

## Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

### St Edward's Church of England Primary School

Dovecote, Castle Donington, Derby. DE74 2LH

<b>Current SIAMS inspection grade</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Leicester</b>
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Name of multi-academy trust / federation [delete as appropriate]	N/A
Date of academy conversion	N/A
Date/s of inspection	28 September 2017
Date of last inspection	11 September 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Controlled Primary School 120122
Headteacher	Rachel Lacey (Interim)
Inspector's name and number	Wendy Wakefield 867

#### School context

St Edward's Church of England Primary School serves the village of Castle Donington. It is a smaller than average school with 203 on roll. There are few pupils from minority ethnic groups or with English as an additional language. The number of pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium or identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is low. From September 2017 Year 6 pupils have stayed on at St Edward's due to age changes made by the Local Authority. The interim headteacher has been in post since June 2017 due to the long term absence of the substantive headteacher.

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

- St Edwards is a nurturing and inclusive Christian community serving the pupils and their families, where ethos is respected and faith openly shared.
- The core set of 12 Christian values are of paramount importance to all members of the school community. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how they impact on their personal development and it is clearly reflected in the positive approach to learning.
- Prayer is central to the spiritual life of the school. Opportunities for prayer and praise beyond worship are valued by pupils and have an impact on their well-being and personal development.
- The strong partnerships with the parish church and local community are mutually beneficial and enrich the worshipping life of the school.

#### Areas to improve

- To provide greater opportunity for all pupils to systematically plan and lead acts of worship in order that that they become true partners in leading the faith community.
- To prioritise the leadership of RE and ensure that rigorous and robust formal systems for assessment and monitoring lead to highly effective practice in this area.
- Deepen pupils' understanding of Anglican tradition and ensure that this is an integral part of their worshipping life in a church school

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

The 12 Christian values adopted by the school have been paramount in promoting the Christian ethos and the learning environment at St Edwards. One staff member commented 'Our school is all about the children and them being valued, sharing values and living those values out in a Christian context.' These values are clearly rooted to stories in the Bible, one child linking the story of Noah's Ark to the value of trust where it was important that Noah trusted God's word when asked to build the ark. Pupils and adults can articulate the significant difference the Christian values make to their lives and as a result, St Edward's is a warm harmonious community with strong relationships and a positive outlook to learning. The school's distinctively Christian ethos is realised by all stakeholders who speak positively about the opportunities and nurturing environment provided. Staff are totally committed to meeting the needs of every individual in a strong Christian environment and one parent described the school as 'an extended family where everybody supports and cares for each other and a place where everybody's voice is heard.' The school's vision to 'Lay the foundations for a lifelong love of learning, inspired by Christian values,' has led to good academic progress and pupils who behave well and are keen to come to school. Attendance is at least as good as the national average because of the care and support provided to children and families.

The development of spirituality and prayer has been a priority and this has been supported by Reverend Andrew the local incumbent who is a frequent presence at school. There are a range of opportunities provided for reflection and prayer throughout the day, and this has had a profound impact on the children's personal development. A small group of Year 6 children spoke about creating an area outside for reflection by converting the 'secret garden' into a spiritual area so that children had 'somewhere quiet outside to really think and talk to God.' Pupils are really keen and enjoy contributing their views. They are able to give insightful reflections on a range of subjects and link them to the teachings of God and Jesus. One child was able to define love by relating it to the poem 'Footprints in the Sand' where God had carried a man at the end of his life saying 'God is always with us, always helps us and loves us without question.'

Pupils enjoy a broad, rich RE curriculum which is creative and interactive and one which enhances spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) provision. A selection of empathetic poems, written by year 5 pupils, focussed on how Peter must have felt when he denied Jesus, one including the line 'Now he is gone I am on my own, I loved him, I betrayed him, I feel alone.' The RE curriculum is enriched by attractive displays which often link to Christian values. Children are able to speak eloquently and enthusiastically about their learning in RE. They show a high level of respect when talking about other faiths and are developing an understanding of the diversity and difference between other faith communities. Visits and visitors from other cultures and faiths have enhanced learning and children spoke animatedly about an 'Islam Day' in school where a classroom was turned into a Mosque and visitors shared their own cultural experiences. The older children talk confidently about having different views and beliefs agreeing unanimously that it is 'good to have differences but the important thing is to respect those differences.' The school's teaching of RE enhances pupils' understanding of Christian beliefs and practice and contributes well to the wider Christian life of the school.

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

Collective worship is central to the life of the school and a time for pupils and staff to come together to learn, reflect, pray, sing and communicate their thoughts with one another and with God. The headteacher commented that 'collective worship is not just a one off event, but a way of sharing the example set by Jesus.' It is fully inclusive and acts as a springboard for learning about Christian values and biblical teaching. Worship is regularly monitored and evaluated by all leaders and through the 'parent forum'. A new prestigious 'pupil collective worship team' is beginning to ensure that the views of children are taken into account. The team reported to have enjoyed taking part in video sequences demonstrating the value of respect. These were used in the act of worship observed during the inspection. Pupils readily volunteer to help and contribute to acts of worship, but there are not yet sufficient opportunities for them to plan and lead these in order to further support their spiritual development. There is a secure understanding of Christian festivals with pupil knowledge enhanced through the Christmas, Easter and Harvest services at the church. These events are seen by parents as 'special times where the church is full and the school and local community can join as one.' A range of worship leaders including teachers, Reverend Andrew, community members and Keith Munroe from the Soar Project is much appreciated by the pupils. A worship table with cross, Bible and candle is effective in welcoming everyone into the assembly hall each day and encompasses an age-appropriate knowledge of the Holy Trinity. A deeper understanding of the seasons and liturgical colours of the Church's calendar and a knowledge of a range of Anglican traditions is not yet developed.

Children understand the value of personal prayer and use the 'prayer vine' in the school hall or areas in classrooms to regularly enhance their spiritual journey. Some of the children's prayers show insight and maturity in their reflections and plans to include Makaton signing to the 'Lord's Prayer' support the school's aims to ensure further inclusivity for all. More recently prayers have reflected the terrible events around the world and showed a real empathy and desire for peace in the world as well as true compassion for those involved. There are designated areas for reflection round the school where children and adults alike enjoy taking time out to sit and think about both personal and global issues or to quietly pray.

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

The interim headteacher leads by example and has continued the sterling work of the substantive head in ensuring that every aspect of the school's effectiveness as a church school has been addressed. It is clear that all stakeholders are passionate about the distinctiveness of St Edward's as a church school. As a team, they are determined that every pupil will develop 'a love of learning underpinned by Christian values' and that they will achieve this by following the example set by Jesus Christ. This is well facilitated by a committed governing body, highly supportive parish church and all members of the school community. Leaders at all levels are eloquent about the importance of the school's Christian vision and the twelve Christian values for the pupils in their care. This in turn enables all stakeholders to live out the vision to the full. One governor commented that during a recent monitoring visit for 'safeguarding', children had linked feeling safe to their Christian values. Leaders at all levels are clear about what needs to be done to secure their ambitious aims for the school, and are proactive in implementing change. Because of this, pupils throughout the school readily speak about the Christian values of the school and the difference that St Edward's being a 'church school' makes to their lives. The partnership with the parish church is of mutual benefit to both the church and school, this along with passionate and determined subject leadership has led to the noted improvements in collective worship.

Staff at all levels access training to develop their teaching and leadership skills and senior staff have accessed training for church school leadership. It is important to recognise the work of the substantive head in developing the role of future church school leaders, as the transition during her illness has appeared seamless. The school has effective systems in place for monitoring and evaluation and governors offer challenge and support. However, whilst RE is fully valued and good practice is evident, it is clear that less attention has been paid to more formal assessment procedures so that there is good practice in all areas of the subject.

All development points from the last inspection have been met.

SIAMS report September 2017 St Edward's Church of England Primary School, Castle Donington Derby DE74 2LH