



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

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

### Holy Trinity Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Middleton Road  
Oswestry  
SY11 2LF

**Previous SIAMS grade: Good**

**Current inspection grade: Good**

**Diocese: Lichfield**

Local authority: Shropshire

Dates of inspection: 23 June 2016

Date of last inspection: 4 July 2011

School's unique reference number: 135786

Headteacher: Pam Edwards

Inspector's name and number: Huw D Bishop 344

#### School context

Holy Trinity Primary School is an average-sized primary school situated in the town of Oswestry. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. However, the number of children from minority ethnic groups is above the national average. A very high proportion of pupils are disadvantaged, eligible for free school meals and are supported by additional funding known as the pupil premium. Over one-quarter of all pupils have special educational needs or disability and are given extra help with their learning. The school has a very strong partnership with Holy Trinity parish church, and supports the needs of the local Christian and wider community.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Holy Trinity Primary School as a Church of England school are good

- The very strong and principled Christian leadership offered by the headteacher, supported well by other senior leaders and committed governors.
- The school's distinctive Christian ethos has a significant impact on all aspects of school life and is resulting in improving progress and behaviour in lessons and around the school
- The strong care shown by the school in its determination to demonstrate the uniqueness of each pupil within a vibrant, inclusive and diverse Christian learning community.
- Outstanding collective worship which is at the heart of school life and its impact extends to pupils' learning in class and their lives at home and in the local community.
- The excellent relationship with Holy Trinity parish church that makes a positive Christian impact on the school community.

#### Areas to improve

- In liaison with the vicar at Holy Trinity parish church, develop further specific Anglican tradition and practice, particularly the Eucharist in worship, to reinforce distinctiveness in line with the school and parish's suggestions for developing Christian fellowship and witness.

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

The school's Christian character is central in ensuring that all pupils thrive, are valued and their individual needs recognised and acted upon. This is characterised by the pupils' excellent behaviour and good relationships that exist within and between all members of the school. Pupils get on well together and feel part of a welcoming and supportive Christian family. Strong emphasis is placed on moral development clearly based on the school's Christian values. Three core Christian values, 'Respect, Belief and Courage' are clear, shared and understood by all involved in the life of the school and most pupils can talk about how the values impact on their lives and the lives of others. Pupils were able to relate the school's core values to Jesus' teachings as illustrated in the parables. For example, Year 6 pupils were considering the parable of the Good Samaritan and could talk with confidence how the values of courage and compassion were demonstrated. These values are wrapped within a mission statement which has an unequivocal 'Trust in God' as its foundation motto. As a result, pupils have positive attitudes to learning and are happy, encouraged and supported in school and this contributes to the improving progress that pupils are now making. Information provided by the school shows that this improvement will continue, with most pupils in school now making the progress expected of them from their starting points. Staff are proactive, engaged and focussed on pupil well-being. Parents show a great pride in the school and feel that its inclusive and Christian ethos permeates everything the school does. Pupils are very supportive of their teachers who they claim *'care for us and teach us lots, lessons are fun'*. Pupils are encouraged to express their views and concerns in the knowledge that they are taken seriously and will receive support if they need it. The school's peer mentors were described as 'teachers' hands' as they went about their work at break and lunchtime, making sure that fellow pupils were supported and cared for. Adults too, during this time, were involved in play and other activities with pupils. This, as well as their supervision responsibilities, demonstrates the mutual care and respect that exists in school and contributes well to pupils' interaction with adults and the sense of enjoyment and fun from being in school. Spiritual development is really at the heart of the school and this is evidenced by excellent displays and artefacts around the building, the programme for worship and the good work done in religious education (RE). Religious education supports and enriches the school's distinctive ethos well. The curriculum is exciting and gives pupils an excellent breadth of learning experience. The strong focus on worship impacts well on pupils' social, moral, social and cultural development. The mix of cultures now represented in the school community contributes well to pupils' understanding of diversity and their appreciation of international and global issues. Parents, too, have contributed to making sure that the school is an inclusive community, by supporting new parents whose first language is not English, through organising an English teaching class for them. Pupils are polite and courteous and express pride in their school and its achievements. Links with the Holy Trinity parish church are strong and the work of the foundation governors to monitor and promote the school's distinctive Christian character is highly effective.

## **The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding**

The school places great emphasis on collective worship which is planned on a two year cycle and it is regarded as a valued experience by all members of the school. Worship is evaluated carefully and thoughtfully and involves pupils as well as adults. The worship programme is linked to the school's core values of respect, belief and courage, the acclaimed 'Open the Book' programme and the work done by a team from Holy Trinity church through the weekly 'Connect Club'. The hall, which is used for whole school worship is regarded as a special place and treated with respect as a place of spiritual nurture. The daily act of worship enhances pupils' knowledge and understanding of the Bible, the Christian faith, including their awareness of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Pupils are confident when discussing their beliefs and do so with a strong sense of maturity. This is very effective and consistent in enabling them to focus on values and it has a good impact on their spiritual development and behaviour and encourages independent thinking. The worship is distinctly Christian in nature but accessible to all pupils

regardless of personal faith. Opportunities to reflect are given in worship and evidence shows that pupils respond sensitively and with dignity and reverence to the occasion. Pupils offer praise and thanksgiving in their worship with zeal and enthusiasm. This was also seen with early years' pupils at the end of the school day. From their experience of worship, pupils spoken to during the inspection were able to talk confidently about the way they apply Christian values in their lives both in school and in their local communities. Each classroom has a prayer and reflection area which is used for class and individual worship daily. Prayers said during the school day are said in English and translated into pupils' individual home languages. This supports integration, racial and religious harmony well. Pupils use a 'Prayer Tree' as individuals or groups and the school offers guidance to pupils on how to compose their own prayers and reflect through their use. Pupils' developing personal spirituality is supported well by the school through worship, individual and whole-school prayer opportunities, reflection and praise. Also, pupils of all religious backgrounds or none show a keen sense of awe and wonder about God's creation and their part within it. Parents are invited to join in school worship and do so by attending school and normal Sunday worship at Holy Trinity church. Thus, pupils' understanding of Anglican tradition and practice is being nurtured. This has a positive impact on the local community and is highly regarded by Christian and parents of other faiths represented in the school community. Pupils' understanding of links with Holy Trinity parish church is very strong because the church is used at various points in the school year and worship in school has been enriched by the strong partnership with the parish and the regular involvement of the clergy and ministry team. The Vicar is a frequent visitor, well known and respected by the school.

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

The headteacher, staff and governors have a clear vision of how distinctive Christian values are central to school life and are open and receptive to change and development. There is a determination to give pupils a rich, varied and exciting learning experience. The way this is articulated is a strength of the school and the school's evaluation of its Christian distinctiveness is thorough and accurate. The school's leadership ensures that the school's Christian values are at the forefront of all new initiatives and RE, collective worship and the broader school curriculum are carefully interwoven to reflect the school's distinctive Christian ethos. The school's internal structures are designed to reinforce a strong sense of belonging and confidence and the school has a track record of staff development and understanding of what it means to work at a Church of England school. Governors and other leaders monitor pupils' learning behaviours and conduct around the school and development points from this are discussed further with pupils, which gives them a voice in determining ways forward to secure improvement. Although the school has its strong foundation relationship with Holy Trinity church, other local church contributions are also included, so that the wider Christian community plays its part in enriching pupils' learning experiences. Parents speak very highly of the school and their views are sought, valued and influence its development. Governors also contribute significantly to this process and have a strong and determined commitment to the school's Christian foundation. They work hard to ensure that the school's designation as a Church of England school is recognised and respected by the community and is viewed as an integral part of the local church's care and mission. School leaders also make effective use of the support available from the diocese to help them in their work. Opportunities for training and development with staff and governors, visits to lessons and discussions with pupils have all had a positive impact on the school's Christian distinctiveness. Areas for development from the last inspection have been addressed successfully. There is a clear culture of Christian service within Holy Trinity school. The headteacher has created a strong sense of teamwork both with staff and the governing body and this partnership is moving the school forward confidently. There is a very real sense that this school has been on a journey, with secure spiritual and educational roots now being carefully nurtured and growth monitored and encouraged.

SIAMS report June 2016 Holy Trinity CE (VC) Primary School, Oswestry SY11 2LF