



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



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

### The Ellis Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

School Street  
Hemingfield  
Barnsley  
S73 0PS

**Previous SIAMS grade: Good**

**Current inspection grade: Good**

**Diocese: Sheffield**

Local authority: Barnsley

Dates of inspection: 18 February 2016

Date of last inspection: 28 April 2010

School's unique reference number: 106638

Headteacher: Nicola Jenkinson

Inspector's name and number: David Horner (648)

#### School context

The school serves a mixed former mining community in the village of Hemingfield, close to Wombwell. The school is oversubscribed and has 234 pupils on roll, including nursery. Since the previous inspection there have been a number of changes in staffing and leadership including a new Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher. In July 2015, the Governing Body underwent a reconstitution and was reduced in size with a new Chair of Governors in post. The school's local church, St. Mary's, is too far away to enable regular visits to take place and is currently without a Vicar.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of The Ellis Primary as a Church of England school are good

- Leadership has a clear, ambitious vision for the school, based firmly upon Christian values.
- Excellent relationships throughout the school community are built around the strong Christian ethos.
- Learners know they are valued and cared for which leads to them making good progress throughout school.

#### Areas to improve

- Develop further the process for the evaluation of collective worship and its impact on learners.
- Develop further the assessment procedures for Religious Education.

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

Distinctly Christian values are promoted consistently and effectively throughout the school and are embedded in daily life. They are clearly seen in displays around school. The impact of these values is seen in the highly inclusive nature of the school; diverse needs are well catered for, particularly through the use of the interactive 'Sensory Room'. Everyone is valued, adults and children alike and this is clearly evident in the very strong relationships between the whole school community; staff, pupils and parents. These relationships are based upon Christian care and love. Parents comment particularly on good, clear and open communication between school and themselves. The school's Christian values create a friendly, safe and caring atmosphere. This results in excellent behaviour because learners know what is expected of them and that issues are dealt with in a consistent, caring and positive way. Learners are polite, friendly and enthusiastic about school. Learners' spiritual, moral, cultural and social development is carefully nurtured by all staff and reflects the school's Christian character and values. Learners are given time for reflection through the use of a dedicated 'Reflection Area' in each classroom. The recently updated curriculum is broad and provides opportunity for learners to explore issues of spirituality and gives time for reflection and to make links between values, biblical teaching and their own lives. Learners are increasingly able to recognise the values of other world faith traditions; this is supported by interactive displays around school and specific teaching in RE. Learners are very aware of the Christian character of the school, and are able to explain about prayers and what they are for. They are starting to make good links and comparisons with other religions to identify what makes Christianity distinctive and to identify what elements of this they see in school.

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

Collective worship is distinctively Christian and an integral part of the school day. Learners speak enthusiastically about it; they enjoy taking part and feel valued. Learners feel that collective worship gives them time to think, but also celebrates their successes so that they feel proud of themselves. Collective worship is made relevant to the lives of learners by linking their everyday experiences to the school's Christian values and biblical teaching. A range of approaches and resources ensure that collective worship is relevant to pupils and it also provides opportunity for spiritual reflection for pupils and adults. A team approach towards the planning and leadership of collective worship enables a variety of approaches which meet the needs of different learners. Careful planning ensures that each of the school's values are focussed on and also that key concepts such as the Trinity and key elements of the Christian calendar such as Lent are covered. Evaluation of the impact of collective worship is still developing, for example a reflection book in the hall shows how worship impacts on learners and inspires them, demonstrating what they have learnt and how they can apply this to their everyday actions. This could be developed further to allow learners to have more involvement in the planning and leading of collective worship. Collective worship reflects basic Anglican practice, for example through the use of liturgical colours and the lighting of a candle. Prayer is a central part of the school day and contributes effectively to the learners' spiritual development. Learners know set prayers; they talk enthusiastically about the Bible and can explain its influence on their thinking. Learners are able to discuss prayer and why it is important to them. The Church is used for worship, principally for Easter celebrations when the wider school community is involved.

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

Learners enjoy Religious Education lessons. Standards are in line with national expectations. The quality of teaching is good with aspects that are outstanding. Lessons are well-planned, interactive and progress at a good pace. Religious Education teaching is part of a cross-curricular approach; a wide variety of teaching methods are used which engage and enthuse learners. In Year 1 learners are able to explore the meaning of a parable through role play, construction, discussion and writing. Religious Education teaching is an integral part of the

school week and strong links are made with personal, social and health education. The teaching of Religious Education helps to develop learners' critical thinking skills and they are able to use these to understand the impact of religion on themselves and others. Learners have a good understanding of Christianity and can effectively compare it with other religions. In Year 6 pupils can make links between Sikhism and Christianity and discuss how religion impacts on local communities. Displays in classrooms reflect the work being done and enhance learning. The new subject leader has taken to the role enthusiastically and is well supported by senior leadership. The new curriculum is being evaluated and time and resources are allocated wisely. Monitoring and evaluation procedures such as work and planning scrutiny are in place but a consistent assessment procedure that clearly informs planning, teaching and learning is still being developed.

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

School leaders have a clear and ambitious vision grounded firmly in the Christian values of nurture and care but also resilience and perseverance. They lead by example and embody the school's values, inspiring others with their energy and dedication. A very strong team ethos ensures that all members of the school community feel valued. A strong emphasis on professional development for all staff stems from the headteacher's inclusive style of leadership which promotes strong teamwork and empowers all staff. Christian values are embedded into learning opportunities across the school. This ensures that pupils become resilient and reflective learners and is apparent in the standards achieved and progress made by learners and shown in the school's current attainment data. There is detailed planning for the development of the school which is based upon the school's accurate self-evaluation. Governors are increasingly taking a more strategic role in the development of the school and ensure that the Christian focus and values remain central. They have recently reviewed their composition, which is leading to them taking a more challenging role which questions the school leadership more effectively. School provides a very good learning environment with opportunities for personal, spiritual, moral and cultural development. This is delivered through a broad, creative curriculum which makes clear cross-curricular links but ties everything together through strong Christian values. Leadership of collective worship and Religious Education has a high priority and leads to effective practice in these areas. The school meets the statutory requirements for collective worship. There are good links with the community and local church. Although there is currently no Vicar, leadership is working hard to limit the impact of this by developing links with other local faith communities such as the Salvation Army. There are very strong links with parents due to clear lines of communication and the hard work and approachability of school staff; parents state that 'Nothing is too much trouble'.

SIAMS report February 2016 The Ellis CEVA Primary School, Hemingfield, S73 0PS