

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

Hornby St Margaret's Church of England Primary School	
Main Street, Hornby, Lancaster, LA2 8JY	
<b>Current SIAMS inspection grade</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Blackburn</b>
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Local authority	Lancashire
Date of inspection	12 March 2017
Date of last inspection	11 November 2011
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Aided Primary 119530
Executive Headteacher	Kerry Stafford-Roberts
Inspector's name and number	Gail Goodman 571

### School context

Hornby St Margaret's Church of England VA Primary School is a very popular, smaller than average, rural school of 57 pupils. The majority of pupils are of White British Heritage, and attend from the local area. Pupils are taught in two mixed age classes. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. More recently, there has been an increase in the number of pupils joining the school late, other than in Reception, which is double the Lancashire average. The Executive headteacher shares his time between this and another local school. The parish church is a five minute walk from school.

### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Hornby St Margaret's as a Church of England school are outstanding

- Clear and distinctive Christian values are central to school life, so that every child feels secure and loved and is able to prosper academically and personally.
- The very high quality of relationships within the school is based on an atmosphere of love and trust.
- Highly effective teaching in Religious Education (RE) contributes significantly to pupils' spiritual development.
- An experienced and able governing body plays an important role in monitoring, supporting and challenging all staff members..
- Links with the parish church are strong. Families value the care, support and guidance that pupils receive from this partnership.

### Areas to improve

- Strengthen the awareness of all learners of the rich diversity of Christianity as a multicultural, world faith.

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

Hornby St Margaret's unique Christian character shines through its daily life and celebrates each pupil's talents and skills. As a result, every pupil feels special and valued. The school's Christian character results in a secure and caring environment. Consequently, pupils make strong progress both academically and in terms of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development. Underpinning the school's character are its Christian values and the key value of compassion is clearly expressed throughout the school in all its work. These values are being talked about and lived out on a daily basis, which is having an impact on the school community as a whole. Christian values are exemplified in such areas as the outstanding behaviour of pupils, excellent attendance and punctuality and high quality classroom practice. Pupils make good progress and the school prides itself in knowing every pupil's needs, ensuring that all aspects of each one's development and well being are promoted. Relationships at all levels are outstanding, as identified by parents who say this is a happy school. All staff are encouraged to work together as part of a team, focusing on each pupil's individual and unique qualities as a child of God. Pupils are enthusiastic about their learning and a conscious effort has been put into ensuring a broad and rich curriculum, including instrumental music opportunities for all, a school choir, multi sports and a Forest school. Consequently, pupils love coming to school and the impact of this is seen in the high levels of achievement in all pupils. Parents and pupils speak highly of the staff, their exemplary role modelling and acknowledge their hard work and dedication. In particular, parents appreciate the 'inclusive nature of the school', the excellent communications and the 'strong family feeling'. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how the school's Christian ethos relates to specific stories from the Bible and, 'how Jesus taught us to lead our lives'. There are Christian symbols throughout the school and each classroom has a colourful and interactive RE display, stimulating pupils' thoughts and encouraging discussion. This can be seen in the participation of children in the Christian Union sessions, and a quiet, almost humble, confidence in their recalling favourite scripture and explaining how they feel inspired. One Year 6 pupil spoke of the Easter story, describing the 'beginning of sadder times', but was confident in that, although Jesus died on the cross, 'He is always with us'. Pupils take their responsibilities seriously, particularly through the school council, peer buddies and in caring for each other as a whole school community. They have also made a difference beyond their immediate locality with a huge range of charity fundraising, including NSPCC, Samaritan's Purse, Water Aid and the Poppy Appeal. There is a strong link established with the Friends of Roshni project, a school and children's centre in India. Pupils exchange letters and gifts and fundraising for a new building has given them a palpable respect for diversity and a sense of Christianity as a multicultural world faith. A highly effective link with a local city school with a high percentage of pupils of different cultures and creeds has benefitted pupils and staff members of both schools. Pupils show high levels of tolerance and understanding of the views and beliefs of others, both in school and church, and in other faith communities. Teaching staff meet regularly to exchange good practice, which enriches continued professional development. There is a strong link with the parish church of St Margaret's. The parish priest and the church team are welcomed into school on a regular basis, both in a teaching and pastoral role. This helps to make the Christian character of Hornby St Margaret's school special and recognisable.

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

Inspirational and inclusive collective worship is an important focal point in this school community, permeating all aspects of school life. It is distinctly Christian and is seen as a special time of coming together as a school family by everyone. Worship themes which influence spiritual reflection are used in planning. Pupils say they enjoy Bible stories and they find worship both an opportunity to express their thoughts and a time to reflect. They enjoy recalling stories from the Old and New Testaments. Consequently, pupils begin to relate to the difference living a Christian life must mean. Pupils from the worship team speak in terms of meeting poverty and how fortunate they are to have plentiful food. Pupils have a clear knowledge of the Trinity, and refer to the candle with three wicks used in worship, representing God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Full emphasis is given to the seasons and celebrations of the Christian calendar. Pupils encounter a wide range of Anglican traditions and practice, such as bidding prayers and responses, demonstrated in their lively and reverent participation in worship. Pupils, staff and governors take an active part in the daily act of worship and enjoy the weekly celebration worship when pupils are rewarded, not only for continued hard work, but also for demonstrating kindness and compassion. Parents speak very positively of the significant value of worship in school and how prayers, written by the pupils, are brought into the home as a means of expressing thanks and support for family members. Worship is seamlessly linked with the whole curriculum so that the current theme of faith is developed through art and writing. Pupils enjoy planning and leading worship, demonstrating how they have moved on since the last Inspection. Monitoring and evaluation is rigorous and well structured, keeping worship fresh and stimulating. Pupils and parents attend worship in church, and for celebrations, such as Easter, Harvest and Christmas. Links with the church community are exceptionally strong. The parish priest and two lay ministers conduct a weekly service in school. There is a whole school attendance of a termly Eucharist. Children who have been confirmed will take Communion, with their parents, and

younger pupils are blessed in the service. Consequently, it is evident from pupils' discussions within the Worship team that there is an understanding of difficult Christian concepts. The parish priest commented that, 'it is utterly remarkable and outstanding for the children to be engaged this way in worship'.

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

Religious education has a high profile within the school's curriculum. The subject is led by a committed and enthusiastic co-ordinator with high standards of expectation for the pupils. As a result, there is a consistency in pupils' progress across the school. Pupils experience an inspirational and stimulating RE curriculum, and as a result they relish learning both about and from religion. One Year 4 pupil accurately described the value of empathy, as her 'mind working hard to wonder what it is like to be that person', having recounted a favourite Bible story of Moses. RE is given the same importance as English and maths. Excellent teaching and rigorous assessment ensure standards are high, in line with core subjects. Teaching is interactive and challenging but also seen as fun by the pupils. Use of the Diocesan syllabus ensures that there is a strong focus on the teaching of Christianity. Other world faiths also receive an appropriate level of coverage. This enables pupils to appreciate common values, such as trust, love and forgiveness. The work of the subject leader is supported by a study of Philosophy for Learning, a subject area which enables a wider understanding of difficult national and global religious issues. As a result, pupils are confident in asking the big questions about the life and teaching of Jesus and demonstrate a recognition of wider faith issues, including forgiveness and tolerance. The subject leader, headteacher and governor responsible for RE use a cross section of pupils' books, plus pupil interviews in order to assess standards and ensure continuing good practice. The understanding of other faith communities is enhanced by visitors to school, including a presentation on Judaism. In addition, pupils have recently visited a Mosque and a Buddhist Temple. Displays around the school emphasise the impact and structure of a number of worldwide faiths and cultures. RE meets statutory requirements.

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

The explicit Christian vision that is articulated so well by the headteacher and governors, is demonstrated by all staff who live out their Christian vision daily. They readily articulate the impact of explicit Christian values on the life of the whole school community. These values are clear for all to see and depicted in the fused glass windows in the school's main hall. The headteacher leads a very effective team who share his vision and put into practice the Christian values that make the school's character as a Church of England school so distinctive. This was recognised when the school received the Award for Church School Distinctiveness. The leadership of RE and worship is given high priority and these areas fully comply with statutory requirements. Parents are very proud of the school and joint events with the church are well attended, enriching the lives of both. An active PTA, involving every parent in school, raises funds for charitable organisations at home and overseas. In a recent survey, all parents indicated, that their children feel 'happy, safe, well looked after, taught well, and would recommend this school to another parent'. There are strong, mutually supportive links with the local parish. Through regular visits the parish priest and governors show their commitment to supporting the Christian ethos and demonstrate effective church and school links. Experienced governors embrace their roles as critical friends and are highly committed to school improvement. They monitor achievement and challenge and support the headteacher and staff. The school has accurate self evaluation in place which clearly informs future development. Staff members are empowered to take additional responsibility through relevant professional development opportunities, appraisal targets and a strong culture of shared leadership. Excellent use is made of diocesan support and training. The headteacher and governors ensure that effective partnerships have been made with community schools so that there is an exchange of visits by pupils and staff. This promotes an understanding of diversity and difference for all learners and ensures continuing good practice. The school council makes an important contribution to leadership and is involved in the many links the school has in the community and abroad. Hornby St Margaret's Church of England Primary School has worked hard, and very successfully, to put children at the heart of its mission.

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