

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Trinity Voluntary Controlled Church of England Primary School	
Butt Lane, Ford, Shrewsbury SY5 9LG	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Hereford
Previous SIAS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local authority	Shropshire
Date of inspection	6 July 2017
Date of last inspection	3 May 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	VC 130931
Headteacher	John Rowe
Inspector's name and number	John Chapman 006

School context

Trinity is a smaller than average primary school with 148 pupils in five mixed-age classes. It serves the village of Ford and a number of surrounding villages south west of Shrewsbury. About 10% of pupils live outside the designated catchment area. The school was formed in 1996 from the amalgamation of 3 local primary schools. The headteacher has been in post for five years. The school was judged to be good by Ofsted in February 2017. Governors are considering possibilities for future school organisation.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Trinity as a Church of England school are outstanding

- School leaders and governors are thoroughly committed to the promotion of Christian values which permeate every aspect of school life.
- The strong sense of unity of purpose shared by all adults in the school community results in excellent academic progress and attainment in the context of shared Christian values.
- High quality collective worship and religious education (RE) are at the heart of school life and strongly support pupils' spiritual and moral development.
- Close and fruitful links between the school and the local church make a significant impact on both pupils and church members.

Areas to improve

- Find ways to increase pupil leadership in, and evaluation of, collective worship in order to deepen pupils' sense of involvement.
- When the new RE syllabus is embedded, develop a tracking system in order to ensure judgements on pupils' progress are regular and accurate.
- Make links with an appropriate urban school in order to give pupils greater direct experience of cultural diversity.

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

Christian values form the bedrock of Trinity School and are embedded in all aspects of school life. This is not achieved through a formal 'value of the week' programme, rather through values permeating every school activity. These include relationships, learning and the curriculum, collective worship, RE and extra-curricular activities. Pupils and parents are very aware of the 'wall' of values on which their school is built, each brick representing an important value with love and hope at its pinnacle. These values are placed firmly in a Christian context. For example a Christmas food collection for local homeless people is linked to the vulnerability of the infant Jesus. The school achieves its stated purpose of providing a challenging education in a Christian context. It values and nurtures the talents of every pupil both in terms of academic attainment and personal development. The headteacher commented, 'Every child here is gifted and talented, it is a matter of finding those for each individual'. Pupils make very good academic progress and most national expectations are comfortably exceeded. Earlier this year, the School's Minister congratulated the school on being in the top 3% of schools in England in terms of progress between Key stages 1 and 2. Parents notice how quickly staff spot any learning problems. Pupils who have any special needs or who have the support of the pupil premium make at least as good progress as other pupils. Relationships between all adults and children are based on the 'wall bricks' of caring, love, trust and respect. A governor noted 'Staff show real integrity in all they do'. High standards of pupil behaviour flow from this. Pupils know good behaviour is less about obeying rules and more about how they treat each other. Older pupils can relate this to the values on the bricks. As a result, one pupil said, 'It makes our school happier; we are a joyful school,' and he added, 'It is why people want to come here'. Older pupils readily support younger ones in a variety of, often understated, ways, and all feel safe and secure in school. This supports a high attendance record and low number of disciplinary issues. Pupils have excellent opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This extends beyond collective worship and RE to a theme-led curriculum and a comprehensive extra-curricular enrichment programme. Pupils have many opportunities to explore and reflect on who they are, their skills, and their place in the world. Some of this work is done in conjunction with other local church schools. RE makes a major contribution to spiritual and moral development. It is carefully planned, imaginatively taught and well resourced. Written work is of high quality. Some pupils claim RE is their favourite subject. It reinforces the school's values and helps pupils think at a deep level for their age. In a lesson centred on baptism, for example, pupils showed an understanding of the symbolism of fire and water and the relevance of the doctrine of the Trinity. Pupils are developing an understanding of the Christian faith based on the life and teaching of Jesus. They are also becoming aware of the teachings and traditions of other world faiths. Links are made between what is taught in RE with work done in other subjects and what is shared in worship. This is facilitated by the theme-based curriculum. Despite the rural situation, the school is aware of the need to help pupils understand and respect the religious and cultural diversity found in other parts of the country and the world. Good links are emerging with a school in Uganda. So far it has proved difficult to establish an enduring working link with a school in an urban area of this country. However, opportunities are offered for pupils to visit other faith's centres of worship. Through displays of work and the worship focus in each classroom, the school uses its own environment to reinforce its Christian values. This is further supported by the provision of a quiet place in each class and a friendship area in the playground.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship is central to the school's core aim of providing a challenging education firmly within a Christian context. It is outstanding because of the value placed on it across the school community and the considerable impact it has on pupils. Everyone in the school is present with all staff involved in leadership. This helps pupils to see adults value worship for themselves rather than something they are providing for children. Worship is planned to provide links to the wider curriculum including RE. What takes place is reinforced at other points in the school day. Parents say that activities in worship are often mentioned at home. Worship helps pupils to look both inwards and outwards. Inwards, they think about their own lives, their beliefs and what sort of people they want to be. Outwards, they are learning to care for and take responsibility for the environment. There is good variety of worship and pupils particularly value the weekly visit from the 'Open The Book' team from the local church which includes pupil drama. Also they greatly enjoy the Friday achievement assembly when pupils are recognised for demonstrating both achievement and the Christian values of the school. Pupils respond well to all forms of worship. They enjoy singing, both traditional hymns and modern songs, and taking part in any way they can. They show reverence and eagerness to respond appropriately. They value the weekly class assembly as well. In one such, older pupils about to leave the school could easily recall and reflect on the various messages and ideas they had

heard from the vicar in her assemblies over the years. Pupils have only limited opportunity to lead worship and only a small number are invited to offer any evaluation. However, each act of worship is recorded by a senior pupil. Pupils give the sense that prayer is a natural feature of school life, an activity which is neither forced nor pious. They are ready to write and read their own prayers in the classroom situation and to talk about prayer at home if they have been involved. A prayer is generally said before lunch (and pupils have written some very imaginative prayers of thanks for food) and at the end of the day. A quiet corner is created in most classrooms giving an opportunity for quiet reflection. Worship is set in a sound Anglican framework with pupils very familiar with the rhythm of the church's year, its liturgy and festivals. Major services are held in the local church with considerable pupil involvement and increasing support from parents. At the end of their school time, Year 6 plan and hold a leavers' service. Also, after careful preparation in school, they take part in a special Eucharist in church. Since 2014, the school has hosted Messy Church on a Sunday every other month, replacing the family service held in church. Many pupils attend this with their families and pupils are able to sense the joint purposes of church and school.

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

A passionate commitment to a school based on Christian values is shared by all leaders, staff and governors. This sense of unity is powerful and drives the school forward towards the achievement of its objectives. The vision owes much to the inspirational leadership of the headteacher over a number of years. Staff have a good understanding of the school's overall academic performance and high levels of attainment are seen as central to the school's Christian mission. Thorough self-evaluation leading to effective planning has underpinned the school's academic progress. A comprehensive school action plan indicates the desire and capacity for further development. Included in this are action points relating to the Christian purposes of the school. All the development points from the previous SIAS inspection have been given detailed attention and these have enhanced the school's Christian character. Parents, governors and pupils all recognise that the adults in school are all good role models for the school's Christian values. Their strong team spirit results in good relationships throughout the school and this brings high expectations of pupils in terms of work and behaviour. Staff take advantage of courses offered by the diocese and the opportunities to work with other church schools in the locality. In these ways the school is making a contribution to the future leadership of church schools. Through the school council, pupils also make a contribution to the leadership of the school. They make suggestions for the smooth running of the school and for new activities, and are involved in the evaluation of worship. RE is given appropriate time and resource. Planning is integrated into the overall planning of the curriculum and is monitored by the headteacher. One teacher is completing the 'Understanding Christianity' course run by the diocese which will be cascaded to other teachers. The school does not track individual progress in RE as in other core subjects. The governing body, combining challenge and support, makes a strong contribution to the Christian effectiveness of the school. Whilst foundation governors are assiduous in monitoring and supporting Christian distinctiveness, they are fully supported by all governors who have an equal commitment. Their meetings now begin with prayer. The headteachers' regular report to governors keeps them well informed and provides a vehicle for discussion of RE, collective worship and Christian distinctiveness. Governors have shared in the school's self-evaluation. Outstanding links and mutual support with the local church make an impact on school pupils and church members alike. The church provides an 'Open The Book' team, foundation governors, and prayer support from its members. It provided a cross for the school entrance when it was extended and liturgical cloths for use in school worship. The school supports causes the church is taking up, joins in the village show and provides a home for Messy Church. In recent years, the school has taken responsibility for worship on Education Sunday in the deanery. All this is held together by the vicar whose presence and contribution in the school is highly valued by both children and adults. The church is much used for festival services and as a resource for RE. Pupils contribute to worship in a number of local churches. Parents have positive views of the school and are full of praise for the care and all-round experience their children receive. They value the high quality teaching and the way children look after each other. They find the school always responsive to any concerns and feel they are kept well informed. They have no doubt that their children are progressively learning and living by Christian values.