



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Cold Harbour Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Highland Close
Bletchley, Milton Keynes
MK3 7PD

Diocese: Oxford

Local authority: Milton Keynes

Dates of inspection: 9th May 2014

Date of last inspection: 2nd December 2009

School's unique reference number: 110404

Headteacher: Mrs Louise Aird

Inspector's name and number: Janet Northing 792

School context

Cold Harbour Church of England Primary School is a popular and well-established school of average size. Since the last inspection there has been a significant turnover of staff though this has stabilised in the last two years. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special needs is well above average.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Cold Harbour as a Church of England school are good

- Distinctive Christian values are embedded in the life of the school and have a profound impact on the daily lives of pupils
- The strong Christian vision led by the headteacher ensures all pupils are nurtured and valued
- Religious Education (RE) plays a strong part in supporting the Christian vision of the school particularly in the way pupils learn to respect diversity and difference

Areas to improve

- To establish a rigorous system of monitoring and evaluation that includes foundation governors in order to develop an action plan, reflecting the National Society criteria, which fully supports the school's distinctively Christian approach to continuing improvement
- To develop the interpretation of spirituality across the school community in order that learners have regular opportunities to engage in high quality experiences across the curriculum to promote a personal spirituality that can be confidently and clearly expressed
- To make the Trinitarian nature of Christianity explicit within worship and so develop learners' Christian understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit

The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is good at meeting the

needs of all learners

The distinctive Christian character of the school is clearly demonstrated through its Christ like commitment to the inclusion of all learners regardless of their ability or background, whether they are Christian, of other faiths or of none. All are made welcome and benefit from being part of an inclusive and nurturing school community where Christian values are clearly linked to Biblical teachings and the life of Jesus Christ. Parents speak warmly of the impact of the school's Christian ethos made tangible in the care and support their children receive from staff at the school. When reflecting on their fundraising for charitable organisations pupils readily articulate that their motivation comes from the fact that God cares about everyone whether friend, stranger or enemy and therefore they should do likewise. Current monitoring data shows the positive impact of the Christian character of the school on academic achievement with noticeable improvements in progress across the school for all learners but particularly for those in vulnerable groups. Relationships between all members of the school community are built on trust and mutual respect linked to the Christian values of the school. This impacts positively upon pupil behaviour and levels of attendance that remain consistently above average. RE makes a significant impact on the lives of the pupils demonstrated in their respect for diversity and difference. Learners understand that Christianity is a multi-cultural world faith and that there are other faith communities which express their faith in distinct ways. Exemplified in a lesson focusing on the key question of the importance of Puja for Hindu believers, music was used during a time of reflection for pupils to think about their own special things before considering the significance of the items on the Puja tray. Standards in RE are in line with national expectations and learners make good progress from their starting points. The school environment promotes reflection, prayer and quiet thinking through the provision of a worship station in each classroom for learners to explore their spirituality. A quiet area located near the reception desk is similarly available with users attaching ribbons to a prayer shawl as a response to prayers once offered. Whilst pupils link provision in the school environment, worship and RE as ways for them to explore spirituality there are not enough high quality opportunities in the curriculum as a whole to enable them express their views clearly, confidently and in depth.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Since the last inspection the school has made good progress in actively engaging the pupils in leading, planning and evaluating collective worship. Older pupils have the opportunity to be part of a Collective Worship Team working with the co-ordinator to plan activities, write and read prayers, choose hymns and choruses, and evaluate in writing their responses to an act of worship. This increased involvement by pupils has led to collective worship having a greater impact on all aspects of school life including attitudes, behaviour and relationships. An act of worship that focused on the celebration of achievements during the week began with a chorus playing as pupils entered the hall. The spontaneity of learners and adults in singing along as they waited created a sense of reverence clearly demonstrating their engagement with and enjoyment of worship. Links were made to 'spiritual gifts' and the importance for the pupils to recognise and use their gifts. This showed how themes from a range of sources including the Christian values of the school and the Anglican liturgical calendar raise aspirations and inspire spiritual reflection. A new resource that uses the Bible as its starting point to explore topical values through creative storytelling has helped pupils to interpret and live out the school values in a Christian way. Pupils readily talk about the impact of prayer and reflection both within worship and at other times, describing prayer as speaking to God about things that worry them or time to think about what they could do to make things better when they have done something wrong. Local clergy and church leaders work closely with school leaders to ensure continuity and support pupils in understanding and appreciating Anglican tradition and practice. Whilst collective worship reflects the Trinitarian nature of Christianity pupils are not able to talk about this in a way that shows a clear perception of the Christian understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. At the last inspection the need for governors to become involved in formally monitoring and evaluating collective worship using the National Society

grade descriptors to inform judgements was highlighted. Although governors have worked closely with the headteacher and RE subject leader on school development no formal monitoring of collective worship has taken place.

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

Since the last inspection the leadership, commitment and Christian vision of the headteacher have been pivotal in the on-going development of Cold Harbour as a church school. The impact of the Christian values has been to energise the whole school community and raise aspirations. The distinctive Christian character of the school now promotes a positive attitude to learning evident in the improving levels of progress and academic achievement for all pupils irrespective of their starting points. Parents affirm the Christian values and talk positively about the impact they have on their children and on their own well-being. The RE and collective worship leader receives good support in fulfilling her role resulting in improvements to practice and outcomes for the pupils. Arrangements for religious education and collective worship exceed statutory requirements. Links with local clergy and church leaders further support the Christian character of the school and enrich the lives of learners through their involvement in worship, and celebrations of the major Christian festivals. Staff receive support through continuing professional development aimed at enhancing the Christian character of the school leading to their greater engagement with the school's continuing Christian vision. Distributive leadership promotes opportunities for the identification of staff as future leaders of church schools. A priority for development from the last inspection required that the whole governing body and staff should be well trained to use the National Society criteria to evaluate the school as a church school and to identify its core Christian values and visions. Good progress has made in this area. School leaders have accessed support and training from the diocese that has been cascaded to all staff, and the evidence base for making secure judgements on the school's Christian character, collective worship and RE is now sound. Whilst the criteria are used to identify areas for development they are not all followed up in a corresponding action plan directly linked to the school's distinctive Christian character, collective worship and RE. A further focus for development required that the leadership of the school should work with the diocese in reviewing the composition of the governing body to ensure that foundation governors were in place and exercising their role effectively. For some time this proved difficult to achieve but since 2012 two foundation governors have been in place. They work closely with the headteacher and RE/ collective worship leader to support the continuing development of the school as a church school. However, governors are not fully involved in the on-going monitoring and evaluation of the school's distinctive Christian character, collective worship and RE and their role does not extend to setting precise and measurable action points leading to future improvement.

SIAMS report May 2014 Cold Harbour Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School
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