

## Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

### Holbrook Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Moorside Lane  
Holbrook  
Belper  
Derbyshire  
DE56 0TW

<b>Current SIAMS inspection grade</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Derby</b>
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local authority	Derbyshire
Date/s of inspection	13 March 2017
Date of last inspection	03 February 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Academy 143450
Head teacher	Andrew Davies
Inspector's name and number	John Clapham (775)

#### School context

Holbrook is a smaller than average primary school serving 138 children and their families in the village of Holbrook and the wider locality. The school is situated around half a mile from St. Michael's Parish Church. The proportions of pupils eligible for the Pupil Premium (those eligible for free school meals or who are in local authority care) are below the national average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are below average, although the number of children who are supported with statements or Education Health Care Plans is above average. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds and speak English as their first language. Significant additions have been made to the building since the previous inspection. Holbrook converted to academy status, through the Derby Diocesan Academy Trust, in September 2016.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Holbrook as a Church of England school are good

- Holbrook is a caring and highly inclusive school where every child is valued and nurtured to fulfil their potential.
- Distinctively Christian values shape the life and ethos of the school and impact positively on children's spiritual, moral social and cultural development (SMSC)
- The whole school community values collective worship, responds positively and participates willingly. This contributes to the ethos in which children thrive, succeed and are happy.
- The school enjoys strong partnerships with the parish church, with a high level of support and increasing collaboration that benefits the whole community.

#### Areas to improve

- Identify opportunities across the curriculum for reflection and spiritual development through the classroom environments.
- Develop children's understanding of Christian belief and the range of Christian traditions both locally and around the world.
- Involve all members of the school community in evaluating the school's ethos and Christian distinctiveness to continue to drive improvement.

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

The life and work of Holbrook is underpinned by distinctively Christian values, where God's love is demonstrated to the community through strong relationships based on genuine care for children and families. As one parent articulated, 'Ultimately, this is a caring and inclusive school. Staff really care about the children and children very naturally care for each other and accept each other.' The school's Christian values are shared with all new parents, and as one parent noted, 'the Christian values at Holbrook are integral to what and how the children learn.' 'Child of Excellence' is celebrated each half term, where children are recognised for consistently demonstrating a Christian value of the school. The practice of linking Christian values to school rules and Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) each half term has helped inform children's attitudes and behaviour at both home and school. One parent observed that, 'the values at Holbrook are for life. They give my child inner confidence.' As a consequence of their desire to live out Christian values, children make a positive contribution to the wider community, showing care and respect for others through a wide range of charity fundraising, including local links with the Belper food bank. They take their responsibilities seriously in school council activities, as worship leaders, through playground buddies and in caring for younger children at lunchtimes, making a marked impact on school life. Religious Education (RE) contributes to the Christian character of the school because the Christian values are becoming more integral to the RE curriculum. One child noted that, 'our values help us be the best we can be. We learned about compassion and it made us think about what other people need. It changes us on the inside because we know how we are all the same.' Children's behaviour is calm and purposeful in classrooms, with good attitudes to learning. They work and play cooperatively and show genuine care for each other. Children know that any issues are dealt with consistently, and are given the skills to resolve conflict themselves. As a result, children are confident and feel valued. There is a noticeable consistency across school in the way the school values are promoted in classrooms. RE is valued as a core element of the curriculum, with the same standards, expectations and consistency as other core subjects. Classroom reading areas are often used as quiet places, although the focus on personal and spiritual reflection around school is limited. The classroom environments are not yet fully utilised as reflective spaces that provide opportunity for pupils' spiritual development. The school's Christian character results in a secure and caring environment where most children are making good or better progress both academically and in terms of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC).

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

Collective worship has a high profile in the life of Holbrook school. Children value collective worship, respond positively and participate willingly. Children and staff affirm that all members of the school community are involved in collective worship each week. The planning of collective worship around Christian values, and the links made with RE and children's social and emotional aspects of learning, has ensured that the impact of collective worship on children's attitudes and behaviours is evident throughout school. Explicit links are regularly made between children's attitudes and behaviours and the school's Christian values, giving opportunities for reflection within worship. This contributes to the ethos in which children thrive, succeed and are happy, and influences the thinking and day to day actions of the whole school community. A range of visitors from the parish church, Valley Cids and cathedral staff input positively into collective worship using a range of activities, including singing and drama. Singing is valued as a form of worship. Children are involved in choosing songs for worship, which regularly reinforce the values. The 'Worship Group' meet regularly with staff to plan and evaluate aspects of worship. This includes evaluation forms used by the worship team as well as whole school questionnaires, which also ask children to reflect on the school values. The involvement of children in planning, leading and evaluating collective worship was an area for development in the previous inspection and has been addressed. Children are now confident at planning and leading collective worship, contributing significantly to the Christian character of the school. Collective worship is not yet formally evaluated by school staff or governors. Children and parents express appreciation for the school partnerships with the church community. The main Christian celebrations that are held in the church building throughout the year are valued by staff, children and parents. They are reported by parents to be very well supported, in spite of the distance of the church from school. Parents affirm that the Bible stories covered in collective worship engage their children and reinforce the values of the school. Children are developing an understanding of Anglican tradition through the use of simple liturgy and formal prayer. Prayer is part of the daily routine of the school, although the value of prayer is not yet clearly emphasised and children have limited opportunities for expressing their own feelings and desires through prayer. Collective worship is well planned around biblical material and Christian teaching and children are developing a good understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

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

The school's leadership is effective in articulating the vision for the school as based on distinctively Christian values. Parents speak highly of the school and comment positively on the impact of the Christian character and the relationships with the church and wider community. They are confident in the school and the way in which it gives their children a strong start in their educational journey. Parents feel that their opinions are valued and contribute significantly to the life of the school. The head teacher is currently supporting another church school within the diocese. The RE and collective worship coordinator has been well supported in his new role, in line with the priority the school has placed on staff development and building leaders of the future. Good use has been made of diocesan training for both RE and collective worship. A previous area for improvement of developing children's biblical understanding of the school values is currently being met as the school introduces and embeds 'Understanding Christianity' teaching into the RE curriculum. Progress has been made towards meeting the areas for improvement from the last inspection, but is still ongoing. The strength of leadership throughout school is apparent in the coherence and consistency demonstrated through children's books, approaches to teaching and classroom organisation. The head teacher has a good understanding of the school's performance, although governors are not currently involved in formally monitoring or evaluating the impact of the school's Christian values or the impact of RE or collective worship. The school works well with the wider community, including current involvement in neighbourhood plan meetings. The new vicar, along with the church warden and foundation governors are highly supportive of the school and committed to further strengthening the links between church and school.

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