



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

### Hildenborough Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Riding Lane, Hildenborough, Kent TN11 9HY

**Previous SIAS grade: Outstanding**

**Current inspection grade: Outstanding**

**Diocese: Rochester**

Local authority: Kent

Dates of inspection: 6 October 2015

Date of last inspection: 6 September 2010

School's unique reference number: 118603

Headteacher: Pamela Scott

Inspector's name and number: Anne Southgate 820

#### School context

Hildenborough is a smaller than average sized primary school. Most pupils are from white British backgrounds. The school serves a socially mixed area. The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium is below average. The number of pupils with special needs and disabilities is average, but the number with statements is higher than average. The school buildings have been adapted to allow full access for those with physical disabilities and a care suite has been added.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Hildenborough as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The work of the school is rooted in Christian values and this leads to pupils being happy, well cared for and making good progress in their learning.
- Everyone is valued, both adults and children, and all work together to be the best that they can be.
- The pastoral support which the school offers makes a significant contribution to the wellbeing and achievement of pupils.
- High quality displays help everyone, including the youngest children, to develop spiritually.

#### Areas to improve

- Monitor the new arrangements for evaluating collective worship to ensure that they lead to improvements.

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

The school has identified three core Christian values of love, courage and honesty. Pupils are also encouraged to explore a wide range of Christian values in addition to these. They relate these to their learning and to their behaviour. Pupils have the courage to take risks in their learning, and as a result, achievement is strong. Pupils have a very good knowledge of Biblical

stories and apply these to their lives. For example, a Year 5 pupil said that they knew from the story of David and Goliath, and from the Garden of Gethsemane that God is present in every situation. Pupils are helped to reflect on 'what would Jesus do?' (WWJD) which helps them to know right from wrong. As a result, behaviour is very good. Spiritual development is a strength of the school, as a result of many, interactive displays and prayer stations. These are widely used, and pupils routinely take time to reflect and pray during the school day. An annual multi-cultural week makes a strong contribution to pupils' understanding of the diversity within Christianity across the world. Pupils have a high level of respect for those who are different from themselves, as they recognise that everyone is made in the image of God. Pupils develop very well spiritually, morally, socially and culturally. Religious education (RE) challenges pupils to think deeply as a result of the teachers' skilful questioning. A display of 'big questions' had led to "a big, heated discussion". RE, therefore, makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual development. The school's mission statement, 'to be the best we can be, for ourselves, for others and for God', pervades everything that the school does. The school provides strong pastoral care for all, including for the most vulnerable. The staff work together to achieve the best for each child, recognising that each child is a unique creation of God. There is considerable support for parents and families. This means that children are happy, well cared for, and they achieve to the best of their ability.

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

Collective worship focuses on a different Christian value each week. This enables pupils to develop an impressive understanding of the Christian basis for each value. Pupils are also enabled to apply the values to their own lives. They do so readily throughout the school day and at home. The well-used prayer stations allow pupils to offer prayers throughout the day. Pupils understand that prayer can help them when they have problems. Pupils know a wide range of Biblical stories. They are confident in expressing their responses to these stories and to Christian teaching. Visual stimuli help pupils to understand complex concepts, such as that God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the variety of experiences that they have in worship. This includes worship in the church and outside, as well as in the school hall. There is also a wide range of worship leaders. Older pupils are 'Leading Lights' and regularly plan, lead and evaluate worship. Pupils continue to reflect on the worship themes throughout the day, and this is aided by teachers relating the themes to their learning. Collective worship often leads to action. A range of charities, such as Christian Aid and Porchlight, are very actively supported by the whole community. Many pupils give their pocket money or hold fund raising events because they are motivated by collective worship to help others. The school celebrates the Christian year, with major Christian festivals being celebrated with parents in the church. Monitoring and evaluation have been informal, but have nevertheless led to improvements. For example, identifying that pupils needed to enter and leave worship with more reverence led to new systems, which have addressed the issue. A new, more formal monitoring system is now in place, which involves all stakeholders.

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

The headteacher has created an environment in which everyone matters, and everyone is cared for as a unique child of God. This enables pupils to "be the best they can be for themselves, for others and for God". Honest self-evaluation with all stakeholders leads to constant improvement and consistency. The arrangements for RE and collective worship meet statutory requirements. RE is very well led. The RE leader supports other teachers, enabling them to deliver high quality learning. RE prompts pupils to think very deeply and to reflect on their experiences. The relationship with the local church is strong and is highly beneficial for both parties. Pupils are familiar with and comfortable in the church. A growing number of families now attend church services as a result of the close links with the school. This addresses an issue from the last inspection. The headteacher has built an effective and cohesive staff team, who all work together to achieve the best for each child. Significant investment in pastoral support stems from the belief that every child matters equally to God.

Professional development is given a high priority. There have been several promotions, both within the school and to leadership positions in other Church schools. This demonstrates how effectively the school prepares future leaders for Church schools. There is a staff handbook, which explains what it means to work in a Church school. This enables new staff to understand the Christian character of the school as soon as they arrive. Policies are underpinned by the school's Christian values. The partnership with parents is strong. Parents trust the school and recognise that it has the best interests of their children at heart.

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