

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Werburgh's Church of England Primary School

Holt Lane Kingsley Stoke on Trent Staffordshire ST10 2BA

Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese	Lichfield
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local authority	Staffordshire
Date/s of inspection	22 June 2017
Date of last inspection	11 June 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	141837
Executive Principal	Jared Eccles
Inspector's name and number	Susan Blackburn 756

School context

St Werburgh's Church of England Primary School is a smaller-than-average primary school with 141 pupils on roll, most of whom are from white British backgrounds. A relatively small number of pupils are eligible for support through pupil premium funding compared to pupil premium numbers nationally. The school has a lower percentage of pupils on the special educational needs register compared to those nationally. In 2015, the school converted to become an academy as a part of The Moorlands Primary Federation; numbers of pupils on roll have remained stable during this time. The Principal and the Executive Principal of the Trust form part of the leadership of the school. The school has strong links with the local church.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Werburgh's as a Church of England school are good

- All members of the school community know and live out the school motto: 'Love to learn, Love God, Love one another', which ensures that pupils achieve well and are cared for as individuals.
- Excellent relationships between all members of the school community exemplify Christian values.
- The behaviour of pupils is exemplary; they are rightly proud of their school and are courteous, welcoming and respectful to all members of the school community.
- High importance is placed on creating high quality acts of worship; these are well planned by the worship coordinator, who ensures the involvement of pupils in regularly leading and evaluating worship.

Areas to improve

- Ensure religious education (RE) is consistently taught well so that pupils achieve the high standards seen in work in other subjects, reflecting the importance placed on high quality RE teaching.
- Provide wider opportunities for pupils to gain first-hand experiences of meeting people from other faiths and cultures in order to broaden their understanding of the multi-cultural nature of modern society.
- Develop a culture of monitoring and evaluation (in RE) through the school so that all stakeholders can contribute effectively to school improvement.

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

The school motto makes it explicit that the Christian value of love is central to the work of the school. This was devised by the children and is a part of school life. This focus on love and care contributes to the consistently high academic standards and successful achievements in the performing arts and music for learners across the school. The school choirs take part in local events led by the church choir leader providing strong links between the school and community. Pupils say they recognise that they are all different and that they respect each other; they all play well together across year groups and say that everyone is kind. The high priority placed on positive relationships ensures that pupils are happy and safe. Pupils enjoy coming to school and, as a result, attendance is good. Staff provide role models of Christian behaviour across the school and there are caring relationships between staff and pupils.

Governors regularly visit the school and the incumbent leads weekly worship. Parents say the school has a strong, caring family atmosphere where their children are happy; they report that the school does all it can to enable pupils to be the best they can be. They say their children demonstrate good manners and are thoughtful because the school teaches them: 'If you are kind to people, they will be kind back.' They are further encouraged to have great care and love for God's creatures. The class rabbit, chicken and fish enable them to regularly look after these animals and appreciate the need to be responsible as well as caring.

Pupils are given regular opportunities for prayer. They use the class-based reflection areas as a focus during prayer as a class during the day and are thoughtful in praying for those suffering in recent disasters. They regularly compose prayers which form a part of worship both in school and in church. The weekly 'Jesus in me' 'Jesus and Me' and 'Is Christ Everywhere?' 'Imagine Christ Everywhere' sessions held at the church provide the opportunity for pupils to actively develop their journey in faith. Each week a class has the opportunity to visit the local church to participate in the Eucharist, further enhancing pupils' spiritual development. The strong links with the church and the promotion of the Christian faith have encouraged both staff and children to make the personal choice to deepen their faith and understanding by being confirmed by the Bishop. Pupils are passionate about fund-raising; they contribute to a range of charities.

Pupils' achievements are celebrated and their God-given talents valued in a weekly celebration worship. The school provides opportunities for learners to develop their understanding of other faiths and cultures in RE. The school recognises the need to provide more opportunities to enable pupils to have a wider understanding of other faiths and cultures and is exploring links with schools in other countries. Pupils are given opportunities, both within the RE curriculum and through attendance at church services, to learn about and celebrate major Christian events and symbols. The Worship Council has the opportunity to lead these events.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Worship and prayer play a central part in the daily life of the school. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their own beliefs to develop a greater understanding of God's love. A worship area in each classroom provides a central place for pupils to share their prayers and thoughts with God and Jesus; these areas are used regularly during class-based worship. Worship has an impact on the lives of the school community. The worship rota contains frequent opportunities to focus on different stories from the Bible and a strong focus on Jesus Christ which enables pupils to relate the values seen in his life to the values in their daily lives. Worship engages all pupils. They demonstrate respect and sing with enthusiasm. The Worship Council is very helpful and competent, taking its responsibilities seriously. Worship Council members are confident in leading whole-school worship both in church and in school. Currently they put forward their ideas on the theme of the week for the collective worship leader to prepare. Pupils say they would like the opportunity to plan and deliver worship on their own chosen theme, such as friendship.

Pupils say prayers which they believe allows them to consider their actions and to thank God. Prayers are shared with the school community by selecting prayers to be read in the church services. The worship table and candles are seen as Anglican traditions and the cloth on the worship table reflects the colour linked to the church calendar, thus providing a reminder of the church year. The incumbent and the diocese have provided support in developing worship; the incumbent supports the school in delivering weekly acts of worship. Pupils have regular opportunities to visit the local church to develop their understanding of Anglican practice. Every week a year group visits the church to participate in the Eucharist service; they are joined by many parents who welcome the opportunity to worship together. Pupils lead the main seasonal services in church, such as Mothering Sunday. They have been recorded by a local radio programme on several occasions as a part of the 'In praise of God' programme, sharing their enthusiasm and faith beyond the school.

Pupils contribute to the monthly church magazine strengthening links between the school and church. The school provides opportunities for all members of the school community to provide thoughts and reflections on worship.

The Worship Council invites pupils to give their thoughts and ideas which are subsequently acted upon. Governors are regular visitors and have provided written comment on acts of worship; however, as yet, they do not evaluate the effectiveness of worship or provide ideas as to how it can be improved.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

Pupils say they enjoy RE lessons and like opportunities to go outside. RE teaching focused upon creation during the inspection and good quality opportunities for pupils to reflect on God's wonderful world were evident across the school. A variety of approaches such as drama and using the outdoor areas of the school ensures pupils have a wide range of opportunities to reflect and respond during lessons. The school has invested time and resources to increase the effectiveness of RE and its prominence as a subject within the school and beyond to other schools in the Trust. The development point from the previous inspection to develop the role of the leadership of RE is being addressed. The Trust has invested in training to support the leadership of RE so that the current leader has been able to implement a curriculum map and introduce the new materials relating to the teaching of Christianity. The curriculum map is well organised and all members of staff have clear planning supported by resources. The school follows the Lichfield agreed syllabus. The school has invested in training to support the implementation of the 'Understanding Christianity' resources, the main focus of which is on biblical teaching. Teachers have begun to deliver some of the content, which is having an impact on the quality of RE teaching. An assessment system is in place, led by the RE lead, and the school is monitoring standards in RE alongside those in other subjects. The RE leader is developing her role and the school is supporting her leadership. Limited monitoring of the teaching of RE or progress in books has meant that there are variations in expectations across the school. Work in some classes is of lower expectation than in other subjects.

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

The school's shared Christian motto is articulated by the school community who have been actively engaged in developing and promoting Christian values in school life. Pupils are engaged in leading the school; the school council were involved in devising the school motto and have a key role in school improvement.

The Executive Principal and Principal provide strong leadership and the impact of their clear focus on the Christian foundation of the school has created the strong family ethos running through the school. The school has undergone a significant change in leadership structure following the journey to becoming a multi-academy trust of a growing number of schools. This has presented challenges for the leadership of the school. The majority of the development points from the previous inspection have been addressed. Together with a strong leadership team and effective governing body there is a commitment to improve as a distinctive church school. Governors are keen to fulfil their duties and have been engaged in visiting the school. They are proud of the achievements and are eager to carry out their responsibilities well. Governors have engaged in the self-evaluation process and have actively contributed to the self-evaluation document. Although they carry out their visits and record these formally, monitoring records are currently purely factual. They do not provide effective evaluation in order to lead to school improvement. They lack focused questions to prompt governors or empower them to ask relevant questions relating to the effectiveness of the school as a church school or the effectiveness of worship and/or RE.

Presentations on worship and RE to the governors' Learning and Achievement Committee ensure that leaders are informed about the work of the school. There are strong links with the local church. The incumbent leads worship and is actively involved in the life of the school. The highly inclusive nature of the school is grounded in a strong emphasis on nurturing and caring for each individual. Parents believe the school is well managed and that their children are safe.

SIAMS report June 2017 St Werburgh's Primary School Stoke on Trent ST10 2BA