



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

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

### Hutchinson Memorial Church of England Voluntary Aided First School

Uttoxeter Road  
Checkley  
Stoke-on-Trent  
ST10 4NB

**Previous SIAMS grade:** Satisfactory

**Current inspection grade:** Good

#### Diocese: Lichfield

Local authority: Staffordshire

Dates of inspection: 11 February 2016

Date of last inspection: 16 March 2011

School's unique reference number 124333

Headteacher: Paula Snee

Inspector's name and number: Helen Gilbert 633

#### School context

Hutchinson Memorial Church of England First School is a smaller than average school which draws pupils from the village of Checkley and the surrounding rural areas. Many parents choose to travel to bring their children to the school. The school has very strong links with the local parish church. The proportion of pupils needing additional support is below average. The proportion of pupils eligible for additional funding or from ethnic minority groups is also below average.

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

- The care, dedication and strong effective leadership of the head teacher inspires staff and governors and ensures that the school is continually improving the outcomes for all its pupils.
- The school's mission statement, 'Learning together for life with Jesus' is clearly articulated by pupils and underpins all that the school does.
- The governing body is very committed to the school, is very well informed and provides a good balance of support and challenge.
- Links with the local church are very good and this has positive impact on the spiritual development of pupils.

#### Areas to improve

- Implement a documented process for monitoring and evaluating the impact of worship on learners' spiritual development that involves pupils and governors.
- Review the progression within the religious education curriculum and the processes for assessing standards and progress and for evaluating the impact on pupils' spiritual development.
- Involve pupils in developing an outdoor area for quiet reflection.

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

Christian values of hope, respect, courage and determination, trust and honesty, kindness and forgiveness underpin all that the school does. They are modelled by the headteacher, staff and governors and are reinforced through collective worship. As a result they are understood by pupils and are evident in their attitudes and relationships. Behaviour is exceptionally good and pupils demonstrate a high level of self-discipline. As one governor said, *'You never hear raised voices in the school.'* In the school's documentation and through its website these values are explicitly linked to verses from the bible. These links need to be shared with pupils to further enhance their understanding of the distinctive Christian character of their school. Pupils all enjoy coming to school and feel very well supported. They know that if they are finding their work difficult they can support each other and that staff will always be there to help them. Teaching is consistently good or better. The climate for learning is very good and pupils value each other's contributions. As a result all groups of pupils make good or better progress and achieve well. Standards have risen and performance is above local and national expectations. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. Many choose to travel to bring their children here because of the caring, nurturing family environment and the academic standards. They say that more able children are stretched and that pupils are well prepared for transfer to Middle School. Some also choose the school because of its Christian foundation and all value the moral standards that pupils learn at Hutchinson Memorial. They describe how children speak at home about what they have learned from the bible. Pupils understand the importance of loving their neighbour and are proactive in raising funds for a number of charities of their choice.

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

Worship has a central place in the life of the school. Themes for each half term focus on the school's core values and are closely linked to Bible stories. As a result pupils are able to recall a range of stories from both the old and the new testaments. In some cases they are able to link these to lessons for life, for example one child spoke about the story of Adam and Eve saying, *'It teaches us that if we're told not to do something, we shouldn't do it.'* They have a good understanding of the things Jesus did, for example, calming the storm, healing the sick and telling stories. They speak readily about the lesson of the good Samaritan and have a strong sense of Christ's command to love others irrespective of whether they are our friends. Their recall of a wider range of Jesus' stories and how these relate to their own daily lives is, however, limited. Nevertheless, they are quick to relate Jesus' core teaching to *'behave as we would like others to behave towards us'* and can relate this to daily life in school. This also applies to the worship life of school, where pupil responses are respected. Consequently pupils have a very positive attitude to prayer, seeing it as normal and natural. They talk about the different aspects of prayer; worship and thanks, saying sorry, asking for help and praying for others. Many pupils value the prayer net in the hall and the opportunities for prayer in their own classrooms. Boys and girls of all ages speak of praying for relatives, friends and pets and some say they also pray at home. Pupils have some simple understanding of the Trinity. They can explain that God has three parts and clearly understand the concept of God the Father and Jesus as his son. However few children understand that the Holy Spirit is also a person of the Trinity or are familiar with the story of Pentecost. They experience all the other major Christian festivals and can explain how they celebrate Harvest, Advent and Christmas, Lent and Easter. The strong links with the church make a strong contribution to the pupils' spiritual development. They enjoy the weekly visits by the vicar and another foundation governor and speak very positively about their frequent visits to the church. Many pupils describe the church as *'a special place where you can get close to God – it's God's house'*. The headteacher has worked to improve the quality of worship. Teachers have received support and training and their confidence in leading worship and trying out new ideas has increased. As a result pupils enjoy a range of worship leaders and styles. Pupils value taking an active part in worship through song, prayers, and drama and say they would like further opportunities. The recently formed Worship Team was so popular that all Year 4 have joined. They have worked with another member of the local

clergy to plan and present a whole act of worship. The role of this group in providing feedback and offering ideas to take worship forwards is an area for development. Pupils say they are asked from time to time how they feel about worship but at present, in the absence of a Worship Co-ordinator, there appears to be no formal system for recording the impact of worship on the spiritual development of pupils.

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

Religious Education (RE) is valued highly by staff and pupils and has a high profile within the school. Teaching is good or outstanding, employing a range of teaching styles and strategies. As a result pupils enjoy RE and approach the subject with enthusiasm. They experience a range of opportunities to reflect, consider questions and give reasons for their responses. This supports their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and ensures that they make good progress, achieving standards in line with those achieved in other subjects. The school has invested time and drawn from a number of resources to develop an engaging RE curriculum and is now working to ensure progression year by year. The teaching of Christianity is at the core and as a result pupils have a good knowledge of bible stories and of key practices for Christians, including baptism, confirmation and the communion service. This makes a strong contribution to the distinctive Christian character of the school and to pupils' understanding of what it means to belong to a Christian community. The RE curriculum is enhanced both by frequent visits to the local parish church and also to other places of worship. Pupils enjoy learning about other beliefs and traditions and are able to speak about the celebrations of other faiths. Older pupils are gaining a more in depth understanding of Islam and are able to talk about similarities with Christianity as well as differences. As a result they understand the importance of tolerance and respect for the beliefs of others. There is currently no RE Co-ordinator and the head teacher has taken on leadership of the subject until an appointment can be made. She has a very good understanding of the strengths of the subject and of areas for development. The school is working with the diocese and with other schools within the Uttoxeter partnership of schools to develop assessment against the recently published end of phase expectations. The appointment of a new subject leader will facilitate this development and also a more systematic programme for lesson observation and for evaluating the impact of RE on pupils' spiritual development.

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

The very strong and determined leadership of the headteacher has secured a rise in standards that is being sustained over time. This has been validated through the local authority monitoring process. She is exceptionally well supported by staff, governors and local clergy, who have every confidence in her and in the school and who speak with one voice about the distinctively Christian values of the school. Areas identified at the last inspection have been addressed. Teachers and support staff are highly committed to the school and to living out these values. They work very effectively as a team to meet the needs of all their pupils. The head teacher and governors have ensured that the Christian values of fairness and respect have underpinned the management of difficult issues. Since the last denominational inspection, governors have developed their role in both supporting and challenging the school. They participate in a range of training activities and evaluate their impact. They engage effectively in the school's self-evaluation processes. Governors' committees have clear terms of reference and delegated powers and report back to the full governing body. The Teaching and Learning Committee rigorously analyse the school's data. The foundation governors are all involved in the evaluation of the school as a church school. As a result governors know their school very well indeed. Despite the lack of a post holder for worship and RE, the head teacher has ensured that the quality of provision has been maintained and staff confidence in leading worship has been significantly developed. Links with the local parish church are very strong and this has a significant impact on the spiritual development of pupils. The vicar and another foundation governor are regular visitors to the school and frequently lead worship. Displays in the church and articles in the parish magazine ensure that the wider congregation are well informed about the work of the school. Parents are welcomed into the church both for collective worship and

for the monthly all age services. As a result some have become regular worshippers. A range of opportunities enable pupils to develop their own leadership skills through participation in the school council, the worship team, sports council and as monitors, buddies, playground leaders and reading partners. As a result, by the end of Year 4 pupils are demonstrating a remarkable level of confidence and maturity and are excellent ambassadors for their school.

SIAMS report February 2016 **Hutchinson Memorial Church of England Voluntary Aided First School, ST10 4NB**