



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

Fiddlers Folley, Fordham Heath
Colchester, Essex,
C03 9UE

Previous SIAS grade: Satisfactory

Current SIAMS grade: Outstanding

Diocese: Chelmsford

Local authority: Essex

Date of inspection: 8 July 2015

Date of last inspection: June 2010

School's unique reference number: 115075

Headteacher: Heather Hann

Inspector's name and number: Pamela Draycott 161

School context

Holy Trinity is a very small Church of England voluntary controlled primary school. It serves both urban and rural areas in and around Eight Ash Green and Aldham. The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs or for whom pupil premium funding is received due to social disadvantage is around the national average. Attendance is well above the national average. Most pupils leave having made good progress. Around 10% of its pupils come from families who attend church regularly outside of their involvement with school.

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

- The clear vision of the headteacher for the school as a voluntary controlled church school, which is effectively shared and supported by her deputy, staff and governors.
- Improved attendance of 97%, which is indicative of pupils' enjoyment of school, and contributes positively to their academic progress.
- The improvement in the quality of the worship programme since the previous inspection, so that it now commendably supports the school's spiritual life.
- Overall progress in developments as a church school since the previous inspection.

Areas to improve

- Review, refresh and refine the school's vision and explicit biblical values so that they are confidently articulated by pupils and move the school forward into the next stage of its development.

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

Holy Trinity is an inclusive school based on its supportive and inclusive Christian foundation. Consequently, it successfully strives to ensure that its pupils develop well academically and personally. This has led to an overall improvement in pupil attainment which is now at or slightly above the national average. Most pupils, including the more vulnerable, now make at least good progress across the school from their different starting points. The school's Gospel values include trust, forgiveness, fairness and respect. The values are well known by pupils who can talk about how they affect the positive relationships and exemplary behaviour evident around school. However, pupils are less clear about how these values explicitly link to Christian and biblical teaching. The school values are shared by those of other faiths and none. They are linked explicitly to biblical teaching and Christian practice through the worship programme and in religious education (RE). As part of the long term strategic planning of the school, the current values were introduced three years ago. They are now at the end of this particular cycle of school development and planning. The school has rightly identified the need to review, refresh and refine the values so that they adequately support the next stage of the school's development as a church school. There are firm plans in place to do so from September 2015. As an expression of the school's inclusive Gospel values, pupils' wellbeing is taken very seriously. Consequently, pupils know that they are well cared for and that their teachers work with them in order for them to achieve their very best. They feel safe and want to be in school, which means that attendance is very good and improving. The school celebrates a wide range of achievement. Accordingly, it provides a balanced curriculum with a wide range of extra-curricular activities, trips and enrichment activities such as the school's half-termly 'theme days'. These 'theme days' have included a focus on the Magna Carta, Amazing Bodies and a Maths and Money day. The theme days provide excellent opportunities for pupils to reflect on key questions linked to spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) issues. Pupils are very well behaved, caring and confident and value the 'togetherness' of the school community. Since the previous denominational inspection the school has focused effectively on helping pupils to develop skills to improve their learning. Within the past 18 months, this has included introducing Philosophy for Children (P4C). This has helped pupils across the school discuss and reflect on key questions focused around the school's Gospel values and 'big questions' like 'What is beauty?' RE is regarded very positively by pupils who enjoy it and recognise the contribution it makes to helping them reflect on the significance of faith in the world today. The majority of pupils do not come from practising religious backgrounds.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Worship takes place daily with developed themes linked to the school's Gospel values and to the Church's year. It is very well planned, monitored and evaluated, including by pupils themselves. This indicates the significant improvements made to the worship programme since the previous inspection report, which graded this aspect of school life as satisfactory. Worship contributes very well to helping pupils to explore the school's Gospel values. Through worship, the school community also appropriately explores the life and teaching of Jesus. This leads to some understanding of Jesus as 'the Son of God' and a basic recognition of his significance for Christians. Pupils have some understanding of the Christian idea of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Christian symbols to encourage reflection and celebrate the school's Christian foundation are in good evidence around the school. However, the use of

symbols relating to the Trinity is lacking. This means that some pupils cannot express, in age appropriate ways, an understanding of the Christian idea of Trinity. Pupils and staff have positive attitudes towards worship which is valued and enjoyed. The quality and variety of worship is good and makes a very positive impact on pupils' spiritual and moral development. A development within the last two years has been the introduction of pupil 'leaders of worship' who have a key role in planning, leading and evaluating worship. Elements of Anglican practice are embedded in worship. These include opening and closing sentences with responses, the Lord's prayer and the use of candles to show, as one pupil reflected during worship, that 'Jesus is the light of the world'. Pupils have a developing understanding of the Christian calendar and of colours used in worship to reflect different times of the church's year. Reflection and prayer is important in school life. Opportunities for joining in with prayer and reflecting on spiritual issues takes place through worship and in the reflection areas in classrooms and in outside spaces. The recent addition of a 'holding cross' is appreciated by pupils and has enhanced reflection and prayer within the school. This is presented to each class by the area bishop of Colchester on behalf of the diocese.

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

As a voluntary controlled Church of England school, the school serves its locality, where the majority of families do not have regular contact with the Christian faith outside of their involvement with the school. Its Christian foundation is consistently promoted by the headteacher, supported by her deputy and staff, and in partnership with governors. Parents and pupils recognise that this is a church school and link that to it being caring and supportive. The school's Gospel values are seen as the driving force for school development and improvement. A robust monitoring and self-evaluation system focuses on meeting the needs of all and is in keeping with the school's Christian foundation. School leaders have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. This shows itself in its accurate self-evaluation and strategic improvement planning. Governors are aware of this process and support it appropriately. Arrangements for worship and RE meet statutory requirements. Issues from the previous inspection have been timely and well addressed. As part of the school's inclusive nature and based on the idea of Christian service to its community, the school builds good relationships with families. It supports its pupils very well, especially the most vulnerable. For example, a school counsellor is employed part time by the school who works for the Brentwood Catholic Children's Society. This provides help for some children in dealing with difficult situations in their lives. Clergy and a youth worker from the parish church and from other churches are regular visitors, leading worship and running an after school Christian group (JAS – Jesus at School). This is regularly attended by around 20 pupils (approximately 16% of the pupil body). This demonstrates the strong and positive links between the school and the parish church. The school is committed to the professional development of staff and supports staff well. Governors recognise this as being important. The school works well in partnership with a local consortium of schools which includes other Church of England schools. It works well with the diocese of Chelmsford through its positive links with its school's advisers, past and present. The headteacher mentors colleagues new to headship in diocesan and local authority schools.

SIAMS July 2015. Holy Trinity Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School, Fiddlers Folley, Fordham Heath, Colchester, Essex, C03 9UE