

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Andrew's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary

Northampton Street, Julian Road, Bath BA1 2SN	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Bath and Wells
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local authority	Bath and North East Somerset
Name of multi-academy trust / federation	N/A
Date of inspection	16 May 2017
Date of last inspection	31 May 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Aided 109257
Headteacher	Sue East
Inspector's name and number	Marianne Phillips 586

School context

St Andrew's is a smaller than average primary school with 220 pupils on roll. There is nursery provision on site. The numbers of pupils eligible for free school meals is just below national average. 51.4% of the school population comes from minority ethnic backgrounds. This is well above national average. For 43.8% of pupils English is not their first language. This is double the national figure. 21.8% of pupils are judged to require special need support. This is also well above national average. Pupil mobility in this school set in the heart of the city of Bath is high.

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

- The clear Christian leadership of the headteacher effectively drives the school vision.
- The established strong sense of team is underpinned by Christian love and care.
- The enthusiasm and expertise of the religious education (RE) leader ensures the subject experiences for all pupils are of the highest quality.
- The creative approaches in RE are planned to challenge pupils' understanding and belief across a range of religions.
- The effective strategies used by school leaders unite this richly diverse school family into a cohesive and respectful community committed to the Christian values that guide their daily lives.

Areas to improve

- Develop the quality of class worship to enable a sense of awe and wonder to be a regular feature to inspire and engage pupils in a high level of spiritual and moral reflection.
- Enable pupils using a range of strategies to take a leadership role in class worship to further drive the vision and values of the school supporting its Christian distinctiveness.

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

St Andrew's is a uniquely outstanding church school. The headteacher is sensitive to the challenging needs of the school family and drives the school vision in a strong, loving way. There is a real sense of team and a whole school commitment to the agreed, core Christian values. These are love, friendship, peace, hope, justice, inclusion, courage and creativity and they form the foundation for daily life and relationships. The values are lived-out and encourage all to enjoy 'Learning for Living: Life in all its fullness'. This vision statement from St John's Gospel appeared on the walls of the school hall when it was a church. These historical Christian 'roots' are extensive and illustrated beautifully by the carved 'St Andrew's Tree' in the foyer. They influence choices such as the creation of 'the Peace Path'. This is an exterior path which leads to a raised area of reflection. The inclusive approaches and the senior leaders' knowledge of the pupils and their needs fosters a positive learning environment. A wealth of strategies unite the richly diverse school family into a cohesive and respectful community. As a result, behaviour is excellent and pupils thrive, regardless of background, faith or ability. As a group of children shared, 'this school doesn't force us to believe, it includes everyone; we all belong.' Parents are very positive about the school and the open-door approaches which exist. They are also supportive of the core values that encourage their children to make positive choices. In the words of one parent, 'the relationships which exist are underpinned by love, which is powerful.' Attendance is broadly in line with national measures. School leaders work closely with persistent absentees in a loving Christian way. They nurture and support all from the time they enter the school, giving additional support to those with skills well below national expectations. A part-time teacher and support assistants have been funded by a government pupil premium grant to support individual need. Through planned interventions progress is monitored carefully in regular meetings. These actions ensure pupils grow in confidence and courage to learn successfully. There is a detailed tracking system in place to evidence this. Consequently, pupils progress rapidly closing the achievement gap by the time they leave the school. The headteacher is very resourceful in networking with outside providers to access additional funding and creative initiatives to drive the vision. This has resulted in a dynamic and richly varied curriculum that uses research based approaches to inspire learning. One such approach is 'Schools without Walls' which takes the pupils beyond the school to events and venues far and wide. One pupil described this as 'an out the box curriculum'. An example of this occurred on the day of the inspection with a 'Hustings event' in St Swithin's Church. The school had invited three other schools to pose questions to politicians from the four main parties. The contributions from St Andrew's pupils reflected their desire for justice, hope and courage, care and compassion. They bubbled with energy and enthusiasm through participating and grew as young citizens from the experiences. RE is a popular subject that challenges pupils to learn about all faiths and to reflect deeply. Links with St Swithin's are very strong. The rector, the curate and members of the church are regular visitors who engage pupils in spiritual reflection and discussion. There are also numerous visits to the church and to other places of worship. One example is the annual visit to Wells Cathedral. Photographic evidence records how the pupils lay on the floor, soaking in the stillness. A sense of awe and wonder supports their individual reflection of the 'power of God in that place'. Forest school and 'welly walks' in the park are other regular activities through which pupils experience 'God as Creator'. Pupils enjoy these activities and the memories they generate. They have created areas within each classroom to support their daily reflections and spiritual responses. These display the termly value and the 'golden leaves' the pupils earn from their application of the value in life. There is a school council and a 'Living Well' group who promote inclusion and also drive the values caring for others. There are house captains, playground buddies and play leaders, who display maturity and care for their fellow pupils. They are keen fund raisers and show their concern for others less fortunate than themselves locally, nationally and internationally. There are regular surveys undertaken to ensure pupils and all stakeholders have a voice. Consequently, pupils feel safe and know their views are listened to and respected. This distinctive church school is making a difference to the lives of its pupils, families and the community it serves.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Worship holds a central place in the life of the school. Throughout the week the rector, curate, church link worker, governors, staff and visitors lead worship. Thursday worship is popular with the pupils and parents. During this worship pupils are rewarded for the ways they apply the core values in their daily lives. They are proud of the 'golden leaves' or 'Learning' leaves they receive. Pupils are keen to share how important the Christian values are in shaping their choices and their relationships with others. Class worship also takes place weekly. In these smaller group settings pupils often lead prayer, share Bible stories, engage in role play and reflect quietly. Ensuring consistent quality worship experiences in these smaller settings has been a priority for school leaders since the last inspection. It remains an area for development to support pupil leadership in worship to further drive the school vision and values. Pupils through worship in a range of settings are growing spiritually. They are also learning about Christianity and other global faiths, which reflect the diversity of the school family. Special services, such as that on 'Poppy Day' held outside in the local community, witness the school's Christian foundation. The whole school came together to pray and reflect with members of the community it serves. The school family, including parents also

attend special services in St Swithin's Church once a term. They celebrate Easter, Christmas and other aspects of the Christian calendar. During these services pupils are learning about Anglican traditions, the Trinity, prayer and reflection. Members of the church and governors formally and informally attend worship. The four-year plan supporting worship was also developed with the support of a governor. The Christian ethos committee meets regularly to review the pupils' and parents' views expressed through formal surveys. Core values, worship and other aspects of the school's distinctiveness are reviewed and the findings influence future provision. This ensures that every effort is made to help pupils engage with and learn from quality worship experiences.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

Pupil surveys and questionnaires evidence the popularity of RE. Standards in RE are in line with expectations and learning outcomes are strong. Planning is creative and follows the guidance from the diocese, included in the local authority's syllabus and Discovery RE scheme of work. Teaching is also strong and ensures pupils are challenged, have fun and reflect on thought provoking questions. This was illustrated during the Year 6 lesson where pupils became investigators exploring the meaning of the word 'Jihad'. The teacher set the scene effectively reflecting on previous learning relating to 'what motivates us'. She challenged pupils to decide whether, 'to kill a person can ever be justified'. Difficult questions with real life links led pupils to empathise and apply their views, sharing them with their partners. Resources were excellent and all pupils remained engaged and learned from their experiences. In the Year 2 lesson, led by the RE leader, her enthusiasm and skill brought the story of Sarah and Abraham alive. Role play and artefacts, such as Abraham's tent set the scene. Partner work effectively focused on Abraham's relationship with God. The pupils showed knowledge of the Trinity in response to the three visitors in the story. They even concluded that Abraham and Sarah could trust God to provide them with a child despite their ages. The follow up activities were clear and differentiated offering a 'star challenge' extension. A group of pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) were also supported in their learning by a teaching assistant. Pupils' books show quality work over time and a clear marking policy which effectively supports and guides learning. Assessment and monitoring strategies are key aspects of RE which also ensure teaching and learning is sustained at a high level. Documented records and discussions with pupils endorse that the lessons observed are typical of the experiences in RE lessons throughout the year. Consequently, RE is developing pupils' understanding of different faiths and religions from a global perspective. Strong links between RE, worship and social and moral studies contribute effectively to pupils' learning. Training is provided accessed by teachers, leaders and governors which is building skills and understanding. As a result, RE is led strongly, taught well and monitored effectively. RE is influential in supporting the school's distinctiveness and in shaping the pupils' spiritual journey.

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

The headteacher has formed an effective senior leadership team that shares and drives the vision for the school. Their loving care and commitment celebrates diversity and nurtures a sense of family united in purpose. The core Christian values are the foundation blocks on which the school stands, lives and interacts. Summed up in the words of one foundation governor: 'This school is distinctive through its inclusive language and the Christian values used to resolve conflict and build relationships.' Parents, pupils and other stakeholders hold the school and its leaders in high esteem. They confirm the positive influence the values have in shaping lives daily. Parents are invited to be partners in their child's learning from the time they enter the nursery. They regularly stay and support their children within the Foundation Stage. Their recorded comments are very appreciative of the welcome and encouragement they receive. This builds their confidence and skills in supporting their child's learning through the partnership. They also feel that leaders listen to their views and respect them. Leaders have high expectations for the school and drive standards through clear systems and structures. 'Learning for Living: Life in all its fullness' is at the heart of all they do. This has improved the quality of teaching and learning and pupils' achievement. This is particularly true in relation to phonics and mathematics, which have been two priority subjects for improvement. The rich creative curriculum supports the whole child and provides an extended day through breakfast and after school clubs. Self-evaluation is a key feature underpinning school improvement. Governors are actively involved in monitoring and challenging school effectiveness. They hold link roles and are regular visitors to the school. Twice a year 'governors' weeks' ensure they know the strengths of the school and take their roles very seriously. Links with the church are very strong. The rector, although newly appointed endorses and celebrates this relationship and the support it provides to staff and pupils. RE is given a high priority and meets all statutory requirements. It is closely linked to worship and this partnership effectively underpins pupils' spiritual development. The school follows diocesan guidance and this relationship is helping it on its journey to become an academy later in the year. Professional development is a feature of the school and structures are in place to sustain future leadership of this church school at all levels. The developmental points from the previous inspection have been met.