



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Mordiford Church of England Academy

Mordiford

Hereford

HRI 4LW

Previous SIAS grade: Outstanding

Current inspection grade: Good

Diocese: Hereford

Local authority: N/A

Date of inspection: 8 October 2015

Date of last inspection: 6 October 2010

School's unique reference number: 116832

Headteacher: Kerri Finney

Inspector's name and number: Sue Blackburn 756

School context

Mordiford is a small rural school with 158 pupils on role. The school serves the local community with some pupils travelling in from nearby villages. Pupils are mainly of white British backgrounds and there is a lower percentage entitled to pupil premium grant or identified as needing special educational needs compared to pupils nationally. The school became an academy in 2013 and the head teacher was appointed in 2014. Pupils have been taught in single age classes since September 2014.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Mordiford as a Church of England school are good

- Positive relationships between all members of the school community reflected in the school's commitment to the core Christian values of respect and trust which are central to the life of the school.
- High quality acts of worship which are well planned by staff and governors and involve pupils in evaluation on a regular basis.
- The visionary and inspiring Christian leadership of the recently appointed head teacher and governing body.

Areas to improve

- Involve foundation governors more formally in rigorous self-evaluation of the school as a church school, to support raised levels of achievement for all groups of pupils.
- Involve staff and governors in formally monitoring and evaluating collective worship in order to measure the impact of the Christian ethos on pupils' daily lives.
- Embed the monitoring and assessment of Religious Education to ensure the highest standards in teaching and learning for all pupils to enable them to appreciate that Christian values originate from Jesus' teaching.

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

The school's strong Christian ethos is evident throughout all aspects of school life. The school's vision statement, 'Treasure each individual' is reflected in the positive relationships that exist between pupils and adults. Mordiford is a school which is well respected in the community where Christian values of trust and respect are embedded throughout the life of the school and underpin pupils' good behaviour. Whilst pupils understand how values can help them to lead their daily lives, the link between values and Jesus' teaching are not clear to everyone. Vibrant displays around the school including the use of Christian symbols proclaim the Christian character of the school and celebrate individual achievements. Attendance for the majority of pupils is high because they enjoy coming to school and feel safe. The school has worked with families to raise attendance for some groups of pupils so that their attendance is improving. Pupils say that there is not any bullying and that any disputes are swiftly resolved with adults providing clear guidance. Pupils understand how the behaviour policy helps them to improve the ways in which they treat each other as they were actively involved in reviewing this policy. Progress of pupils is monitored and the data collected has been used to raise standards across the school. The school's distinctive Christian character underpins the school's aim to deliver and sustain the required improvements in learning and progress to enable all groups of pupils achieve well. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development are a priority for the school. The school's outdoor classroom environments, with access to a wild life garden and forest school area, enhance learning and pupils' opportunities to develop their spirituality. In religious education (RE) pupils actively engage in debate around 'big questions' and pupils understanding of other faiths and cultures is further enhanced through planned visits to places of worship such a mosque and synagogue. The school has links with seven schools in Europe as well as links with schools in India and Tanzania. They have been recognised through the International School Award for its global and community cohesion work. Positive relationships exist within the school community. Parents say the school is a welcoming place and that it is evident that Christian values contribute to the good behaviour and kindness displayed towards one another. Parents were clear that pupils know right from wrong and attributed this to the school's Christian ethos. Some parents believed the school needed to find better ways of seeking their views in order to secure improvements. The school has recently formed an ethos committee to promote the Christian distinctiveness of the school. Due to the early stages of this group it is not possible to see the impact of this work as yet.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship has a very positive impact on pupils' spiritual development and plays a central part in affirming the Christian foundation of the school. The worship programme, based on the Christian calendar, underpins the school's Christian ethos because it is linked to core values and allows pupils to deepen their knowledge and understanding as each value is explored. Parental engagement is enhanced through the values newsletter and the sharing of an 'In our prayers' section. Pupils' understanding and use of both collective and private prayer is very strong. This is reflected in the parent testimony that their children's focus on prayer at home is attributable to teaching in school and that they feel confident and secure. Pupils welcome the opportunity to reflect in the classroom and also in church. One pupil commented on the calm and peaceful atmosphere in church where he could 'Pray and think about God'. Good opportunities are provided during the day to develop pupils' spirituality through prayer and reflection, with pupils being encouraged to write their prayers and read them out during worship. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on worship and are actively involved in its evaluation. As yet governors and adults have not had the opportunity to contribute to this. Every class has a class prayer and

pupils are familiar with the 'Lord's prayer' and the Grace. The programme of worship is varied and involves outside visitors such as the incumbent and representatives from charitable organisations such as 'Samaritan's Purse'. Children are given roles and responsibilities, including setting up collective worship. Opportunities for pupils to lead collective worship are provided as a part of class worship and they are encouraged to take an active role, but there is little opportunity for pupils to plan this independently. Anglican traditions feature in worship and the Trinitarian nature of Christianity is promoted. The collective worship coordinator and head teacher organise and plan collective worship. The newly formed governing body has met with leaders to improve the overall effectiveness of collective worship and RE and outcomes from this have been used to inform the school development plan. Worship is well supported by the incumbent. Parents are welcomed at worship in Holy Rood church at events such as Easter and the end of the school year as a transition arrangement before the new Reception children start school. Parents are invited to class assemblies in school. This means that families, as well as pupils and staff gain an understanding of church tradition and practice.

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

The headteacher and governing body are passionate about the Christian ethos of the school. They articulate and promote the Christian vision and have worked together to deepen and embed the Christian ethos in the short time they have worked in the school. Christian values are evident in school documentation, policies, the prospectus and website. The school environment reflects a strong Christian ethos based on respect and care. These are modelled well by staff to create positive relationships that form the basis for behaviour within the school community. The head teacher has a clear vision for school improvement, shared with governors, which is already contributing to improved attainment. Due to the short time the new leadership team, including governors, have had to achieve a positive impact on standards the monitoring and evaluation of the school as a church school are in their early stages. Governors have been involved in reviewing progress in RE and collective worship and are regular visitors to the school. The RE and collective worship coordinator has worked closely with the incumbent and head teacher to raise the profile of RE and collective worship in school. The development of RE has been a priority and investment in teaching resources is underpinned by a commitment to enhance the teaching of RE. The school promotes an understanding of global and national communities through its international partnerships. Mutually beneficial partnerships with the local church and local community are well established. Pupils have the opportunity to visit Hereford Cathedral and a visit to another local church has been planned as a part of 'Spirituality Week'. The school accesses some appropriate training opportunities for governors and staff, including diocesan training to develop spirituality throughout the school.

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