



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Hatherop Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Hatherop
Cirencester
Gloucestershire
GL7 3NA

Diocese:	Gloucester
Local authority:	Gloucester
Date of inspection:	6 th February 2014
Date of last inspection:	24 th November 2008
School's unique reference number:	115628
Headteacher:	Mr Sam Bartholomew
Inspector's name and number:	Mrs Daphne Spitzer NS No 37

School context

Hatherop Church of England Primary school serves the three villages of Quenington, Coln St Aldwyns and Hatherop. A third of children at the school also live in outlying areas including the nearby town of Fairford. There are 88 children on roll, organised into three classes, although they are taught in four classes each morning. The number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average, as is the number of children eligible to receive the Pupil Premium. The vast majority of children are of white British heritage. The headteacher was appointed in September 2011.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Hatherop Voluntary Controlled Primary as a Church of England school are good

- A strong sense of spiritual awareness promoted by collective worship enables pupils to make direct links between Christian values and their learning across the curriculum
- Excellent relationships between the children based on distinctive Christian values of friendship promote their personal and spiritual development
- Strong partnerships between the church and school communities unite and benefit all involved

Areas to improve

- Embed the school's distinctive Christian values so that children can more easily understand the Biblical teaching which underpins the values
- Provide professional development from the diocese for all staff on the school's distinctive Christian character so that they are empowered to take a greater role in its development
- Widen links with diverse communities in this country so that children develop a greater understanding of and respect for people of other faiths and cultures

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

Hatherop Church of England Primary School is a welcoming, friendly Christian community where Christian values permeate daily life. The school creates a secure inclusive Christian environment in which all children are cherished and valued in line with the core Christian belief that each is created in the image of God. This in turn has a very positive impact on the children's attendance and achievement. The school's explicit twelve core Christian values introduced over a year ago are recognised, celebrated and are rapidly becoming embedded in all aspects of the life of the school. This is reflected in the way that children are able to explain how the Christian values of perseverance and courage help with their learning. However, as yet they are not always able to link their school's Christian values with explicit Biblical stories or teaching. Relationships in the school community are excellent because they are built on the Christian values of friendship. This is evident in the playground, where older children ensure that everybody has a friend. The school's Christian values are very effective in promoting spiritual development. A child's comment that he would ask God's help to 'be brave and say sorry' if he had fallen out with his friends is a good example of this. Children say they know that they can pray anytime, anywhere. However, although there is a designated quiet area for reflection outside, no special spaces or opportunities for reflection are provided in the classrooms. Religious education (RE) promotes the school's distinctive Christian character well as seen in a lesson observed when young children understood that God would be pleased if they said sorry. RE is having a positive impact in promoting understanding of and respect for other faiths as observed when children recognised the value of generosity in the beliefs of Islam. The comment from an older child that 'it is important not to disrespect someone just because they look different' is another example of how RE promotes spiritual development. However, this is not yet consistent across all groups of children.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship is explicitly Christian and is central to daily life at Hatherop Church of England Primary School. This is because it is very effective in promoting the school's distinctive Christian values. During the worship observed, children were able to understand the message that it is important to be generous with their time. This was because the parable of the Good Samaritan was used effectively to illustrate the Christian value of generosity. Prayer is a strong feature in the life of the school, particularly during collective worship. Spiritual awareness is promoted strongly by worship, for example, through the use of guided reflection to promote and deepen personal spirituality. On the day of the inspection, children were clearly able to reflect in a sensitive and confident way on how their personal behaviour could be improved; how they could become more generous. Children are actively engaged and participate well during worship. Older children have the opportunity to plan and lead worship each week and enjoy using their own interactive style. The headteacher plays a key role in planning worship but whilst this ensures consistency, other members of staff have not been provided with training in collective worship so that their contributions can effect change. Governors monitor the impact of worship well by conferencing regularly with the School Council and issues raised by them have resulted in improvements. This is noted by the recent reintroduction of the Open the Book team and the greater opportunities for children's leadership. Children's understanding of Anglican practice is good. For example, they know that the lit candle symbolises the person of Christ and that special prayers, written by the headteacher are helping them gain a greater understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The vicar regularly leads worship including special services in church, which has a beneficial effect by promoting spiritual awareness on the whole school community,

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

The strong leadership of the headteacher and governing body have made a significant

difference to the school's distinctive Christian character since the last inspection. Together with the vicar, as chair of governor, the headteacher has led the whole school community in adopting a new Christian vision and core set of distinctive Christian values, which are shared and understood, as noted from governors' termly monitoring visits. Parents describe how the school's Christian values have a very positive impact on the children's behaviour and spiritual awareness. They say that this is evident in the way in which their children ask for the school prayer to be said at meal times at home and that their children find comfort in prayer, for instance when a well-loved pet has died. The self evaluation of the school as a church school is good. The whole school community is involved and children's views are regularly sought and issues raised are addressed. The school's partnership with the church is strong. It is founded on a belief that the school is central to the church's role in serving the needs of the children and local community. This is seen in the recent reordering of the church to create appropriate space for their use. The links with the diocese are good and governors, in particular, have valued the input provided three years ago as part of the headteacher recruitment process. However, although the headteacher and chair of governors have attended training over the recent period, none has been sought or provided for the staff as a whole. RE is well led by the headteacher who monitors and evaluates teaching in this subject. Although the curriculum is exciting and enjoyable, a programme of visitors and visits to places of worship of other faiths has yet to be implemented. The school's work to develop children's understanding of the lives of diverse communities on a global level, for instance, through the Fair Trade and International Schools awards has been very effective.

SIAMS report February 2014, Hatherop VC Primary School, Hatherop, Cirencester, GL7 3NA