



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

St Peter's Church of England Controlled Primary School

Church Lane

Hixon

Staffordshire

ST18 0PS

Previous SIAMS Grade : Good

Diocese: Lichfield

Local authority: Staffordshire

Dates of inspection: 2 July 2015

Date of last inspection: 15 June 2010

School's unique reference number: 124304

Headteacher: Julie Alexander

Inspector's name and number: Reverend Alison M. Morris 759

School context

St. Peter's Voluntary Controlled Church of England Primary School has 127 pupils on roll aged 4-11. It is a smaller than average primary school. The serves the village of Hixon and surrounding areas. Almost all pupils are white British representing the whole social spectrum. A significant number are from split family units. St Peters building and site are very large making maintenance of the site time consuming and expensive. The school has very close links with the parish. In October 2014 the school was judged 'good' from OFSTED. The headteacher is a Local Leader of Education.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St. Peter's Voluntary Controlled Church of England as a Church of England school are good

- The distinctive Christian school vision, based on Christian values, is effectively fostered through the Christian leadership of the head teacher.
- Exemplary pastoral care based on Christian values.
- The effectiveness of the 'nurture room' that overcomes barriers to learning and enables pupils to succeed.
- Positive, harmonious and inclusive relationships that foster a strong sense of community cohesion and a sense of belonging within this Christian church school.

Areas to improve

- Embed more regular and formal rigorous monitoring of collective worship with a wider range of stakeholders which will inform future planning to ensure quality worship is consistently engaging with pupils and fostering their spiritual development.
- Build upon planning for collective worship to incorporate more Christian teaching and Biblical material aligned to the school's Christian values to enhance the quality of worship.
- Create more activities for pupils to experience a wider range of Anglican rituals and practices to facilitate their understanding of Christian diversity within the Anglican Communion.

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

St. Peter's School has a strong Christian character with a harmonious, inclusive and caring ethos. Core Christian values, such as respect and forgiveness within a Christian ethos permeate school life and impact upon pupils' lives and their learning. Christian values presented by the school have some influence upon academic and personal development. Pupils are happy and secure in an exciting and fulfilling school which is enriched by creative experience which meets pupils' needs. Such experiences recognise pupils' individual strengths and support areas for development. Effective intervention programmes for 'Pupil Premium' pupils ensure good progress is achieved to expected levels. A significant development since the last inspection has been the introduction of the 'nurture room' which has impacted upon the emotional needs of specific pupils to optimise their learning potential. Effective monitoring of this project is facilitated with the use of 'Boxall profiles' which evaluate sessions. High academic standards exist across the key stages and pupils' progress is generally good. Social, moral, spiritual and cultural development lies at the heart of the curriculum so pupils are prepared for life in modern Britain. Some older pupils understand what it means to be a pupil at a Church school and make the link of core belief expressed in the school to Christian teaching in the Bible. Other pupils are able to speak of their own faith which is encouraged by the school's Christian character. Personal development and well-being is promoted through pupil roles of responsibility on both the School Council and Worship Committee. The effective school council allows the pupil voice to contribute to decision making, such as fundraising activities for 'Samaritan Purse'. Relationships are very good as they are based on mutual respect. This fosters high standards of respect and courtesy. Staff model Christian values and work co-operatively together with pupils. Pupils are respectful, polite and behave well, as they have clear guidelines concerning their behaviour and expectations. A culture of praise and reward is present throughout the school. Attitudes towards school are reflected in the 97.7% attendance figure. Pupils also have good attitudes to learning. Parents feel welcomed and valued within this inclusive school where all are appreciated. Both pupils and parents are confident of support structures for help as issues are dealt with quickly and fairly. One parent said, '*It is an open door policy.*' Pupils appreciate the enhancement activities and the extra-curricular activities such as the cricket club. Religious education (RE) contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It encourages pupils to be respectful and self aware beyond themselves. It not only fosters a deep respect of Christian values and beliefs but that of other diverse faiths and cultures. Community cohesion and a sense of belonging by pupils are strengths of the school. Classrooms have Christian symbols, worship tables and displays which, when used, make a significant contribution to spiritual development.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good.

Worship is distinctively Christian with artefacts used symbolically at the start of worship. Pupils enjoy worship and are receptive, keen and affirmed throughout. They are eager to sing, praise and pray. One pupil explained that worship is when –*you look up to God.* Prayer is an integral part of school life; daily prayers, a school prayer and use of the Lord's prayer, make the use of prayer natural. A significant development from the last inspection is St. Peter's quiet reflective area which has been established for pupils to take time out for reflection to enhance their spiritual development. Pupils take up opportunities to be still and reflect in this area of peace often using the prayer nets and prayer cards which are read out in daily worship. One pupil said, '*I pray to Jesus the light of the world.*' Given the teaching that also comes from their RE lessons, pupils are developing a sound awareness of the person of Jesus and of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Worship is valued and makes a good contribution to school life and pupils' spiritual development. It affirms and influences the pupils' actions and behaviour making it a positive experience for most pupils. Parents and foundation governors enjoy and are appreciative of worship, especially in church. Worship enhances the purposeful learning environment which enables most pupils to learn. Pupils occasionally participate in worship with a prayer, bible reading and role play. One pupil confidently spoke about role play based upon 'The story of the Paralysed Man' and '*how it showed faith in God which allows us to help our neighbours.*' Responsibility for planning of worship

relies upon the headteacher. Her skills ensure that pupils experience distinctively Christian worship with clear teaching points to explain some Christian values which are linked to the spiritual and emotional literacy (SEAL) programme. However, pupils' understanding of a range of Anglican traditions and practices is limited. Links with the clergy and foundation governor do ensure some Anglican traditions are upheld but creating planned opportunities for exposure of other traditions is important. The role of the Church through the vicar and foundation governors supports this Christian school. Major Christian festivals such as Easter and Christmas take place in St. Peter's church. Input to worship also includes participation from the 'Kerygma project' and the secondary academy. Pupils' knowledge of the Christian story is good. Pupils have some understanding and awareness of other faiths such as Islam and Judaism. Visits to places of worship such as the mosque and links to a multi-ethnic school help in developing such knowledge. Parents respond positively to invitations to share worship in school. Another focus for development from the last inspection has meant that more self-evaluation by foundation governors is being embedded to assist with the development of ideas proposed by pupils. Formation of a 'Worship Committee' has encouraged some new ideas. Evaluation of worship by pupils is in place, but this needs to be further embedded to provide sufficient evidence for effective action. Some formal monitoring and evaluation of collective worship by other stakeholders happens, but again limited in impacting upon informing future planning to ensure worship is consistently of a high standard and diverse in its approach.

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

Experience, energy and dedication by the head teacher have brought stability and consistency to the Christian vision to improve and promote this Church school within the community. A clear and consistent direction is rooted in her own personal faith. Both the head teacher and foundation governors promote the Christian vision and values which permeate school life and this cohesive community. A simply expressed vision '*Opening Doors with Learning, Faith and Care*' serves the school well. The chair of governors and foundation governors are supportive of the strategic drive to improve further academic standards within this Church school. New foundation governors now provide some evaluation of evidence and strategic support at every level, monitoring and evaluating the school's progress as a Church school, giving account and acting as critical friends to the leadership team. Systems for monitoring and evaluating the school's impact on pupil achievement are also implemented but introduction of further planned opportunities to evaluate the Christian distinctiveness through worship is important. RE provides a positive, spiritual and affirming experience for pupils. The teaching and training of RE is well managed across the school by the co-ordinator, with monitoring to be fully implemented. Through 'Leadership Pathways' and succession planning staff have some understanding of future development needs of this Church school. The future conversion to the Mid-Trent Multi Academy Trust is a strategic move in direction. Staff are now given training opportunities and responsibilities for leadership roles to ensure effective school improvement planning. Close and effective relationships with the Church, clergy and foundation governors help to maintain the Christian distinctiveness at St. Peter's. Strong and effective partnerships exist with parents, multi-agencies and the wider community. An example of this is seen in the distribution of harvest parcels to local senior citizens and the extensive work of the 'Parent Teacher and Friends Association'. Parents refer to the school as having a '*fabulous friendly atmosphere*' but do not always acknowledge or recognise the value of the Christian identity. Addressing a focus for development from the last inspection, there has been some attempt to broaden links with the Church and local community to include other denominations and faiths, for example with the local Methodist Chapel. Pupils are encouraged to be aware of their wider responsibilities within a multi-faith and multi-cultural society through their link with Lichfield Diocese at Open Door, their national links with Calshot Primary School, Great Barr and their international links with St. Veronica's, Kenya.

