

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Hallaton Church of England Primary School

Church Gate Hallaton Leicestershire LE16 8TY	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Leicester
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Date of academy conversion	N/A
Name of multi-academy trust / federation	N/A
Date/s of inspection	18 May 2017
Date of last inspection	26 June 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Controlled Primary 120176
Headteacher	Diane Riley
Inspector's name and number	Carol Price 869

School context

Hallaton is a smaller than average village school with 120 pupils on roll. An increase in pupil numbers has resulted in the school hiring the adjacent rectory in order to provide more teaching and outdoor space. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is similar to national although the proportion who are disadvantaged and eligible for pupil premium is below average. The school is served by the local parish church of St Michael and All Angels and has been without an incumbent since April 2017. The headteacher has been in post since January 2005 and her teaching commitment has recently increased from 50% to full time. The school works collaboratively with the South Leicestershire Collaborative Partnership (SLCP), a group of local schools, the majority of which are church schools. The school was judged good by OFSTED in March 2017.

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

- The school is distinguished by the quality of its Christian care, compassion and service to others. This has a significant impact on the lives of learners and the wider school community. It promotes an attitude to others which is 'captured' by pupils so that they are characterised by their concern for others.
- The solid partnership between the school and the local church has a very positive effect on the spiritual development and well-being of the whole school community.
- Pupils' behaviour, relationships and attitudes, which are strongly influenced by Christian values, are excellent.
- Strong international links and high quality provision to learn about other faith communities convincingly impacts on children's understanding and respect for diversity and difference.

Areas to improve

- Improve the rigour of self-evaluation as a church school in order to secure the Christian character into the future by:
 - gathering feedback from all groups about the impact of provision
 - checking that documentation reflects the school's Christian vision
 - using the outcomes of analysis to directly inform improvement planning.
- Develop a relationship with the new incumbent in order to sustain the existing strong and mutually beneficial link between school and the church.

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

Hallaton is a warm, welcoming and happy school with a caring, nurturing and family ethos. This is overwhelmingly attributed to the school's seven core Christian values of friendship, compassion, justice, creation, endurance, wisdom and service. Significantly, the whole school community speak about these values as being part of everyday life at Hallaton, and not just the words prominently displayed in every classroom and explained on the website. This is demonstrated by the way in which pupils, staff and parents can aptly provide many examples of the children's spontaneity in showing compassion, service and a moral duty to others. For instance, they talk about self-generated acts, such as pupils raising money for a defibrillator, or the child who raised the funds to have her own hair made into a wig for someone else. Furthermore, it is clear that the distinctively Christian nature of the school's values are understood by all. This is illustrated by the way that pupils link the story of the Good Samaritan to their Christian values of friendship and compassion. It is also revealed in the way that staff talk about how Jesus' message to 'love thy neighbour' and care for others has impacted on the 'strong moral compass' that runs through the school to be charitable and helpful to others. Consequently, the school's Christian character has a high profile and has an extensive impact on the daily lives and achievements of learners. Indeed, parents make reference to the school as being an 'extension of their family' and a 'safe spiritual environment' where Christian teaching is commonplace. They say that their children enjoy coming to school because the school's values are lived out and that this is reflected in the devoted staff who know their children well. As a result, there is excellent provision for pupils of all abilities and all groups of learners are well supported and challenged, with standards of achievement and attendance being above those nationally. In addition, pupils play well together and develop positive and inclusive relationships. They enjoy opportunities to buddy and mentor others at playtimes and demonstrate exemplary behaviour. Visits to Parliament, the Royal Ballet and the chance to participate in the Jaguar F1 Primary Challenge form part of the extensive range of spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) experiences available to pupils. These events have a substantial impact on both learners and the school. This is clearly illustrated by the opportunities pupils have to debate issues such as homelessness, and these successfully enable learners to put themselves in other people's shoes. It is further demonstrated by the school's regular involvement in village activities, for example the tribute to World War I, which forge strong relationships between old and young in the community. The religious education (RE) curriculum, international links and opportunities for global learning provide a wide variety of opportunities to learn about Christianity and other world faiths. Consequently, pupils demonstrate an impressive knowledge of other faiths and have an excellent understanding, respect and appreciation of faith and cultural diversity. RE teaching is given a high priority and weekly lessons and 'wow' days enable learners to explore and develop their own spirituality. Pupils are interested in RE. They talk about enjoying creative lessons where they are challenged and 'get asked big questions' and where they are allowed to reflect and express their own opinions. They also appreciate opportunities to communicate their thoughts through a variety of media including art and model making. As a consequence, pupils are able to confidently consider concepts such as what sacrifice means to them and can relate this to giving up something special in their own lives. Pupils value RE lessons because they 'help them understand about other people' and 'help them know how to live their lives'. It is, therefore, evident that RE makes a significant contribution to the SMSC development of learners as well as the Christian character of the school.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

The whole school community places a high value on collective worship and it is considered to be 'special' and a 'time for coming together'. Pupils explain that worship gives them the opportunity to 'learn a lesson from a Bible story that is useful in their lives'. They also say that it helps them to respect and look after other people and the world and this reflects the impressive range of social actions and charitable work that they are involved in. Since the previous inspection the school has worked hard to improve provision for collective worship. A well thought out programme based on diocesan themes and the school's Christian values has a strong focus on biblical teaching and the life of Jesus. As a result, worship is consistently and recognisably Christian and children are developing a good understanding of local Anglican practice and the Christian calendar and have an impressive recall of Bible stories. All teachers are involved in planning and leading worship and are individually responsible for collective worship for a two-week period. This innovative timetable ensures continuity and progression and is highly effective in allowing themes to be developed and explored in greater depth. The previous incumbent made a significant contribution to this development, planning and leading worship, modelling good practice and supporting the professional development of staff. Teachers are therefore able to plan interesting and memorable activities that both revisit, and consider anew the importance of the school's Christian values on the daily lives of learners. For example, pupils eloquently describe how they have reflected on the value of justice through considering how they can be a superhero or part of the 'Justice League'. Space for worship is limited, and although the school do use their hall, regular acts of worship and class assemblies

also take place in the church. These are well attended by parents, governors and other community members who readily talk about the impact they have on them. Class assemblies provide opportunities for all pupils to plan and lead worship and this has a positive impact on pupil confidence and inclusion in worship. Pupils' enthusiasm to write and choose prayers for use in collective worship and at other times in the school day clearly shows their engagement and understanding of the nature and purpose of prayer. One pupil described prayer as being a time to talk to God when you need advice or to ask for forgiveness when things go wrong. Reflection within collective worship and RE further enhances the spiritual life of the pupils. Pupils enjoy taking part in Remembrance Day and Ash Wednesday services and these enrich their experience of worship in different contexts. Pupils recognise the Trinitarian nature of God and can talk about one God who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Some pupils are able to articulate a mature and deeper understanding of the Trinity and talk about how they think 'the Holy Spirit is God invested in us' or 'God sitting on our shoulder to guide and help us'. Monitoring and evaluation of collective worship has improved since the last inspection. A variety of methods, such as parental questionnaires and governor visits are used to capture the observations and opinions of a range of stakeholders. However, although pupil discussions are effectively used to measure learners understanding of worship themes, monitoring strategies are not yet providing leaders with the views of pupils or the impact that worship has on their lives. Consequently, pupil voice is not yet influencing development planning.

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

The headteacher expresses a vision for the school that places Christian values at its heart and a genuine desire to serve the needs of the pupils, school and local community. She promotes and models this to the whole school community and it is reflected in the high level of support given to staff and pupil well-being. Parents hold the head in high regard and talk about how no job is too small and her willingness to help someone in need. A dedicated governing body and staff team support her in this.

The school's Christian ethos is instrumental in creating a learning environment in which pupils are valued and allowed to grow spiritually and where they are supported to become kind and compassionate and 'have the best experiences'. This vision shapes the curriculum, relationships and the development of Hallaton as a church school. Its impact can be clearly seen in the mutually supportive relationship between the school and church which has enabled the school to expand into the rectory, providing much needed space to accommodate a rising roll. This bond between the school and the church is highly valued and enriches the lives of learners. Links with parents, the diocese, the local and wider community provide clear benefits for learners. Parents are welcomed and involved in the life of the school and speak positively about the advantages of their children attending a church school. Leaders ensure that pupils participate in local and diocesan services and events, for example, the village Christingle Service and the Advent Service at Leicester Cathedral. These, along with school trips and links with countries such as India enhance pupils' understanding of local, national and global communities.

The school has continued to progress since the last inspection because of the sustained leadership of the headteacher and RE Coordinator, as well as support from the previous incumbent. Indeed, in spite of the full time teaching role of the headteacher, the school's day to day practice is praiseworthy. When visiting Hallaton, it is clear to see that it is a church school. However, the attention placed on school based practice is not yet reflected in documentation. Consequently, it is not yet evident how biblical teaching has shaped the school's Christian vision or how the school's vision and Christian values have influenced the development of policies. Nevertheless, all development points from the previous inspection have been addressed. The collective worship policy has been implemented and leaders have established formal and informal systems to monitor and evaluate the school.

Governors make regular visits and include collective worship and the RE curriculum as routine agenda items at their full governing body meetings. As a result, leaders can describe how Christian values influence all areas of school life, including behaviour, relationships and the children's capacity to have a go and not give up. However, although leaders know the school well, the systems for self-evaluation focus too much on provision rather than impact and are not rigorous enough to provide insightful links between self-evaluation and school development planning.

The leader for RE and collective worship is enthusiastic, extremely committed and well informed about current developments. The weekly release time that she receives enables staff to feel well supported and able to effectively implement new initiatives such as the new Leicestershire Agreed Syllabus and materials from Understanding Christianity. Her leadership of RE and collective worship is instrumental in ensuring that both areas contribute to the school's Christian ethos and positively influence children's behaviour and SMSC development.

The priority that leaders place on the development of the Christian character of the school is further demonstrated by the investment that the school makes for continuing professional development for staff as leaders in church schools. This is supported by links with the South Leicestershire Collaborative Partnership and the Diocese of Leicester. Hence, statutory requirements for RE and collective worship are met and the school is in a good position to continue to develop as a church school.