

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

### Christ Church Church of England First School

<b>Address</b>	Northesk Street, Stone, Staffordshire ST15 8EP		
<b>Date of inspection</b>	27 June 2019	<b>Status of school</b>	VC First, The Key Educational Trust
<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Lichfield</b>	<b>URN</b>	142421

<b>Overall Judgement</b>	<b>How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Additional Judgements</b>	<b>The impact of collective worship</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Good</b>

#### School context

Christ Church is a first school with 138 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is below national average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below national average. The executive headteacher has been in post since September 2018 and the school joined The Key Educational Trust in 2016.

#### The school's Christian vision

Christ is at the beginning of our school name and He is at the centre of our school life.  
Respect Matthew 7:12    Ready Proverbs 6 v 6-8    Safe Psalm 46:1

#### Key findings

- The exceptionally strong leadership of the headteacher has created a vibrant Christian learning community in which every member flourishes. However, monitoring and evaluation by governors is limited.
- Collective worship reflects the Christian vision which is central to the school. It is inclusive for the whole community, offering a variety of ways to encounter God.
- The broad and balanced curriculum, underpinned by clear Christian values, offers learning experiences adapted to support the needs of individuals to enable all to thrive as unique children of God.
- Pupils articulate the Christian vision well. They feel treated with dignity and respect and model the values and behaviour that are fundamental to this Church school.
- Religious education (RE) is well led so that all pupils enjoy their learning in RE and thoughtful questions and make some deep responses to Jesus' teaching.

#### Areas for development

- Establish more rigorous and effective systems of monitoring and evaluation involving all members of the school community so as to inform future Church school development.
- Ensure pupils awareness of all faiths and world views extend to meeting people of faith in their places of worship or school.
- Develop mutually beneficial global partnerships to understand how other Christians around the world live and to appreciate the diversity of Christian worship and worldwide traditions of Anglican worship.

## **How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?**

### **Inspection findings**

Christ Church First School is committed to putting Christ at the centre. It is distinctively Christian and is making rapid progress since the arrival of the new executive headteacher. She has brought stability and unity enabling pupils and adults to flourish. Her vibrant leadership is breathing new life into the school. As such, a new Christian vision which was written with the pupils is grounded in biblical narrative. This is supported with rules of respect, ready and safe which shape all policies and practice. Christian values, such as hope, are promoted through worship, religious education and daily interaction. Therefore, many can articulate its importance. For example, a pupil said, 'Jesus and God are in the middle of our school.' The vision reflects the key priorities and ethos of this inclusive Christian community. It is impacting positively upon the Church school experience for all to thrive. Partnerships with other schools in The Key Educational Trust and the diocese effectively support Church school improvement. Both worship and RE are well led and have a high priority. This makes a substantial contribution to the school's Christian distinctiveness. Staff play an active role in Church school improvement, which is successfully driven by the headteacher. Self-evaluation processes are in place for governors to evaluate the effectiveness as a Church school, but this is currently limited.

Pupils are inspired by the motto, 'Be the best you can be in God's beautiful world.' This, with the Christian vision underpins the desire to give all pupils the best possible start to life. A broad and balanced curriculum, enhanced with extra curriculum activities, is transforming pupils' lives. Early identification of learning and personal needs are quickly addressed. Intervention strategies and nurture provision have a significant impact on pupils' learning and particularly those with specific learning challenges. Consequently, pupil progress, including those most vulnerable, is strong and attainment is above national standards. Parents are effusive in their praise for the impact that the school has upon their children's development. One parent said the school was a 'refreshing change'. They confirm that their children are happy, enjoy learning and joyful in their relationships. These young pupils enjoy all that the school offers. As a result, attendance and attitudes to learning are exemplary due to the inspiring learning environment that is fostered. Activities for resilience and perseverance are organised so that pupils feel well prepared for life. Reflection areas and worship displays are used to provide valuable spiritual experiences. Spiritual development is becoming spontaneous across the curriculum.

Pupils feel a responsibility to make a positive contribution to the world. Their sense of justice and understanding of global deprivation is strong. This is reflected in their fundraising. RE inspires the pupils to be advocates for change through developing global partnerships. For example, topic work on Christian Aid encourages pupils to make a difference where injustices occur. The 'Deadly 60' display motivates pupils to challenge where damage is being done to God's creation. Speaking about this, a pupil said 'We must pass the message on.' Big questions are woven into the curriculum, through good use of the 'Understanding Christianity' resource. RE is enthusiastically led and supported, with access to good quality training. Pupils have an improved knowledge of the Bible and are able to articulate how the stories have taught them a greater understanding of Christian values. RE focuses on several religions, such as Judaism, which means pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of other world faiths. This is particularly useful since the school is not a naturally diverse community. However, experiences to meet people of other faiths are limited. Both monitoring and assessment systems are effective in maintaining the high standards in RE.

Inspired by the Christian vision, all relationships are rooted in Christian values. Professional development equips staff with the skills and knowledge to fulfil their roles in a Church school. It is central to school improvement, supports succession planning and promotes an understanding of Church school education. Policies, such as behaviour are infused with the Christian vision which translates into a very positive approach to the physical, mental health and wellbeing of each individual. Pupils learn to manage their worries through strategies, such as the 'Listening Ear' and the worry monster. School council initiatives provide space to effectively explore different points of view. Exemplary standards of behaviour are due to a well-disciplined school which focuses on Christian values.

Underpinned by the Christian vision, everyone is respected and allowed to flourish in all that they do. Individuality and diversity is celebrated and pupils feel nurtured to grow as unique individuals, loved by all. As a

result, all are welcomed, loved and embraced, into a Christian community where they have a sense of belonging. Both staff and pupils feel happy, valued and safe.

Worship provides a daily time to praise, reflect and spiritually grow together. Using a biblical thematic approach it has a focus on the teaching and person of Jesus Christ. This reinforces an understanding of the Christian belief of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. Through Bible stories, song, prayer and stillness, worship is inclusive. Spiritual and moral reflection are significant elements of worship so that pupils take away thoughts and ideas that enable them to see the impact of God in the world. Pupils are able to express their relationship with Jesus. One pupil said, 'Jesus is next to me when I pray'. Prayer is central to daily life so pupils speak very well about their prayer life. One pupil explained, 'I feel more connected when talking to God.' Pupils' experiences of different styles of worship, led by other Christian faith groups, are not always evident. As such, their appreciation of Christian diversity and worldwide traditions of Anglican worship is limited. Worship benefits from visits to church and a mutually beneficial partnership with the clergy and the 'Open the Book' team. Pupils contribute to family worship, but have limited occasions to evaluate. Formal evaluation and monitoring of the impact of collective worship upon pupils is limited.

Executive headteacher

Amy Graham

Inspector's name and number

Alison M. Morris 759