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Youth and Education

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STATUTORY INSPECTION  
of  
ANGLICAN SCHOOLS  
S48

INSPECTION REPORT  
for

Hartlebury CE VC Primary School  
The Village  
Hartlebury  
Kidderminster  
DY11 7TD

Head Teacher: Caroline Unitt

Inspector: Robin Sharples

Inspection Date: 26<sup>th</sup> March 2012

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### Hartlebury Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

The Village, Hartlebury, Kidderminster DY11 7TD

#### Diocese: Worcester

Local authority: Worcestershire

Date of inspection: 26<sup>th</sup> March 2012

Date of last inspection: 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2009

School's unique reference number: 135042

Headteacher: Caroline Unitt

Inspector's name and number: Robin Sharples 398

#### School context

Hartlebury CE Primary school is a rural school of 142 pupils. It has good accommodation and well used grounds. The pupils are virtually all of white British origin and the school has an above average number of children with special educational needs.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Hartlebury CE VC Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding

Hartlebury is an outstanding Church School in which children are enabled to flourish spiritually, physically and academically. Significant improvements through the current school year and especially since the Ofsted inspection in January have ensured that a high quality of teaching and learning can be sustained into the future. The foci for development from the previous Church school inspection have all been taken account of in the school's planning and self-evaluation.

#### Established strengths

- The dynamic leadership of the headteacher
- The energetic, hard-working and thoughtful children
- The strong and highly motivated staff team
- The close relationship with the local church.

#### Focus for development

- Explore possibilities to extend the leadership of worship to pupils
- Review the Christian Character of the school in the light of recent developments and ensure that this character is fully expressed in documentation
- Enhance children's spiritual awareness and expression by creating a structure for the development of spiritual vocabulary as pupils progress through the school.

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

The children at Hartlebury are very enthusiastic about their school. They are aware of the special 'Church' character of the school and they are keen to stress that this ethos builds up their self-confidence. This ethos is built upon Christian values, which are quickly becoming embedded in the lives and behaviour of the pupils, as one of them said '*...we don't just think about it for a month...*'. Pupils are constantly engaged with their learning and responsibilities within school. The behaviour in classrooms and elsewhere is excellent, courteous and considerate. This attitude is strongly promoted by the good humoured and industrious approach of all the staff. Children's spiritual development is excellent, they make good use of opportunities for reflection in curriculum time – particularly in RE and various displays, such as the 'Hope Tree' exemplify this. The Religious Education (RE) observed during the inspection overall was very good; the Year 2 lesson on Shabbat was quite outstanding and led to some very sophisticated independent written work. Work in RE and links with a school in Tanzania are providing opportunities to learn about other cultures and faiths which are

having an increasing impact on the development of the children. Children take responsibilities very seriously; they are proud of their Eco-status and demonstrate their characteristic enthusiasm for their pursuit of the silver eco-flag. Similarly the school council are very active both in their work within school and their support of charities such as 'Water Aid' and 'Children in Need'. Attractive displays celebrate children's work and understandings. These include explicitly Christian symbols such as a beautiful wooden cross and an excellent presentation of work following excellent studies of different faiths and visits to places of worship.

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

Worship at Hartlebury is central to the life of the school. Since September a pattern of values has been woven into the liturgical calendar, by identifying 'key' values for each season, this has had a very powerful impact on the children's understanding of worship and has been very effectively reinforced by the striking 'values tree' mural in the hall. These values are being compiled into a permanent structure to ensure that the present quality of worship can be sustained. Worship is well planned and engages the children through excellent use of music, spoken word and video selections. The incorporation of children reading a Collect has drawn them into the centre of the worship patterns. This strengthens the seasonal rhythm of worship and alongside other such formal elements as the Lord's Prayer serves to enhance the children's experience of traditional and Anglican forms of worship. Children participate fully in worship especially identifying singing and reflection as important to them. The success of the school in creating a worshipful centre to the day is to encourage children to seek further involvement. They are very enthusiastic about the possibilities for leadership of worship and deeper spiritual development through exploration of reflective times. Relationships with the local congregation are very good. The introduction of Open the Book through the parish has further enriched the relationship between church and school and is very much appreciated by the whole school community, as the children said, *'it is brilliant!'*. The local church is used as a centre for worship and successful efforts are being made to link school and Sunday worship – as on Mothering Sunday.

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

The headteacher has steered the school through a process of continual improvement since her arrival at the beginning of this school year. This process has been accelerated by the Ofsted inspection, leading to a substantial level of good (and better) teaching seen during the inspection. The Governors are supporting the work of the headteacher well. This is being achieved by monitoring and visits as well as revising the website, prospectus and other documents so that they fully demonstrate the distinctive qualities of the school. The foundation governors play a full role in the school and are developing their involvement alongside the changes being led by the headteacher. The developments have created a strong Christian ethos. The progress of these changes now needs to be reviewed by the whole school to ensure that the presentation of this Christian ethos is fully representative of the school's community – including, especially, the children. Parents speak highly of the school and echo the children's observation that their self-confidence is encouraged through the work of the teachers. In conversation they were keen to highlight the faith aspects of the school and events to which they are invited such as the recent Mothering Sunday service mentioned above. These occasions are appreciated for their significance to the community as a whole as well as having a very positive impact on the children. The substantial range of developments established during this school year is commended by parents as a significant improvement in the work of the school. The links with the church are very good, being maintained through the foundation governors and members of the congregation.