



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

St Margaret's at Hasbury Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Hagley Road
Hasbury
Halesowen
B63 4QD

Previous inspection grade: Outstanding

Current inspection grade: Outstanding

Diocese: Worcester

Local authority: Dudley

Date of inspection: 9 November 2015

Date of last inspection: 17 November 2010

School's unique reference number: 103840

Headteacher: Pauline Rogers

Inspector's name and number: Karen Surrall 842

School context

St Margaret's at Hasbury is a one form entry primary school with 219 on roll. The local community has some pockets of deprivation and the school has above the national average number of disadvantaged children and children with special educational needs and disabilities. The school hosts the unit for children with receptive language difficulties for the Borough of Dudley. Over a quarter of pupils speak English as an additional language.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Margaret's at Hasbury as a Church of England school are outstanding.

- Expectations are aspirational for all pupils, whatever their starting points and these are firmly underpinned by the school's distinctive Christian character. Children make good academic progress at St Margaret's.
- The headteacher has a clear and passionate vision for the school which ensures that there is a high level of respect amongst all members of the school community.
- The link with a school in Tanzania enables the school to show a practical outworking of its distinctive Christian ethos and provides meaningful ways to enhance pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development.

Areas to improve

- Further develop learners' own spirituality by engaging in planned cross curricular high quality learning experiences that lead them into reflection and contemplation.
- Plan an annual programme of visits to a broad variety of places of worship for all year groups and monitor the effectiveness of these on learners' SMSC development.

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

The Christian ethos at St Margaret's sustains and informs all aspects of the school's work, challenging and motivating learners to aspire to be the best that they can be. This results in a school that is inspirational and readily shows how proud it is of its Christian heritage. The school serves a community of many faiths and this is seen as a strength of the school by all stakeholders. They confidently attribute this to the distinctive and inclusive Christian character of the school. One parent commented that she liked the variety of faiths and cultures because it teaches the children respect saying 'It's really important, especially with everything that you see on the news at the moment'. The school has worked hard over the last five years to ensure its learning principles are deeply embedded, supported by the school's five core Christian values of love, forgiveness, peace, hope and courage and the rights respecting agenda. As a direct result progress and attainment for all pupils is consistently good. In addition, attendance has risen from 93% to over 97% due to the personal attention of the headteacher; and because children are in school more, their achievements have improved too. These initiatives are expertly woven together so that all learners have a very deep understanding of not only how they should respect each other but why. The Christian values of love and forgiveness run hand in hand so that children are willing and able to take responsibility for their actions and to make restitution when needed. Behaviour is impeccable and this is consistently attributed by all stakeholders to the school's Christian ethos. The link with Gairo A, a school in Tanzania, has without doubt developed the children's understanding of themselves as part of a wider community. All stakeholders see this as a partnership of equals. 'We don't think it's all about charity, we learn from each other' explained a child from Year Four. The school has skilfully ensured that the partnership has developed the children's understanding of diversity and difference whilst enabling them to make a difference in the lives of others. Learners are fully aware that Christianity is a multi-cultural world faith. Religious education (RE) contributes significantly to the pupils' SMSC understanding and to the life of the school. It is interesting and relevant and children speak highly of their lessons. The children can readily articulate the link between the school's Christian values and learning about Jesus although this is not true of all stakeholders. Whilst the children visit other places of worship, including the Yemeni Community Centre and local churches, visits to places of worship further afield and of other faiths are not regular enough for them to become memorable to the children. This is a school where the distinctive Christian character runs deeply through policy and practice and as a result pupils are well prepared academically and socially for their next steps and for later life.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

'Worship times are special' confided a child from Year Three. Collective worship is central to the life of St Margaret's and permeates every aspect of the school. Children expect that worship time will 'make us think' and they have high expectations of all acts of worship, including prayers at lunchtime and at the end of the day. Consequently children enter the worship time quietly and with reverence; they are engaged and thoughtful in their responses. A large banner of a cross dominates the hall and forms a focus for worship along with the worship table. Worship is inclusive and inspirational enabling the children to see the life of Jesus, the Trinity and the teaching of the Bible as fundamental to the school's ethos. It is planned by the collective worship lead and the incumbent around the Anglican church calendar and as a result the children have a good understanding of both Anglican liturgy and of the wider Anglican church. The five core Christian values are focussed on in turn, term by term, and underpin a variety of worship times. As a result children are able to see that the school's values are rooted in the Christian faith. Learners are enabled to make links between collective worship and their learning and are confident to articulate their thoughts and ideas. For example one Year Five child commented that he thought that the kings who visited Jesus had shown courage, the current Christian value, by refusing to return to King Herod. The school worship team are proud of their responsibilities and their involvement in worship time, although they are eager

for more. They have asked to be allowed to prepare and lead worship more often as a team. The class-led worship times, to which parents are invited, are planned, led and evaluated by the children. As a result they are memorable for the school community and there is much evidence to show the impact that they have on the lives and beliefs of learners. Following a class-led act of worship on 'Hope' a Year Six child wrote, 'Even though I am very small compared to the world, I can still make a big difference'. Prayer is central to the life of the school and to the spiritual lives of learners. The children are able to articulate the need to respect those of other faiths or of no faith during prayer and explained that 'people are not forced to join in, they can just reflect on the day'. They see prayer as a special time, for example explaining 'prayer calms you down and helps you if you are upset' (Year Five child). The school has worked hard over the last five years to ensure that all families, whatever their faith or background, feel welcome in school and in church and as a result all children attend collective worship; services at Christmas and Easter are well attended by parents from all communities; and no Year Six pupil has ever been withdrawn from the monthly Eucharist. This service, much prized by the Year Six children and the staff, enables the school to be part of the wider worshipping community of St Margaret's church.

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

'Every child, every day, happy to learn' is the cornerstone of all the school leaders' aspirational Christian vision for the learners at St Margaret's. The head clearly articulates a passionate desire for the children and staff in her care and she sees feeding the children's spiritual and moral development as the key to academic success. Self-evaluation by the headteacher and governors is robust and they understand that they have a unique opportunity to knit together the various threads in the community so that all can benefit. As a result the school is held in high esteem by parents and local community leaders and pupils attend school regularly and achieve well. The incumbent is seen as a valued member of the community. His contribution to collective worship and to the emotional life of the school is identified by all stakeholders as substantial. Leaders at all levels have addressed the issues in the last inspection very well so that all stakeholders have a deeper understanding of the Christian distinctiveness of the school which, in turn, has become more effective in its community. For example there are strong links with Halas House, a centre for adults with learning difficulties, to the mutual benefit of each group. The RE and collective worship leads have a high profile within the school's management structure. They have brought about improvements which have been very effective in embedding the school's learning principles and Christian values across the curriculum so that they contribute well to pupils' SMSC development. The arrangements for RE and for collective worship meet statutory requirements. Leaders at all levels attend training and moderation both within the local cluster and within the diocese. As a result the school community has begun to look closely at its understanding of spirituality and is now seeking to embed this more deeply in the whole curriculum. Enabling children, and adults, to be 'happy to learn' through reflection and contemplation is a vision expressed by leaders at all levels. This is a highly inclusive school, committed to ensuring the highest possible standards for its pupils within the context of a very effective Christian ethos.

SIAMS report November 2015 St Margaret's at Hasbury (VC) Primary School B63 4QD