



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

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

### **Holbeach William Stukeley Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School**

Spalding Road

Holbeach

Lincolnshire

PE12 7HG

**Previous SIAS grade: Good**

**Current inspection grade: Outstanding**

**Diocese: Lincoln**

Local authority: Lincolnshire

Dates of inspection: 15 June 2016

Date of last inspection: 9 June 2011

School's unique reference number: 120593

Headteacher: Tom Emery

Inspector's name and number: Anne Platt 807

#### **School context**

Holbeach William Stukeley Church of England Primary School is slightly larger than an average sized school with 275 children on roll. The very large majority of pupils are white British. The proportion of pupils from white European backgrounds who speak English as an additional language has risen since the last inspection. The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is average as are the number with special educational needs.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Holbeach William Stukeley as a Church of England school are outstanding**

- The vision and drive of the headteacher, effectively supported by staff and governors has embedded strong Christian values that underpin all aspects of school life.
- Collective worship is engaging and motivational and creates a special time for a personal spiritual journey to take place.
- The strong sense of community means that pupils and their families are well supported and nurtured.
- The high priority placed on collective worship and religious education (RE) ensures that their contribution to the Christian ethos are valued and celebrated.

#### **Areas to improve**

- To ensure all pupils have an understanding of Christianity as a global faith so that they better understand diversity beyond their own community.
- Develop the strategic involvement of governors in self-evaluation as a church school so that it informs other areas of school improvement.

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

Holbeach William Stukeley is a highly caring and welcoming school where Christian values are deeply embedded in the daily lives of pupils. The core values of respect, love and hope linked to Bible verses, are made explicit to the community through worship and displays. Newsletters specific to the Christian values are valued by parents as a tool to reinforce the teaching of the values at home. As a result of this, the core values have a very positive impact on the behaviour of pupils and on relationships at all levels. Parents spoke positively about how staff live out Christian values by example in everything they say and do. There is a very strong sense of living in a Christian community in which church and school links are very important. Aspirations are high and the school's holistic approach and values led curriculum mean that the needs of pupils are well met. This has a positive impact on the progress of all. Vulnerable pupils are nurtured and supported through excellent systems of pastoral support. As a result, pupils feel valued as children of God which has helped with improvements in behaviour and attendance levels. Pupils understand the importance of giving to charitable projects, through which they experience the Christian values of thoughtfulness and sharing. They realise how privileged they are and feel, 'we should pitch in and make a difference.' Through the curriculum and regular school visits, the school provides for high quality learning experiences. These activities strongly support pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development. The school has established quiet areas of reflection inside classrooms and within the walled garden. This was a focus for development in the previous inspection. The walled garden is an exceptional resource which has been developed to provide specific areas for spiritual reflection. These include areas for stillness, remembrance and awe and wonder for nature in God's world. Pupils treat these areas with reverence and could speak eloquently about the rules regarding their use. The impact of the areas can be demonstrated by comments from pupils. 'Our memory garden is to remember family or pets who have died. It helps us feel calm and think.' These areas and the use of them provide evidence of the way in which the school environment contributes to the outstanding spiritual development of the pupils. Pupils behave well and cooperate in a spirit of mutual tolerance and respect, which affirms all, regardless of their faith or background.

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

The evaluation of collective worship has been a focus since the last inspection. This has led to outstanding improvements where worship is at the heart of school life and everyone participates enthusiastically. Staff, pupils, parents and visitors are able to talk about the positive impact worship has on their lives. The attitude of pupils to collective worship is very good because they are engaged in worship and it supports their spiritual development. Pupils say that 'worshipping together as a whole school unites us as a family.' The weekly themes are based on key Christian festivals in the church year, as well as the core school values and topical events. This has enabled pupils to develop their understanding of Christian life and the centrality of Jesus. Celebrations of major Christian festivals take place in the local church and this further enhances the pupils' experience of worship. Pupils are inspired to serve others such as supporting charities both local and global. Pupils say, 'charity work brings us together in caring for the world.' Pupils, staff and clergy contribute to leading, monitoring and evaluating worship. This demonstrates improvement since the last inspection and has led to changes in the structure of worship. The Anglican liturgical framework of gathering, engaging, responding, and dismissal is now used by a wide range of worship leaders. The range of visitors who contribute to collective worship has increased since the last inspection. These include local clergy and the Bishop's visitor who are welcome additions to the collective worship programme. Their contribution to collective worship is valued by staff, pupils and parents and enriches pupils' understanding of Christian traditions. However, pupils' have limited knowledge of Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith. Prayer is integral to school life. Pupils read prayers in worship and at other times during the school day, including the Lord's Prayer. Classrooms contain areas of reflection with prayers written by the pupils to

reflect times of the day and seasons of the Christian year. Pupils use these areas when they feel the need for quiet contemplation or inspiration. Through the use of this and the walled garden, spiritual development is outstanding. The daily act of worship and work on Pentecost has reinforced an understanding of the Trinity. Religious education displays and collective worship reinforce the school's commitment to teaching an understanding of The Holy Trinity across all age ranges.

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

Subject leadership of RE has rapidly improved since the last inspection. Improvements in leadership have enabled staff confidence in the subject to grow and develop, so that teaching and learning is now good or better. Numerous RE displays around the school are testament to the high profile and importance given to the subject. The supportive ethos of the school creates a learning environment where pupils feel included and safe. This, together with skilful and supportive questioning from teachers, gives pupils the confidence to share ideas and relate what they are learning to their own lives and experiences. It also helps them to think independently and show respect for each other. Pupils clearly enjoy RE in which they demonstrate secure knowledge of Christianity as well as respecting other faith traditions. As a result, RE supports pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development well. Religious education is taught through a range of creative and practical experiences such as a visit to a Mosque and a school coronation service. Pupils can discuss the impact of their learning on their lives with confidence. 'The Good Samaritan teaches it doesn't matter who you are or what faith, anyone can help and everyone should,' said a pupil. Another said, 'The Bible is the guide to life for Christians like the Koran is for Muslims.' This clearly demonstrates the impact of RE teaching on pupils' respect for others. Parents reported that their children go home excited by what they are learning in RE, questioning and wanting to learn more. They especially praised 'WOW' days where pupils study a religion through a variety of activities including art, music and drama. Religious education standards are in line with core subjects as evidenced through work in books and pupils' oral contributions in RE lessons. Effective assessment and tracking procedures are in place, which have been developed by the subject leader using levels and key skills. Teachers use the extremely comprehensive level descriptors to monitor class progress which are fed into the whole school tracking. Tracking demonstrates that pupils are making good progress through the year.

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

The outstanding leadership of the headteacher and assistant headteacher ensures that this school promotes a vision rooted in distinctly Christian values. They work effectively with staff to ensure the Christian vision impacts on standards of achievement and the wellbeing of the school community. Distributed leadership and continuing professional development linked to the Christian character of the school are examples of how the school is securing its future leadership. Leaders and governors have worked together with staff to address the improvements advised at the last inspection. The leadership of RE and collective worship has greatly improved. The impact is clearly visible in the dedication and thoroughness of the subject organisation. Staff and pupils are motivated to enjoy and be inspired. This has meant both areas now make a major contribution to the Christian distinctiveness of the school and the spiritual development of the pupils. Arrangements for RE and collective worship meet statutory requirements. The school benefits from successful partnerships with the diocese and from local churches. Clergy have supported the outstanding organisation of collective worship and the planning of RE across the school. This has further strengthened the effectiveness of the school's leadership of RE and collective worship. The church and school work together to serve the needs of the community. This is clearly demonstrated in the level of Christian care which is shown to children and their families. One governor encapsulated this by saying, 'the church is an extra classroom for the school and the school is an extra place of worship for the church.' Local people and businesses are involved in supporting 'Stukeley University' seminars,

held regularly to enhance the curriculum and inspire pupils. Parents are actively involved in school life and speak warmly of its role as the focal point of the local Christian community. The development of church and community links was an area of focus at the last inspection and outstanding progress has been made. The school's self-evaluation is honest and accurate. The areas of development have been carefully identified and the issues from the previous inspection have led to outstanding developments in collective worship. The school has developed highly effective procedures to monitor and evaluate its overall effectiveness. Governors offer highly effective support and challenge through monitoring activities. The role of the governors in the strategic evaluation of the school's distinctively Christian character, collective worship and RE is not however formally linked to the school improvement planning process.

SIAMS report June 2016 Holbeach William Stukeley VA Primary School, PE12 7HG