



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Radcliffe Hall Church of England/Methodist Controlled Primary School

Bury Road
Radcliffe, Manchester
M26 2GB

Diocese: Manchester

Local authority: Bury

Dates of inspection: 20 November 2014

Date of last inspection: 15 June 2011

School's unique reference number: 105330

Headteacher: Revd Denise Luke

Inspector's name and number: John Horwood 177

School context

Radcliffe Hall is a larger than average primary school which experiences an above average number of pupils joining or leaving part way through their primary education. The proportion of pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs is above average. Although the large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds, an increasing number of pupils are from minority ethnic groups and many have a limited knowledge of English. A well-above average proportion of pupils come from disadvantaged backgrounds and the ability range of pupils is large. The school buildings are old and much is scheduled to be rebuilt.

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

- The headteacher leads by example. Her strong faith and theological knowledge have an excellent impact on promoting Christian values within this diverse community.
- Christian love and care ensure that every child has an equal opportunity to succeed with the absence of any discrimination within this improving school.
- Adults promote Christian values, such as forgiveness and community, extremely well and ensure that pupils develop into mature, sensible and caring individuals whose behaviour is outstanding.
- Pupils' excellent response to the Christian values promoted within the school impact on their attitudes to learning, the progress they make and the excellent relationships and mutual respect within the school.

Areas to improve

- Make full use of the good links with the diocese and church communities to increase pupils' understanding of Christianity as a multi-cultural faith.
- Embed the planned enhanced elements of worship and religious education across all year groups to develop pupils' understanding of the Trinity and their knowledge of the work of John Wesley at an earlier age.

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

The Christian character of the school is demonstrated by Christian values being fundamental to the daily life of the school. Through consultation with staff, governors, parents and pupils, leaders identified forgiveness, love, trust, community, compassion and friendship as the six values to focus on in the school. Pupils have responded to this by becoming proud of their school and the ethos promoted. They have developed excellent relationships and their behaviour is outstanding. There has been an impact on attendance which is now above average and on the behaviour which has resulted the absence of any exclusions for the past 18 months. The school ethos also supports learning in the classroom and, with the focus on every child, all pupils make good progress in their learning from their starting points. The high numbers of pupils who spend only part of their education in the school make good progress whilst in the school. However, this is often not reflected in the school's published data. Pupils' well-being and their achievement are well-supported by the school values of love and care. Leaders have ensured that the excellent pastoral care extends to pupils' families through the recent appointment of an outreach worker. Throughout the day, the school encourages the growth of pupils' spiritual development through reflection and prayer. Formal prayers are said during worship, at lunchtime and at the end of the day. Reflection areas have been developed within each classroom and pupils use these if they need to sit quietly and think. Pupils talk proudly and confidently of these opportunities and understand how prayer helps them. Older pupils show an age-appropriate understanding of 'the Trinity' as well as the work of John Wesley. Although pupils throughout the school join in with the John Wesley prayer their understanding is less secure in lower year groups. Pupils' cultural development is supported by the curriculum content especially within religious education. However, although the school is working with the diocesan board of education and the Methodist circuit to address the issue, pupils only have a limited awareness of Christianity as a multi-cultural faith. Pupils enjoy religious education lessons, they show a good knowledge of the beliefs of other faiths and they respect pupils from different backgrounds.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship is an important feature of school life and pupils recognise it as a special feature of their church school. No pupils are currently withdrawn from worship and all adults generally attend worship and this develops a sense of the school as a worshipping community. There is a clear worship plan which is focused on Christian values and in particular those identified as important to the school. This has enabled pupils to talk confidently and knowledgeably about worship and prayer. The plans also identify the opportunities supporting both Anglican and Methodist traditions. This ensures that pupils appreciate and understand the importance of worship in both denominations. On a well-defined rota basis, worship is led by the headteacher, staff, pupils, clergy from both churches and a wide range of visiting speakers. This gives pupils experience of a wide range of Christian worship and traditions. Christian festivals are mainly celebrated in the two churches and on occasions both are used simultaneously for the two key stages. This enables most pupils to identify differences and similarities between the traditions promoted within the two churches. However, these are often about the fabric of buildings rather than the Anglican/Methodist traditions. Worship regularly uses Bible material to explain how Christian values help people in their lives. Pupils show an understanding of this and also the key position that Jesus holds in Christian faith. They also learn how the work of John Wesley has supported Christian beliefs. John Wesley's prayer is used in worship and pupils, especially the older ones, know all the words enabling them to reflect more easily how his words link to every-day life in the school. They are developing an awareness of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit through worship but the understanding of this by the younger pupils is limited. Pupils' outstanding behaviour and their respect for others ensure that all pupils can be fully involved within worship. Pupils enjoy the responsibilities in preparing and supporting the leadership of worship and are developing their confidence in

leading parts of worship. They also play a growing role in the monitoring of the effectiveness of the worship. In line with Methodist traditions, pupils have excellent opportunities for singing which they clearly enjoy. Sensitive music is also used at the start and end of worship to produce a reflective atmosphere and ensures that the school community can worship together peacefully. Parents attend worship, in good numbers, when their children are leading collective worship in school and during celebrations of Christian festivals in one of the churches. Although most parents are not regular attenders at church this enables them to see the experiences pupils have within this church school and are then able to talk to their children about the worship. The school's church school ethos committee reviews collective worship at each meeting and has used this information to develop styles of worship that more closely reflect the shared Anglican/Methodist traditions. A strong feature within the school is the well-defined 'thinking time' for reflection at the end of collective worship. Both adults and pupils of all ages focus quietly during this period.

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

Through her strong theological background and faith, the headteacher leads by example in promoting Christian values to ensure ongoing improvement in the school so that every pupil achieves their best. Excellent support is provided by the church leaders and the governors who are all committed to ensuring the school becomes an even more effective church school. The school's focus on the Christian values of love and community has had an impact on staff appointments. For example, in a locally unique appointment they have a dedicated outreach worker who, working with effective pastoral staff within the school, supports and engages with families. This has improved the partnership between the school and parents. Because the Christian values identified as most relevant to the school were agreed through consultation they have become explicit in everything the school does. Pupils have such positive attitudes to the school and to learning because they have been consulted about the values promoted. As a consequence, they become mature and sensible pupils who show respect to others and support each other both in lessons and in the playground. This, in turn, is reflected in the good academic achievement they make. Leaders have a good understanding of how the Christian values have supported disadvantaged pupils in their learning and development to catch up with their classmates. This is confirmed in their accurate self-evaluation of the improvements since the previous inspection. The school's investment in English and mathematics teaching enabled standards to rise and the school to move from 'notice to improve' to be judged good in the 2012 Ofsted inspection. Pupils achieve similar standards in other subjects including in religious education. There are strong links to the diocese, the Methodist circuit and other church schools which have helped the school to improve from being a satisfactory 'church school' when it was last inspected. The school uses the current Bury Agreed Syllabus for religious education and has added to this the Methodist scheme of work to support the dual status of the school. The Vicar, the Minister, the Deacon and the foundation governors all provide good support to the school and have ensured that religious education is taught well. Opportunities to develop staff to become future leaders of church schools are good. This helped the previous deputy moved to become headteacher at another local church school.

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