



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Cherry Hinton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

High Street,
Cherry Hinton
Cambridge
CB1 9HH

Previous SIAMS grade : Outstanding

Current Inspection grade: Outstanding

Diocese: Ely

Local authority: Cambridgeshire

Date of inspection: 10th February 2016

Date of last inspection: 13th January 2011

School's unique reference number: 110801

Headteacher: Patricia Yoxen

Inspector's name and number: Stephen Cutts 495

School context

Cherry Hinton School has expanded over the past four years from infant school to small primary school, now accepting children from nursery up to year six. New building work has accommodated these changes. Approximately half of the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds most of whom speak English as a second language. The church is just a short distance from the school and the parish has been in interregnum for several months.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Cherry Hinton School as a Church of England school are outstanding

- A very strong Christian ethos, underpinned by reflection and prayer, permeates the whole school and is thoroughly embraced and articulated by staff, parents, governors and children.
- Christian Worship is inspiring, thought-provoking and enjoyed by all.
- The school's work with vulnerable ethnic families is to be highly commended.

Areas to improve

- Aim to form a strong and mutually-supportive partnership with the in-coming vicar, so as to maintain and build on the excellent links which currently exist between church and school.
- Ensure regular and rigorous monitoring of all aspects of the school's Christian ethos, involving all stakeholders, which is clearly recorded and analysed in order to inform good practice.

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

There is a legacy of shared spirituality in this school which all stakeholders speak of passionately. Everyone is valued and appreciated. They clearly articulate the school's vision, based on courage, love and thankfulness, and children readily link these values to the teaching of Jesus the Light of the World. Each child is nurtured and encouraged by happy and committed members of staff who embrace Christian principles to foster excellent behaviour. This contributes greatly to the moral, social and cultural development of all pupils. It is underpinned by regular use of prayer, compassion, good teaching, thoughtful worship and close links to the local church. As well as formal Religious Education lessons, religion is implicit in other areas of the curriculum and this was backed up by one boy who said that his teacher "slipped it into everything". These lessons contribute well to a school ethos in which children talk about their understanding and respect for all faiths, traditions and world-wide multi-cultural Christianity. A wide variety of charities are supported throughout the year. Pupils are taught to value and care for God's creation, experiencing awe and wonder through gardening club, rearing butterflies and chickens, carefully-chosen educational visits and a range of after-school activities. These enrich the learning experience, build team work and provide opportunity to share and celebrate each other's achievements. Good work and behaviour are celebrated. Older pupils share a wide range of responsible roles within school. Informative religious displays in classrooms and corridors add to the overt spiritual ethos. Pupils share a global knowledge of Christianity through class discussions. Achievements are celebrated and there is much support and imaginative motivation for more-reluctant learners and those with English as a second language. Identified pupils from the upper school act as "young interpreters" to translate eleven different languages whenever needed. Children make good progress because of good teaching. The school employs a support worker who visits family homes and she organises a full programme of activities throughout the year to help those who feel vulnerable or anxious. Documents and letters of thanks from parents and carers show how welcome and effective this intervention has been and all refer to the love and support shown by school staff. One parent told me that he could not thank the school enough for helping him through a very difficult time. Others, new to this country, spoke of caring teachers who welcome them into the school family and always find time to chat. Throughout the school, there is a strong feeling that everyone is responsible for every child.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Daily collective worship is central to school life and highly valued by all stakeholders who talk enthusiastically about their involvement. Comments from teachers and children show that it is often inspiring and uses a variety of forms including whole school and key stage worship, music worship, special festivals and celebrations of achievement. Several of these are held in the church. A variety of leaders from school, three local churches, and other Christian organisations use an informal liturgical pattern. This includes reflective music and the lighting of a candle to show that Jesus, the light of the world, is present. An opening sentence uses one of the twenty three different languages represented in the school family. The presentation is closely linked to Bible stories and verses, often with pupil participation, and this is followed by discussion, hymn and prayer. Learners really enjoy this part of the day. They are enthusiastic about worship and clearly relate the day's theme to the school's core values and to their own lives, challenging them to take responsibility for their own actions, forgive and respect others. The greeting and the Lord's Prayer are accompanied by illustrations and sign language. Despite the vulnerability and difficulties experienced by many of the children, they were all fully engaged in a true act of worship. One child described prayer as a "one-to-one experience with God, in which we can speak and listen" whilst another said that the key message of worship is that we are all valued and made in God's image. Pupils enjoy leading and taking part in the services. They are confident when talking about the Holy Trinity and speak enthusiastically about "the unconditional love of Jesus" and "the amazing things he did". One local minister wrote that it is a privilege to share worship with the children. Prayer is used at key times during the school day and there is a quiet area of the library for reflection, in which children may listen to taped Bible stories or write their own prayers. Thoughtful moments are often spent at the end of the afternoon when children make positive comments about school friends or teachers and then pray for them together. There is a detailed folder of worship plans and monitoring which includes comments from leaders, governors and children. Worship is discussed, evaluated and appears in notes from staff and governor meetings. This informs good practice. Curriculum leaders are currently drawing up plans to link more acts of worship with work done in class.

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

Leaders value and share a clearly developed Christian vision and communicate their distinctiveness as a church school very well. This is evident in discussion, on the school's excellent website, in displays, documentation and in the school environment. Governors, staff and church members are working hard to maintain the strong partnership between school and church during a long interregnum. The previous incumbent was pro-active in school as chair of governors and his dual role has ensured a very effective two way partnership, recognised and valued by the whole community, which is based on sharing, support and celebration. The strategic cycle of planning, evaluation of impact, and improvement is firmly and clearly established. Members of the governing body, without an incumbent and with vacancy for a foundation governor, work hard to maintain these high standards which currently, whilst effective, are not securely sustainable without the full support and partnership of the church. Internal monitoring by the school leadership team, however, is outstanding and this is used to inform governors, build on good and effective practice and raise standards through staff meetings and formal reports. All class teachers have link governors who give advice, help and support. Teaching assistants feel strongly that their comments are listened to and concerns addressed. Outcomes of all meetings are shared with everyone via the staff notice board and all feel that their ideas are valued and considered. All members of staff have input into distinctiveness plans and evaluation forms through discussion with members of the school's working party. Help and support is encouraged and appreciated at all levels. Issues relating to church school ethos are discussed at every governor meeting. As a church school, aiming to care for each individual child, the role of special needs coordinator is well-established and effective, working with other schools and colleagues to offer support and advice to teachers and parents. She works in close partnership with the family support officer who is also a vital and successful link between school, home and outside agencies, thus ensuring that the whole family is nurtured within the wider church-school family. The new coordinator for religious education is already having a positive impact on teaching standards, motivation and recording. Results of questionnaires inform good practice and an excellent school website is informative and celebrates the school's Christian foundation. All stakeholders believe that the school's vision impacts greatly on achievement and attendance. Leaders attend a variety of professional courses aimed at improving standards including some diocesan-led courses and meetings relating to church school issues. Interviews and induction processes emphasise the school's ethos and aspirations. The head teacher is currently involved in the selection of a new vicar and, throughout the appointment procedure, the importance of a close partnership between school and church has been emphasised. Members of staff feel valued and their well-being is important to governors. Recent surveys and questionnaires show very positive and wide-spread support for the school.

SIAMS report February 2016. Cherry Hinton CE School, High Street, Cherry Hinton, Cambridge. CBI 9HH