

# National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

## Hollinsclough Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Carr Lane  
Hollinsclough  
Buxton  
Staffordshire  
SK17 0RH

**Diocese:** Lichfield

Local authority: Staffordshire

Dates of inspection: 6<sup>th</sup> March 2013

Date of last inspection: 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2010

School's unique reference number: 860/5200

Headteacher: Mrs. Janette Mountford-Lees

Inspector's name and number: Revd. Huw D Bishop 344

### School Context

Hollinsclough Primary School serves a unique community of learners.

There are 52 students, 19 of whom are full time and 33 who are educated at home and attend the school on a 'flexi time' basis. The latter travel to school by arrangement from up to 40 miles away with 91% of pupils attending from beyond the parish boundaries and 76% from other adjoining counties.

This diverse community is established in a remote hamlet in an area of outstanding natural beauty.

There are close links between the school and a Methodist church in the village and the Anglican parish of Longnor some 2 miles away. 17% of pupils have special educational needs.

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

The structure and organisation of Hollinsclough Primary School means that pupils receive a highly personalised Christian based education which addresses their specific individual needs.

The Headteacher's personal Christian faith and practice drives forward the vision for a highly individualised and in some ways innovative learning structure. This also ensures that pupils are supported to reach their potential. Despite local and national imperatives, this continues a priority for the school's leadership, governing body, parents and staff who work together to work out what this means for each pupil in a learning environment where they are known well.

### Established strengths

- The vision and leadership of the headteacher in enabling an environment committed to creating learning experiences and improving standards for all within the school's distinctive Christian context.
- The strong sense of community which is generated and the way pupils from different backgrounds relate to each other.

### Focus for development

- In partnership with St Bartholomew's parish church in Longnor, give pupils the opportunity of experiencing the Holy Eucharist in school to enrich their unique community experience.
- Develop assessment in religious education by setting and tracking pupil targets.
- Involve governors and parents proactively in evaluating the school's distinctive Christian character within the Anglican tradition.

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

Christian values are openly expressed in the school's daily life and these impact well on pupils' progress and achievement.

Through effective teaching which is so personalised, pupils make progress and the school's ability to integrate different learning experiences almost seamlessly, nurtures pupil confidence and opportunities to learn independently.

The spiritual experience of collective worship, good care and guidance and the quality of relationships within the school influences pupils' personal development and well-being positively.

The unique educational context in which the school operates means that pupils, who enter the school with a varied range of standards, leave at the end of Key Stage 2 broadly in line with national averages.

Pupils, parents and governors were very clear that, at the heart of this improvement was the headteacher's vision and practice of setting every individualised learning programme and intervention within the context of Christian values. This vision is owned passionately by the school community.

Pupils from a wide variety of social and religious backgrounds demonstrate a positive degree of spiritual awareness across a range of traditions. Visible indicators of the school's Christian character are seen as the visitor enters the school as well as in the central corridor and classrooms.

A strong sense of respect, trust and feeling safe and well supported is evident from pupils and parents alike and the quality of relationships between pupils and staff is very strong. This contributes well to good behaviour in lessons and around the school.

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

An act of worship either for the whole school or grouped classes occurs daily. Pupils regard it as central to their school day and said that worship demonstrated the school's distinctive ethos and helped them to think about issues in school as well as the wider community. They were positive about the range of themes and the opportunities for prayer and reflection which affirmed their individual spiritual response.

The structure and content of all collective worship in the school is Christian, with the teaching of Jesus and the Bible as central. Worship themes are planned carefully with pupils playing a full part in the planning and organisation.

The observed act of worship was led by the headteacher and although pupils were not actively involved in its delivery, it was a good spiritual experience with pupils responding with great enthusiasm and reverence to the song (which they wanted to repeat), guided reflection and prayer. Pupils recited the Lord's Prayer. The theme was linked to the RE syllabus so that there was a mutual interchange between learning and worship.

Pupils commented how they enjoy their worship and how it is applied to their daily life.

A few pupils withdraw from worship because of their personal and religious backgrounds but this does not diminish from respecting the school's distinctive religious character.

## **The effectiveness of the religious education is *good***

Pupils enjoy religious education (RE) and this helps them to achieve well, with standards, as assessed by the school now improving for most pupils to average. Although there is a process in place to assess and moderate pupils' work in RE using approved criteria, it is not as established as in other curriculum areas and individual pupil targets are not set. Neither is there no coherent practice currently in place to track progress in RE through the key stages.

Two lessons were observed across Key stage 1 and 2 and both contained good elements reflecting the school's commitment to developing the subject within the wider programme of teaching and learning.

The headteacher is the RE coordinator, and in the observed lessons, a wide variety of creative and interactive approaches and cross-curricular learning skills were used well.

The quality of teaching and learning is monitored and pupil voice also contributes to this.

Pupils answered questions well, often demonstrating a mature attitude and strong knowledge. They were challenged and encouraged to explore deeper concepts and the older pupils were very supportive of younger ones.

Pupils are given ownership of their learning and are encouraged to think beyond the boundaries of the lesson.

Lessons in RE help pupils to develop their confidence and help them to reflect on their attitudes and behaviours, consider relevant social and moral issues and make connections between the subject, worship and the school's distinctive Christian character.

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

The headteacher and governing body lead and manage the school's distinctive Christian character well. They also recognise that the school is on a journey and there is still much to do.

The headteacher leads by example and is regarded by pupils and parents as a good and positive role model in the way she applies inclusive principles in a practical and realistic way.

The impact of careful strategies to improve achievement for all learners over the last three years is coupled with an appreciation of the importance of Christian faith and its influence on the whole child.

Foundation governors are clear about their responsibilities and monitor daily worship and effective practice in RE lessons. They say that *'day to day life at the school is an expression of Christian values'*.

Outcomes are now beginning to reflect the success of recent strategies and are also evident in the lengths the school goes to support pupils, even at times when they have come from difficult and challenging backgrounds.

The strong relationship with the local Methodist church is celebrated well and there is a growing relationship with the parish church at Longnor.

The Vicar of Longnor and the local Methodist minister lead worship regularly in school and this is greatly valued by pupils.

Parents attend seasonal worship in church.

***The school enjoys a high reputation among parents who are consulted regularly. They agree that the school gives their children a 'balanced education with Christian values at the heart of learning'.***

**SIAS report March 2013 Hollinsclough CE VA School SK17 0RH.**