**National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report**

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| **St Peter’s Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School**  School Lane  Caverswall  Stoke on Trent  Staffordshire  ST11 9EN  **Previous SIAMS grade: Good**  **Current inspection grade: Good**  **Diocese: Lichfield**  Local authority: Staffordshire  Date of inspection: 26 November 2015  Date of last inspection: December 2010  School’s unique reference number: 124331  Headteacher: Sarah George  Inspector’s name and number: Lizzie McWhirter 244 |
| **School context**  Almost all of St Peter’s 197 pupils are from a White British background. This village school serves a community on the outskirts of Stoke. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is lower than average. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils or those with special educational needs is average. There are strong links with the parish church. A new headteacher was appointed in January 2015. The religious education [RE] coordinator took up her responsibilities for both RE and collective worship in September 2015. |
| **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Peter’s as a Church of England school are good**   * This extended family is a welcoming, inclusive and supportive Christian community which serves all children and their families. * The worshipping life of this school, enriched by mutual and substantial links with the parish church, is valued by everyone. * The Christian vision and dedication of the leaders and managers, including staff, ensures the school’s mission and vision to ’Love Christ, Love Learning and Love One Another’ is lived out. |
| **Areas to improve**   * Ensure the work of the governing body has a systematic focus on the impact of the school’s Christian values on learners’ achievement. * Embed the monitoring and assessment of RE to include pupils’ self-assessment, to give them a clearer understanding of their own learning journey. * Enable pupils to deepen their understanding of key Christian concepts and their knowledge of the lives of the saints such as St Peter, to nurture their personal and spiritual growth. |

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| **The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is good at meeting the needs of all learners**  The strong importance of the extended family within a welcoming Christian community where everyone feels accepted, is at the heart of this rural aided school. Consequently, all children and their families feel included and are well supported. Furthermore, the school has a focus on The Golden Rules which are attributed to biblical verses which pupils know and show in their lives, such as forgiveness. The anti-bullying week in October ensured all pupils feel accepted within an environment where *‘good Christian behaviour is praised’*. Pupils show respect which they explain as ‘thinking of other people before you’. As a result, relationships are good and attitudes to learning are positive. In addition, staff go the extra mile in genuinely caring for, and respecting, parents and their children as part of the school. Pupils feel safe and happy and enjoy coming to school. As a result, attendance is good. To ‘love learning ‘is very positive throughout the school. High aspirations for children with personal targets as well as high quality and calibre of teaching ensure the best possible results. The school attributes this to the governors funding extra staffing, with a focus on what the children need. Consequently, all groups of children achieve well and academic standards are in line with the national average by the end of Key Stage 2. This includes pupils with special educational needs. They also make good progress within a culture of praise and expectations of good behaviour where the school’s Christian ethos is made explicit. Reflecting and learning from mistakes are seen as the building blocks for learning. Christian values of perseverance, trust, forgiveness and respect are positively encouraged. Consequently, children develop a sense of who they are and the difference they can make in the community. Pupils experience their Christian value of service through their charity fundraising activities. They enjoy learning about different cultures through their worship and RE which make a good contribution to the Christian character of this school. |
| **The impact of collective worship on the school community is good**  Collective worship at St Peter’s engages and involves the whole school community. This is because worship brings the whole community together and is recognised as an important part of the school day. This is richly enhanced by the strong partnership between St Peter’s Church and the school. The school is therefore a welcoming and worshipping community, where prayer features strongly, contributing significantly to the spiritual growth of the whole community. Some well-used interactive class reflection areas have prayer chairs. In addition, the prayer activities in the sanctuary are welcomed by pupils and staff alike. One pupil commented, ‘*if I’ve got a question, God might answer it in my head when I pray’*. The vicar of St Peter’s is a welcome and regular visitor to school, leading worship every Monday. Pupils say, ‘*he tells us about Jesus, kindness and Christingle’*. The school equally enjoys going to church for key festivals and services. When the Christingles were held all around the church, one pupil said, *‘Jesus is all around us and we reflect on how Jesus lived his life*’. Pupils say they would like to lead more worship themselves, and welcome more worship outdoors. Currently, some use *‘the left hand corner of the field near the bench’*. Pupils are growing in their understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. They explain, ‘*God is the father of Jesus the son who died on the cross and is the light of the world. When Jesus was crucified, his spirit lives on. We still have the spirit of Jesus helping us here. His love is like a wreath, a circle which is never ending*’. Pupil voice is valued as part of on-going evaluation of worship. Pupils too value such experiences to share their views on worship. However, the school acknowledges that further work to enable pupils to understand the mystery of the Holy Trinity as part of their worshipping experience would enrich their understanding of Christian belief and practice. Also deepening pupils’ knowledge of the saints, such as St Peter, after whom their church is named, would nurture their personal and spiritual growth. |
| **The effectiveness of the religious education is good** Pupils at St Peter’s enjoy their RE lessons, learning ‘*how we live and how all Christian stories affect our lives’*. This is because RE is seen as an important subject and teaching and learning is consistently good, with standards in line with other core subjects. Children know how to improve in their work. They ask important questions such as, ‘*How is God mysterious*?’ which enable them to think deeply. Year 2 pupils explore why Advent is important for Christians and can explain the symbolism of the Advent wreath. Year 6 pupils creatively examine the Christmas story through the different gospel writers, dressing in character. They explore the sources that Matthew and Luke used. They are less secure in what they know about Pentecost. Year 6 pupils visit Lichfield Cathedral and all pupils enjoy their visits to St Peter’s Church. Equally, pupils value visiting other places of worship and extending their knowledge. Pupil voice on RE is currently gathered annually, which informs future planning. However, the school has correctly identified the need to embed the monitoring and assessment of RE to include pupils’ self-assessment. This helps to ensure the school is moving towards outstanding on its journey going forward. |
| **The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school is good**  Leadership at St Peter’s is strong, with clearly defined roles and responsibilities. This is because the headteacher, senior staff and governors all have a strong Christian vision which is embraced by everyone. They all work hard to ensure the school’s Christian values underpin all the school embodies. Governance is also strong. The wellbeing and subsequent achievement of all pupils is a priority for governors. They have a firm commitment to ‘*pray before every committee meeting and every governing body and seek God’s guidance for every decision we make’*. Consequently, they want the best for every child. Governors plan for and monitor the development of the school’s Christian ethos, ensuring that prayer and Christian policy and practice underpin their work. Importantly, this includes the monitoring of RE and worship by the committee of foundation governors who then feedback to the whole governing body. Moreover, going forward, the school recognises the importance of systematically monitoring the impact of the school’s Christian values on pupil achievement. In addition, the foundation governors recognise the importance of putting the school’s distinctive Christian character on every governing body agenda to raise its profile with all governors. Currently, this does not happen. The governors support new leaders amongst the staff and have invested in developing succession planning. Staff are continually improving their practice. Consequently, RE and worship, which are well led, managed and resourced with passion and enthusiasm, meet statutory requirements. All areas from the last inspection have been successfully addressed with clear priorities identified for action. There is a real sense of identity and belonging with church and school working closely together. Very good community links include the annual Christmas tree festival. Parents are full of praise for this inclusive school, speaking highly of ‘*the sense of togetherness where all work to achieve the same goals’*. It is very evident that parents value the school as a big family where supportive integration is a feature in all classes and the oldest children support the youngest. A hallmark of St Peter’s is that everyone is accepted and all achievement is valued. Good examples include a club for cheerleaders, who contribute to whole school activities, including worship. |

SIAMS report November 2015 St Peter’s CE VA Primary School, Caverswall ST11 9EN