

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St John's Church of England Primary School	
Charlton Park, Keynsham, Bristol BS31 2NB	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Bath and Wells
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local authority / Date of academy conversion	Bath and North East Somerset / 01/09/2015
Name of multi-academy trust	Wellsway Multi Academy Trust
Date/s of inspection	11 July 2018
Date of last inspection	12 June 2013
Type of school and unique reference number	Academy 142227
Executive Headteacher / Head of School	Matthew Cottrell/Mark Hilliam
Inspector's name and number	Carolyn Banfield 610

School context

St John's is a single form entry primary school which is regularly oversubscribed. An additional class was created in 2015 and is currently positioned at Year 2. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils eligible for support from pupil premium funding and those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below national averages. The school joined the Wellsway multi academy trust (WMAT) in September 2015. The former headteacher is now the Executive head. A new leadership team was established in September 2017 with the deputy headteacher becoming interim head of school.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St John's as a Church of England school are outstanding

- Explicitly articulated values are deeply embedded and recognised by all to enrich the life of the school. As a result, they have a significant impact on behaviour, attitudes and achievement.
- Worship is a rich source of spiritual growth and religious understanding. Its impact is evident in relationships of trust and mutual respect.
- The statement 'celebrate and learn together' has encouraged all adults to work together to provide a rich academic curriculum which support pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development.
- The well informed and engaged governing body and parish community successfully celebrate and proclaim the school's church foundation.

Areas to improve

- In consultation, review the current vision so that it more readily communicates the uniqueness of the school's established Christian character and the way in which it is rooted in biblical teaching, to effectively inspire and inform every aspect of the school's work.
- Ensure that the school improvement plan has a sharper focus on the impact of the school's distinctive Christian character.

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

St John's has a strong church school identity. It has developed an excellent Christian character and positive ethos which is immediately apparent and permeates all aspects of school life. This arises from a consistent focus given to the nine Christian values which underpin the school vision and are at the heart of the school's aspirations. Rooted in biblical teaching and creatively interwoven through a range of events and activities, the values are successfully embedded. As a result, the values shape and support a holistic approach to meet the needs of all pupils. Pupils speak readily of the significance of the values with obvious understanding of both their Christian meaning and the relevance to their own lives. The school logo depicting Jesus as the lamb of God, is powerful and adds considerable weight to Christian teaching. As one pupil described, 'like the lamb, we follow the shepherd who shows us the way'. Consequently, a strong moral compass is in evidence and everyone seeks the good of one another. The impact is demonstrated through the choices pupils make, their exemplary behaviour and clear and trusting relationships. Pupils and adults are united in their responses to Christian teaching engendering a perceptible sense of 'family' and affirmative pastoral care. Approaches to attendance and behaviour management are consistently informed. As a result, attendance is high and exclusions are avoided. This is because pupils are treated with dignity and valued as unique individuals created by God. Academic achievement is carefully tracked and monitored. Targeted precision teaching, nurture activities, and focus groups support pupils in overcoming challenges whilst at the same time meeting the needs of the more able. Consequently, a rising trend in outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and those achieving at greater depth is in evidence. The success of the guiding principle 'celebrate and learn together', is reflected in the latest data demonstrating that by the end of each key stage, most reach standards of attainment above the national average. The curriculum is both creative and skills-based. Enriching experiences and personalised learning strategies such as 'learning without limits' and the 'core, stretch, challenge' approach, provide excellent learning and life opportunities. A shared understanding of spirituality exists and opportunities to develop this within and beyond collective worship are imaginatively provided. The secure and inclusive ethos that epitomises St John's, mean that pupils are happy to engage with thought provoking challenges and to think for themselves without fear of failure. As a result, they confidently and respectfully share their thoughts and opinions and participate in deep conversations about their own and others' beliefs. Therefore, religious education (RE) makes a substantial contribution to spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development. The more recent introduction of the Understanding Christianity resource is already impacting on pupils understanding of key Christian concepts and this has a positive influence on the distinctive Christian character of this community. Christian values are explored from a range of faith perspectives informing pupil understanding of what motives belief and the choices people make. As a consequence, Christianity is set within the context of a multicultural world faith which is widely understood and celebrated.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship is integral to the life of the school and its value is clearly understood by everyone. This is because it plays an important role in exploring, enriching and expressing the school's Christian foundation. It allows for a time of inspiration and reflection focused on faith and Christian principles. The concept of family as a value is fully embodied through the fellowship pupils and adults experience within an atmosphere of Christian love and respect. Music and the singing of hymns is an important part and regarded as 'praising God for all that he means to us and has given us'. The school community does this with gusto and reverent sincerity. Consequently, worship is a joyous, uplifting and affirming experience. Because worship is inclusive and engages the community in relevant themes it makes an outstanding contribution to the daily experiences. Biblically rooted in the person and teachings of Jesus, worship has a huge impact on how pupils view their behaviour and interactions with others. Even the younger pupils recognise the transformational impact of stories that show what 'the right thing to do is'. Pupils' Biblical literacy is impressive and the messages shared provoke high levels of reflective thinking. As a result, pupils expertly link the relevant Bible story with a value and regularly test out their actions and behaviour against the messages heard. A cohesive worship plan ensures continuity and gives focus to Christian belief and practice. The four-stage approach (gathering, engaging, responding and moving into the day) implicit to all acts of worship, ensure high levels of interaction and response. Where themes raise concerns or heighten awareness of the plight of the less fortunate, pupils as well as adults are inspired to social and charitable action. They are confident in their ability to effect change and fundraising activities or service within the local community are outward expressions of Christian response. Pupils also articulate the motivational impact of worship and this is reflected in their determination to achieve personal goals or attain improvement. Worship is enriched by the variety of leaders, groupings and locations, so that pupils appreciate the different elements of worship and the ways they can be experienced. The principles of 'celebrate and learn together' are seamlessly woven into the proceedings and outwardly expressed through the weekly celebration of achievement. In response to a development point from the last inspection, pupils now plan and lead acts of worship. The sensitive guidance and support provided by the head of school is attributable to the quality and impact taking place. The prevailing presence of St John's Church and the churches together team,

successfully enhances the spiritual, moral, social and cultural life of this community. From the presentation of Bibles, participation in 'messy church', and the joining of the church choir, pupils recognise the important bonds which exist. Occasions such as the 'Easter experience' and the patronal festival, engender high levels of interaction. As a result, pupil understanding of central aspects of Christian belief is significantly raised. The celebration of key Christian festivals ensure that pupils have a clear understanding of the church year and its associated traditions. The lighting of candles and responsive greetings mean that pupils are developing a clear understanding of Anglican liturgy and practice. Pupils' understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit is developing. An inclusive approach to prayer and Christian reflection is part of the daily rhythm of the school. As a result, pupils understand its purpose and appreciate the impact that prayer can have. This is reflected in the way the community interacts with prayer corners, trees and pebbles thus contributing to personal and collective spiritual journeys. Purposeful monitoring and evaluation of worship is in place and the focus given to impact is effectively used to plan for future improvement.

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

The highly motivated head of school and leadership team have worked with energy and commitment to develop and promote a vision that seeks to 'provide an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice'. Driven by clearly stated Christian values and eloquently described through the school logo and motto, leaders successfully endorse and articulate this vision. Whilst the vision has served the community well for a long time, it does not completely capture the uniqueness of St John's or express its intentions in more than generic Christian terms. However, it is obvious that the Christian vision and values work successfully in tandem to inform practice, influence policy, and determine strategic direction. As a consequence, leaders are unequivocal in their drive to promote an holistic approach through challenge and nurture. This is reflected in a rich curriculum with SMSC development at its heart. Personalised learning strategies and effective interventions successfully breakdown barriers and impact positively on pupil wellbeing. Governors know the school well and challenge appropriately. They are justly proud of their school and take an active part in promoting its distinctive Christian character. An effective mechanism for monitoring and evaluation is in operation and is informed by the SIAMS evaluation document. The proactive church/school link group, have an established role in facilitating this process and as a result, leaders and governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and contribute to focused development priorities. Because the group is representative of all stakeholders, pupil and parent voice is taken seriously. Creatively planned events such as the patronal festival and facilitating the spiritual garden, enrich SMSC development and serve to strengthen the school's distinctive character. The development points from the last inspection have been addressed. The status and support accorded to RE and collective worship mean that both areas are well led and resourced, meet statutory requirements, and provide relevant training opportunities for leaders and staff. This has resulted in innovative and highly effective practice. Each has a place on the school improvement plan. However, as it omits any focus on the distinctive Christian character, the potential to effectively measure impact and evaluate progress is diminished. The head of school's completion of the Church of England professional qualification for headship, has brought significant benefits to the school and exemplifies the importance governors place on planning for succession and future leadership. St John's has formed highly productive and purposeful relationships with the church, diocese and wider local community. Links with Zambia through a parish focus take this to a global level. Parents are extremely supportive of the school. Surveys convey their appreciation of the school's mission and status. Innovative use of technology has effectively increased their awareness of the school's Christian foundation, eliciting greater involvement in the ongoing development of their child's spiritual growth. Membership of the WMAT is mutually beneficial. Leadership capacity has increased and expertise is readily shared, resulting in high expectations and the implementation of excellent practice.

SIAMS report July 2018 St John's CE Primary School, Keynsham, Bristol BS31 2NB