

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Horspath Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Blenheim Road Horspath Oxford OX33 1RY	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese	Oxfordshire
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Date of academy conversion	1 May 2017
Name of multi-academy trust	River Learning Trust
Date of inspection	23 May 2018
Date of last inspection	2 July 2013
Type of school and unique reference number	123121 Voluntary Controlled Primary
Headteacher	Emma Coleman
Inspector's name and number	Olwyn Davison-Oakley 822

School context

Horspath Church of England Primary School is a small rural school which serves the local community and a growing number of pupils from neighbouring Oxford. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals and with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is lower than the national average. The number of pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) is in line with national figures. Most pupils are White British. The headteacher has been in post since 2009. The school, which is divided into five classes became part of the River Learning Multi-Academy Trust on 1 May 2017.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Horspath as a Church of England school are good.

- Christian values underpin daily life in the school and this positively impacts on pupils' well-being, academic and personal development.
- The Christian values and teaching from collective worship has a great influence on the good behaviour and caring relationships in the school.
- The partnership with St Giles Church ensures that the distinctive Christian character of the school is enhanced and that pupils, families and staff are supported pastorally.
- The recognition of collective worship as an important part of the school day is well-planned to provide a rich tapestry of Anglican worship in which pupils feel included and are active participants.

Areas to improve

- Put in place rigorous and robust monitoring and evaluation of the school's Christian character and collective worship by leaders, especially governors, so that this leads directly to improvements in the school's Christian character.
- Initiate a process for inclusion of the school's Christian vision in the school development plan and in formal meeting agendas so that the school's Christian foundation remains a high focus for all within the school.
- Develop pupils' spirituality and the understanding of the importance of prayer by promoting opportunities for prayer outside of acts of collective worship in classrooms and in the playground.
- Strengthen the pupils' understanding of Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith and improve pupil's understanding of diverse communities through more focused opportunities in the RE curriculum and visits undertaken by the school.

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

All members of Horspath Church of England Primary clearly express the Christian values which underpin every facet of school life. They live out the distinctive Christian values and are aware of the impact that they have on the lives and achievements of pupils. Parents quote the Christian values embedded in the school, reaffirming the ethos held by school leaders. This contributes to a school where every child is encouraged to develop in terms of academic achievement, personal development and well-being whatever their starting point, ability or faith. Academic achievement in the school is good and can be directly attributed to the nurturing Christian ethos. Vulnerable groups and families are nurtured, creating a caring happy atmosphere with supportive relationships. Attendance is in line with national figures and the school has worked hard to engage with hard to reach families. The school encourages pupils to become independent learners with a growing awareness of their own beliefs and values as well as those of others. Respect for others is a high priority and forms part of the school's robust behaviour policy which is underpinned by Christian values. Pupils openly report that behaviour is good in the school and is a result of thinking about the Christian values of forgiveness, accountability, truth and respect. They explain how this is reinforced in collective worship and RE, and the way that they are encouraged to reflect at all times on their own actions and the effect of their actions on others. One pupil explained that, 'Stories in the Bible about Jesus and God make the world a better place', whilst another claimed that stories in the Bible made her 'grateful for what she had'. Pupils are very proud of their school and are happy that they are part of Horspath family. They enjoy the opportunities that they are given. They are able to challenge themselves in all lessons and benefit from a carefully planned RE curriculum which allows greater social interaction and increases pupil self-esteem and enhances spiritual, moral and social and cultural development (SMSC). Pupils and parents are happy that hard work and caring attitudes are recognised and rewarded each week in school. Pupils talk about respect for people from other faiths and cultures. However, further experiences of visits and visitors from other cultures and faiths would deepen pupils' understanding of diverse communities. Well-established links with the local church of St Giles support the development of the Christian ethos of the school and its standing in the local community. The close relationship contributes to the spiritual and moral development of pupils. Members of the local church regularly come into school to help with activities such as reading and gardening, reinforcing the concept of community. Pupils understand the role of St Giles in Horspath, however, pupils' understanding of the role of the church as a multi-cultural world faith is basic and less secure.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good.

The inclusivity of collective worship and engagement of pupils, staff and parents undeniably enriches the distinctive Christian ethos of the school. This is achieved through a well-defined and planned programme of Bible stories which are closely linked to the school's Christian values and challenge pupils to care for and respect each other. The impact of this focused worship is evident in the good behaviour, caring attitudes and relationships of everyone in the school. Pupils describe how Bible stories encourage them to make sacrifices to make others happy and direct you to always do what you know is right. All members of the school community can explain what collective worship means to Horspath Church of England School and one pupil explained that, 'It gives us our spirit'. Daily collective worship is a valued aspect in the school day and is led by all staff and the local incumbent. Pupils participate with reverence, respect and enjoyment, engaging fully through prayer and singing, and are happy to take on increasing responsibility for leading certain aspects of the worship. They are an integral part of the invitation to worship, lighting of the candles and in the closing prayer. They contribute in the major church festivals through dance, drama and music, significantly enhancing their spirituality. However, they are not yet regularly, independently planning and leading worship themselves. Collective worship has a strong focus on prayer and is clearly developing pupils' spirituality. Pupils also use prayer beads in the school entrance to pray for others. However, prayer spaces in the classrooms and in the playground are not used to promote further understanding of the importance of prayer outside acts of collective worship. The local incumbent is a regular visitor in the school and is well-known and respected by pupils and parents alike. In addition to leading school worship every week she has worked with the school to develop worship in the local church through school involvement in Christian festivals and monthly family worship. The strong links with the church and an Anglican core structure to all school worship have encouraged pupils' awareness of Anglican routines and tradition. Pupils have a good understanding of the church seasons, response and the centrality of Jesus and the cross. They can explain at an appropriate level the concept of the Trinity, using a three-wick candle as a focus for this. One boy was overheard asking, 'Which of the three flames is God?' Pupils are aware of the importance of service to others and enjoy the opportunity to fundraise for local and more national and international charities such as Sports Aid. No formal monitoring or evaluation of collective worship has been undertaken by the school, in particular, by governors or pupils.

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

The distinctive Christian ethos of the school is modelled by school leaders who recognise the impact that the school values have on standards and achievement, behaviour and relationships in the school. Since the last inspection some work has been undertaken to address the development area of self-audit and promoting the Christian vision and values on the school website. However, this still requires further work. The formal recording of discussions in meetings and further work involving all stakeholders, in particular governors, on reviewing the school vision is needed to reinforce the importance of the underlying Christian foundation of the school. Governors are supportive of the headteacher's drive to make Horspath an inclusive school where all pupils have equal opportunity of experience. A governor and leadership focus on wellbeing of pupils and families in the school is a direct result of endorsing the Christian principle. Governors are very aware of their role in securing the impact of the school ethos through evaluation and strategic planning. However, they do not have in place a formal system of monitoring and evaluation of the distinctive Christian character of the school. This means that the Christian foundation of the school is not as secure as it could be. The sense of community throughout the school is extended into the local community through collaboration with the church. Good links exist between the church and the school, enriching the lives of pupils at a local level. This is evidenced by the support through the local incumbent and also between the school and other local network groups. The relationship with the local clergy and church is mutually supportive and makes a real difference to the life of the school. There is a strong emphasis on the well-being of all staff which is supported by relationships within the school. Some training for future leaders in church schools has been undertaken by the Diocese of Oxford. However, most is in collaboration with the River Learning Trust and concerned with standards and achievement rather than training for future leaders of church schools. Staff are articulate in expounding the impact of the Christian values; they readily attribute the success of pupil achievement to the ethos of the school. Parents are active supporters of the school and are delighted that their children attend because the nurturing environment and the clear values in the school makes a difference to the attitudes and morals of their children. They are happy that their children are nurtured and become confident pupils who are well-prepared for challenges that they meet. Parents feel welcomed into the school community and are pleased that their contribution is valued and that their views have been sought. They are confident in the support that the school gives to the whole family and not just the pupils. Pupils model the school values and enjoy helping others in the school through initiatives such as peer mentoring. Pupil voice is obtained through the school council and discussion regarding lessons and behaviour, resulting in some changes for improvement. The headteacher is very aware of the importance of the status of RE and collective worship in the school but there is no formal monitoring and evaluation in place. She has ensured that the previous area for improvement in collective worship has been met. Statutory requirements for both RE and collective worship are met.

SIAMS report May 2018 Horspath Church of England Primary School Blenheim Road Horspath Oxford OX33 1RY