



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Bishop Hooper Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Ashford Carbonel
Ludlow
SY8 4BX

Previous SIAMS grade: Outstanding

Current inspection grade: Outstanding

Diocese: Hereford

Local authority: Shropshire

Date of inspection: 25 May 2016

Date of last inspection: 19 July 2011

School's unique reference number: 135790

Headteacher: Kerri Phelps

Inspector's name and number: Bridget Knight

Quality assurance: Lyn Field 151

School context

Bishop Hooper is a smaller than average size school. It moved into a new building in 2011 following the amalgamation of two village schools in 2009 and became voluntary aided in 2014. The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives additional income (the pupil premium) is below average. The school population is predominately White British although there is a periodic Traveller population. The percentage of children with special educational needs, including those with Education and Health Care plans, is above the national average. The school has recently taken over the pre-school and both this and the school are over-subscribed.

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

- The school's Christian mission, 'Success in Spirit', infuses its work, informing relationships, behaviour and its aspirational approach to teaching and learning.
- The Christian commitment of the headteacher and other leaders to valuing and supporting all as children of God ensures no child is left behind.
- The centrality of collective worship, prayer and reflection throughout the school has a significant impact on children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Areas to improve

- Develop children's knowledge and understanding of Christianity as a global world-faith.
- Monitor the newly-agreed assessment systems for religious education (RE) in order to inform analysis of progress and achievement across the school.

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

Bishop Hooper's distinctively Christian ethos is threaded through the life of the whole school including the recently joined pre-school. Its Christian mission actively shapes the school's approach to issues of attendance, pupil exclusion, welfare, progress and achievement. As a result, attendance is in line with the national average and all pupils, including disadvantaged children, make or exceed expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This is a school where all children are valued and nurtured because they are seen as God's children. Consequently its success in identifying and meeting individual needs is exemplary. Behaviour throughout the school is of a high standard and this is consistently attributed to the explicitly Christian values of the school, which teach and guide at every turn. The Christian character, evident in artefacts and displays around school, inspires high quality relationships between all stakeholders. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent because they know and understand a variety of prayers, songs and Christian affirmations. The degree to which children respectfully understand diversity and difference, including other faiths, is impressive. One child described the outlook of all the children: 'We're all people, no matter what religion we are'. This is a direct result of the excellent links that the school has made with a school and other faith communities in contrasting areas. Through these visits and school exchanges, children gain a vivid personal experience of their hosts' places of worship: the church, temple and mosque. Children's understanding of how Christianity is a world faith is less secure and this is an area for development. Religious education has a high profile and makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and to the school's Christian character.

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

Collective Worship is at the heart of how the school affirms its Christian foundation. The headteacher enacts a strong and consistent vision that embraces all members of the school community. Worship focuses on the Bible and life of Jesus and results in children both understanding and following his examples and teaching in their own lives. This is evidenced in the profound wording developed by the children to accompany worship rituals for the placing of the Bible, candle and cross on the altar table. Children appreciate the opportunities they have for personal prayer, which has a meaningful and prominent place in the school day and in their lives. Children speak movingly of how important prayer is to them because of how it makes them feel closer to God. Their personal prayers show children have a high level of understanding of how the Christian teaching relates to their own lives. As one parent had noted, 'the children here are very comfortable with praying'. Worship embraces a wide range of representatives from different Christian traditions who make a significant contribution to the spiritual life of the school, including the pre-school, which mirrors the worship focus of the school in its own displays and artefacts. Pupils have regular opportunities to worship at the two local churches in turn, occasions that are also shared by the two village communities. Worship has a profound impact on the whole school community, including its leaders, one of whom described how leading worship continues to develop her own spiritual life. Worship, planned jointly by the headteacher, foundation governors and worship leaders, offers a rich and varied experience reflective of the Anglican traditions. In turn, children have a good understanding of the Christian year, and the festivals that mark it. Children value especially the Open the Book worship, in which they play a full and active role. Children independently plan and lead acts of worship for the rest of the school and in so doing, both deepen their own learning and act as role models for a personal spiritual journey. The monitoring and evaluation of worship is responsive, leading to meaningful changes such as the invitation to parents to join the school in worship. Worship has focused on the concept of the Trinity and as a result children demonstrate understanding.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding.

RE has a strong profile in the school and across all classes. Work is planned in line with the new Agreed Syllabus, which has been carefully analysed and mapped to ensure appropriate balance and coverage. Standards of attainment in RE for the majority of children are above national expectations and pupils make progress from their starting points as a result of good and improving teaching. This is a result of the impact of careful monitoring and evaluation that identified differentiation as the current focus. Children love the way they are able to learn about RE through a wide range of curriculum areas because 'it's not always the same thing'. Opportunities for children to experience awe and wonder are various and relevant on the day of the inspection children's learning embraced the mysteries of both birth and death. Children show genuine interest and engagement in the subject, as well as the willingness and ability to enquire and reflect upon matters of significance. During a lesson studying words of inspiration one child spoke with animation about how the words would be significant to her in her own life. Learning in this subject promotes deep engagement with and reflection on important aspects of Christianity and other faiths. Beautifully-presented RE learning journeys for each class celebrate and exemplify a wide range of meaningful learning experiences. Children display an impressive understanding of other faiths and are able to make links between the differing practices and values systems. Assessment is carried out diligently. The school has begun to use revised systems for the analysis of progress and attainment but has not yet monitored their effectiveness. The headteacher, a passionate leader of RE, distributes leadership effectively so that all teaching staff embrace a shared focus on its development. Governors work closely with the school to ensure it goes well beyond meeting the minimum requirements for provision.

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

Christian motivation infuses all of school life. The powerful, yet unobtrusive, leadership of the headteacher in living out her personal faith and Christian vision ensures the school is rooted in distinctively Christian values. The result is a highly aspirational and high-achieving school where children are courteous and caring. In the words of one governor, they 'noticeably help one another'. Parents appreciate this aspect of the school, which makes an important contribution to the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. The school's mission, 'Success in Spirit', is inspired by biblical teaching and rooted in a strong belief that every child is therefore a child of God. The result is that, regardless of culture or background, each child's need is addressed. The sensitive work carried out to improve the attendance of some groups of Traveller children is illustrative of this. Governors form a committed partnership with the headteacher in the determined focus on the church school ethos and make a good contribution to the effective and insightful self-evaluation of its work. In so doing, they achieve a balance of support and challenge that directly impacts on the provision for and experience of the children. The number on roll has risen steadily, a testament to the school's reputation. The school benefits from excellent support from its local churches and incumbent. As a consequence, there is an exceptional focus on living out explicit Christian values: in the words of the incumbent, 'We just want the best for all children, as Christ would'. Worship leaders from the local church community, including 'Open the Book', make a significant contribution to school life, leading to mutual and substantial benefit for all groups. The headteacher has proactively sought development opportunities for this school as a church school so links with the diocese are strong and high-quality training is accessed. As a result, teachers have the confidence to plan RE creatively, as was seen in the lesson on 'Love Thy Neighbour' where children selected beads to make a bracelet to represent the people they love, and those they will come to love. Taking part in local and international charity events gives children a real purpose to both use and to see the impact of Christian values. All the development points from the last inspection have been addressed showing the determination of leaders to improve provision for children at this outstanding church school.