

Holy Trinity Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Quemerford
Calne
Wiltshire
SN11 0AR

Diocese: Salisbury

Local authority: Wiltshire
Dates of inspection: Tuesday 15th November 2011
Date of last inspection: 13th July 2009
School's unique reference number: 126487
Headteacher: Stephen Heal
Inspector's name and number: David Shears - 423

School context

Holy Trinity is an average-sized primary school, currently with 206 pupils on roll. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds with a very small proportion from minority ethnic families. No pupils are at an early stage of speaking English. The school has a breakfast club on site that is managed by the governing body. Three of the school's foundation governors were new to the role in September 2011.

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

The school staff, expertly led by the headteacher, ensures that this is a highly effective church school that consistently meets the needs of all pupils within its care. The distinctively Christian nature of the school is demonstrated in all areas, although supremely in the excellent provision of collective worship. The contribution of the foundation governors in their monitoring and evaluation can only serve to strengthen this further, particularly in relation to the effectiveness of RE.

Established strengths

- The excellent leadership of the headteacher that underpins the school's distinctively Christian foundation.
- The high level of care and support given to all pupils and their families.
- The excellent planning and evaluation of collective worship that result in a very positive impact on pupils and parents.
- The good levels of knowledge of Bible stories that enable pupils to better understand the Christian faith.

Focus for development

- Develop more opportunities for personal spiritual reflection through focused areas, both within the school and outside.
- Improve the use of assessment in RE so that it is consistently used to plan work that equally focuses on AT2 as well as AT1, and will meet the needs of pupils of all abilities in RE.
- Develop the monitoring and evaluative role of the foundation governors in collective worship, RE and the school's self-evaluation as their contribution towards school improvement.

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

needs of all learners

Pupils feel safe and secure within this highly effective primary school because they know that all staff care well for them as individuals. As a result they behave well and have excellent attitudes towards their work. Pupils are seen as partners with the school in learning and this engenders a confidence and self-belief that they are able to achieve well. They are becoming proficient at reflecting carefully on their work. As a result pupils make good academic progress and reach above average attainment. Pupils have a clear understanding of the school's distinctively Christian ethos because it is written in child-friendly language and overtly shows pupils the principles of daily living such as: 'God looks after us and we look after each other' and 'Jesus helps us to make the right choices.' This results in pupils having excellent social skills and a keen understanding of right and wrong. Their understanding of other cultures is improving securely and quickly. This is because the school has invested time to establish a good link with a Sikh primary school in Slough. Both schools have visited each other so that pupils can learn first hand about each other's faith and culture. This experience has given pupils a much better insight and understanding of other cultures than simply learning about it in the classroom. While pupils spend time together in spiritual reflection, such as in collective worship and praying together before meals and at the end of the day, there are not enough opportunities for them to experience and practise spiritual reflection on an individual basis through the provision of focused areas for this purpose, either in school or outside. The school has already recognised this and is planning an indoor area for pupils to take time to reflect and pray individually or with each other. There are opportunities for pupils to extend their understanding of Christianity through 'Messy Church', a club that is run in the school by the local Anglican church. The school has also changed the venue of the Y6 residential trip to an outward-bound centre in Devon that is based on a Christian foundation. Pupils are encouraged to be thankful for all that they have and to think of others who are not as well off as they are. An example of this would be in their collection of Christmas boxes to give to those in need.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

The impact of collective worship can be clearly seen in the enthusiastic responses given by pupils who thoroughly enjoy the experience. In particular, they recall with much enjoyment the creative acts of worship that are led by the headteacher and the local vicar. The inclusion of a data projector has enhanced collective worship through its visual stimulus. There are examples of how comments from individual pupils afterwards have been used to adapt the planning of the next act of worship, acknowledging their insights and moving them further in their learning and understanding. Pupils enjoy learning new forms of worship such as the giving and receiving of the peace that is modelled from the front and then practised, by all pupils giving the peace to each other. Pupils enjoy worshipping through singing, although they would like to know and use an even wider range of songs. Pupils love to be involved in worship by discussing questions with their partners and participating at the front. The school has already introduced a scheme where older pupils plan and deliver acts of worship. This is being continued this year to include younger pupils. There are also plans for classes to lead collective worship at the end of a theme so that they can share their learning. Planning for collective worship is outstanding, ensuring that previous learning and understanding is built upon and consolidated. While there is some planning within this for reflection, this is not explicit enough to ensure a similar progression in spiritual development. The church is used well to support worship, particularly in celebrating the major Christian festivals such as the Christingle service. It is also used as a venue for occasions such as a production of the Nativity. Parents enjoy participating in these occasions and many attend collective worship regularly on a Friday, where the achievements of pupils are celebrated. Worship leaders consistently evaluate collective worship and the co-ordinator spends time with groups of pupils to gather their views so that they can be taken into account in developing a clear action plan. Collective worship is a key part of the school's Christian vision and makes an excellent start to the pupils' day at school.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

Pupils are gaining a good understanding of the Christian faith through the teaching of RE. The school is currently beginning to implement the newly revised local syllabus. Using their

own Bibles that are given to them by the school, they are able to explore the main stories and are very good at recalling these in detail. There is a good emphasis on helping pupils to understand how the Biblical characters were feeling in their particular situations and this is explored creatively such as through the use of freeze-framing in drama. The teaching of RE is good. Teachers carefully re-visit the previous learning and tell pupils what they are going to learn in the current lesson. In some classes pupils are clearly shown how they will know if they have been successful in their learning. Excellent relationships result in pupils having the confidence to give their own views, knowing that they will be positively accepted. However, while pupils recall and understand important Biblical stories well, they do not consistently know how they can be applied to life today and, in particular, to their own lives. Consequently, their 'learning from Christianity' is a weaker element. The school's own self-evaluation through looking at pupils' books and talking with groups of pupils has already identified this as an area for development, which is recorded in the school's RE action plan. However, RE needs to be more carefully monitored to include the observation of lessons. Assessments, too, need to be adapted so that, at the end of each unit, a grade is awarded both for 'learning about religion' and 'learning from religion'. This will enable the school to compare these two attainment targets to check how well pupils are achieving in both. Pupils are very interested in learning about the religions of others, recognising the importance of understanding these so that they can relate positively to those of other faiths and to be respectful of their views and beliefs. Their knowledge of other faiths is rapidly improving. Progress in RE is good overall. It is not yet outstanding because assessments are not consistently used well enough to ensure that pupils of all abilities in RE receive work that is tailored to their needs. Pupils' attainment in RE is in line with their attainment in other core subjects.

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

Pupils, parents and visitors to the school are left in no doubt about the Christian foundation of the school. This is because the leadership and commitment of the headteacher enables the Christian distinctiveness of the school to be overtly promoted and celebrated, both in school and in communication with parents and the local community, such as through the school's website. Parents speak enthusiastically of the school's caring Christian nature, knowing that their children are safe and secure and making good progress both academically and in their personal development. Staff emulate the Christian ethos of the school through their care and support of pupils and their families, and they are encouraged to develop their understanding of what it means to be a Christian school. The school's Christian provision is monitored and evaluated well and the results of this is encapsulated in the RE and collective worship co-ordinator's action plans and the overall school improvement plan. Foundation governors are very keen to support the school and have been instrumental in making important strategic decisions, such as the review of the school's admission arrangements. However, their own monitoring and evaluation of the school's provision in collective worship, RE and the school's self-evaluation as a church school have not been developed well enough and so their contribution to the school's development in these areas is weaker. This was a key issue from the previous report that still has not been sufficiently addressed. Three new foundation governors have recently been appointed and the time is now right to provide training for all in developing this area of responsibility. The school's partnerships with the local churches and community are excellent. The school has a very good reputation within the area, resulting in many wishing to send their children to be educated there. The school has a distinctively Christian ethos that not only nurtures and develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith but also impacts on their families and the local community, providing a clear Christian witness for all.