and encourages their children to explore matters of faith and belief openly. The headteacher has a very good grasp of the school’s strengths and areas to improve as a church school and self-evaluation is accurate. She is supported very ably by the RE leader and other members of staff. Foundation governors, although quite recently appointed, are developing a clear understanding of the school as a church school and have a good awareness of its strengths. Current systems to evaluate are effective but school leaders are aware of the need that they will need to develop in order to monitor the impact of new initiatives. Together with the chair of governors they form a strong team who have a good capacity to continue to develop the school’s Christian ethos. The RE leader ensures that the subject has a high profile in the school and that it is delivered in an exciting and vibrant way. She has an excellent understanding of developments in RE and is clear about how to take the subject forward. During the current vacancy of a vicar, links with the local church have been maintained through the commitment of parish members. The appointment of the new vicar, imminent at the time of the inspection, involved meeting the school community and reflects the school’s desire to build strong links between church and school. The school has benefitted from clear advice from the diocese which has helped them to evaluate their performance as a church school and given appropriate challenge. The school’s Christian ethos has supported the school through some hard times. The school is at a place where children and adults are excited about the possibilities for their next stages of development. The school meets the statutory requirements for RE and collective worship. |

SIAMS report June 2016 Hilperton CE VC Primary Trowbridge BA14 7SB